# Cultural Anthropology and Ethnology

## Prof. Anna Casella

***Text under revision. Not yet approved by academic staff.***

***COURSE AIMS AND INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES***

The general aim of the course is to introduce students to the fundamental concepts of anthropology in order to identify its applications in related professional contexts. The course also aims to offer knowledge of Europe as a cultural project that combines cultural diversity, protection of the dignity and freedom of the individual, and democratic coexistence.

Specifically, the course aims are:

1. Know in broad terms the historical development of the discipline and the fundamental problems that it has dealt with and that it still offers for reflection today.
2. Understand the anthropological lexicon and the critical approach that the discipline adopts when it comes to reading the cultural constructs, both of our own and of others' societies.
3. Understand and assimilate the humanistic orientation of anthropological science, which is based on the rejection of all types of racism and discrimination, on the recognition of the right to diversity, on respect and curiosity for the multiple ways of living and thinking of peoples and for the related symbolic worlds.
4. Understand Europe’s cultural space, highlighting its main unifying features, its diversity and the project of multicultural coexistence.

At the end of the course, students will be able to (according to the Dublin Descriptors):

1. Know the fundamental phases of the history of cultural anthropology, understanding its main issues and the fundamental results achieved.
2. Know and understand the anthropological lexicon, the research method used by the discipline, the interpretative concepts.
3. Know and understand Europe’s social, cultural, and religious complexity in its construction and current composition, its basic anthropological orientations, and the particular project of coexistence it intends to implement.
4. Apply anthropological knowledge to the analysis of social issues and to issues relating to one's professional profile.

***COURSE CONTENT***

The course offers a general part relating to the history and development of the ethno-anthropological discipline, from its origins to today's theoretical formulations. Specifically, it will analyse the fundamental themes of the discipline and today's debates, especially the particularly innovative ones. The course will also address an analysis of the construction of Europe as a cultural space, the anthropological characteristics of the different areas and communities, and the coexistence project, with particular reference to the multicultural dimension.

The topics will be the following:

1. Birth of the anthropological discipline, from its precursors to the academic organisation.
2. The main anthropological schools (evolutionism, functionalism, cultural relativism, structuralism, interpretativism, critical anthropology).
3. Themes of today's debate.
4. The critical foundations of cultural anthropology: the nature/culture debate; universalism and relativism; methodology and critical analysis.
5. Particularly relevant anthropological issues for students of Education Science (anthropology of the family and kinship, economic anthropology, anthropology of religion and symbolic anthropology, medical and care anthropology, environmental anthropology).
6. Europe as a cultural space and as a project of coexistence.

***READING LIST***

A. Casella Paltrinieri, *L’esperienza umana. Introduzione alla antropologia culturale*, CISU,

Rome 2017.

A. Casella Paltrinieri, *Figure e percorsi dell’Antropologia culturale*, CISU, Rome, 2020.

Lecture notes by the lecturer on the anthropology of Europe.

***TEACHING METHOD***

The lectures will mainly be held in the first part of the course focused on the history and fundamental concepts of cultural anthropology. The lecturer will use slides and audio-visual and iconographic documents that will be uploaded to Blackboard. In addition to the lectures, the second part of the course will include meetings with experts and testimonials, on topics related to the course programme.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

The final exam will be oral. In the assessment of the exam, the final mark will be based on the following elements: knowledge of the main historical stages of the discipline and the results achieved, understanding of the fundamental issues dealt with and of the anthropological method; competence in the use of the anthropological lexicon and its critical tools; competence in applying anthropological knowledge to one's own cultural and professional training path; knowledge of the European anthropological space in its regional and project variations.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

Due to its introductory nature, there are no content-related prerequisites for attending the course.

Further information can be found on the lecturer's webpage at http://docenti.unicatt.it/web/searchByName.do?language=ENG or on the Faculty notice board.