# Cultural Anthropology

## Prof. Alessandro Gamba

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

The course aims to introduce students – from a foundational perspective – to the studies related to culture and cultures, as a complex of concepts and behaviours of the human being within the societies created over time. Furthermore, it aims to explore the general mechanisms at the basis of cultural processes, as well as the different ways in which cultures structure and diversify themselves, in order to understand, from a comparative perspective, both the differences and the identities of the various configurations.

At the end of the course, students will have become more familiar with the competences related to the content, the methodology, and the history of research in this field. In addition, they will be able to effectively understand the different voices of the current anthropological debate, with a focus on the main individual and community dynamics.

Finally, in accordance with their degree programme, students will be introduced to the application of the theoretical dimension of the analysis of exemplary works of the French/English/Russian/Spanish/German literature.

***COURSE CONTENT***

*FIXED CORE*

The subject of anthropology: the identical and becoming human being.

History of the discipline and short introduction to the main stages and schools of anthropology. The anthropological vocabulary. The main features of anthropological thinking and research methodologies. Subsistence, social structures, settlements, and dwellings. Identity and alterity. People, bodies, sexuality. Forms of family relations and social structures. Communication, language, knowledge. Orality and writing. Beliefs, cosmologies, representations. Rituals and myths. Cultural creativity and aesthetic expression. Celebration and game. Power administration and resource management. the climate issue. Netnography and visual anthropology.

*VARIABLE PART*

The ancestral role of the mother revisited in exemplary works of the main European literary cultures.

***READING LIST***

*FIXED CORE*

* R. Guardini, *Le età della vita,* Vita e Pensiero, Milan 2011.
* D. Navarria, *Abitare il mondo. Temi di antropologia culturale*, Educatt, Milan 2023.

*VARIABLE PART*

*Students will have to choose a play in its original language from the list below:*

* Russian A.N. Ostrovskij: *Groza* [Moskva, Malyj Teatr / 16 October 1859]
* English J.M. Synge: *Riders to the Sea* [Dublin, Molesworth Hall / 25 February 1904]
* French R. Vitrac: *Victor* [Paris, Comédie des Champs-Élysées / 24 December 1928]
* Spanish F. García Lorca: *Yerma* [Madrid, Teatro Español / 29 December 1934]
* German B. Brecht: *Mutter Courage und ihre Kinder* [Zürich, Schauspielhaus Zürich / 19 April 1941]
* ***TEACHING METHOD***

Classroom lectures (with the use of multimedia tools).

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

The final oral exam aims to assess the study of the textbooks of the reading list and the students’ understanding of the global content of the course, evaluating at the same time the ability to find relevant arguments, their interdisciplinary creativity, and the maturity of their thought. In addition to the knowledge of the contents, another fundamental assessment criteria will be the conscious, confident, and flexible use of anthropological terminology, together with the use of methodological rigour in the problematic application of the most coherent and cogent theoretical tools required to answer the questions asked by the board of examiners.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

There are no prerequisites for attending the course.

Students will have to choose a play from the variable part of the reading list according to the two foreign languages they are studying (it being understood that they have the opportunity to integrate the reading of the play with the consultation of a good Italian translation).

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.