# Cultural Anthropology and Ethnology

## Prof. Stefano Allovio

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

The teaching aims to provide students a solid general knowledge of concepts, theoretical frameworks and the main methodological tools of Cultural Anthropology and to enable them to use anthropological thought as a critical input to their studies, research and future professional activities.

The specific aims of the course are for students to:

1. Have a general knowledge of the history of the discipline and of the fundamental issues which it has dealt with and that it proposes today for reflection.
2. Understand the anthropological lexicon and the critical approach adopted by the discipline for the interpretation of cultural constructs, both in our society and in other societies.
3. Acquire a basic knowledge of anthropological research methods and further in-depth study of specific basic topics through the analysis of specific ethnographic case studies: nature/culture dichotomy, comparative analysis, ethnographic methods, the critique of the concepts of “race” and “ethnic group” and the worth of cultural differences.

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

1. Knowing the fundamental phases of the history of cultural anthropology, understanding the main issues and achieved results.
2. Knowing and understanding the anthropological lexicon and the research methods used by the discipline.
3. Applying anthropological knowledge in the analysis of social issues and those related to their professional profile.

***COURSE CONTENT***

The course will offer a general part on the history and development of ethnoanthropology, from its origins to present theoretical formulations. The course will specifically cover the analysis of the discipline’s fundamental themes and contemporary debates together with an in-depth study of the African context, with a focus on the forms of solidarity that develop in urban areas between migrants.

The second part of the course will cover ethnographic monographs with new case studies on solidarity and social and economic collaboration in societies from an ethnological perspective.

The following topics will be covered during the course:

1. Birth and development of cultural anthropology as an academic discipline.
2. Introduction to the main research topics and methodologies in the field of cultural anthropology (culture, comparison, ethnographic method, cosmologies, rituals, identity, kinship and ancestry, reciprocity, mobility and globalisation issues).
3. Forms of solidarity and collaboration in the African context.
4. Ethnographic monographs starting with some significant examples.

***READING LIST***

1. S. Allovio, L. Ciabarri, G. Mangiameli (edited by*), Antropologia culturale. I temi fondamentali*, Raffaello Cortina, Milan, 2018.

Except for the following optional essays:

The cultural dimension

Living or building

Practice schemes

Relational identity

Ethnic groups and ethnic minorities

Globalisation and the future of cultural difference

La nuova Thurii

2. S. Allovio, *Ricreare mondi. Mobilità e mutuo aiuto fra Kinshasa e Cape Town*, Laterza, Rome-Bari 2023.

3. E. E. Evans-Pritchard, *Stregoneria, oracoli e magia tra gli Azande*, Raffaello Cortina, Milan, 2002.

***TEACHING METHOD***

Frontal lectures will be accompanied by support materials (slides and audiovisual and iconographic documents). In addition, meetings will be held with experts and speakers on course topics.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

Students will be expected to take an oral exam. In the final assessment, the mark will take into account the following elements: knowledge of the main historical milestones of the discipline and achieved results, understanding of the fundamental issues which have been tackled and of anthropological methods: proficiency in the use of the anthropological lexicon and of its critical tools.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

Being introductory, there are no specific knowledge prerequisites for students to attend the course.

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