## **Cultural Anthropology**

## Prof. Edoardo Quaretta

***COURSE AIMS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES***

The course aims to provide students with a solid general knowledge of the main concepts, theoretical frameworks and methodological tools of Cultural Anthropology, and to enable students to apply the anthropological perspective as critical thinking on their studies, research and their future professional activities.

Specifically, the course aims to enable students to:

1. Have a general knowledge of the historical development of the discipline and of the key issues it addresses and presently offers for reflection.
2. Understand the anthropological lexicon and the critical approach which the discipline uses for interpreting cultural constructs, both of our society and of other societies.
3. Acquire a basic knowledge of anthropological research methodology and to study in depth some basic issues by analysing some specific ethnographic cases: the dichotomy nature/culture, the comparison, the ethnographic method, the criticism to the concept of ‘race’ and ‘ethnicity’ and the value of cultural differences.

At the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. Know the anthropological lexicon, the research methods used in Anthropology, interpretative concepts.
2. Know the main historical phases of cultural anthropology, understanding its main themes and obtained results.
3. Apply anthropological knowledge in the analysis of social issues and with regard to their professional profile.
4. Understand anthropology’s specific contribution to the analysis of environmental issues and of health protection.

***COURSE CONTENT***

The course will offer a general part on the history and development of the ethno-anthropological discipline, from its origins to current theoretical formulations. The course will specifically cover the discipline’s fundamental themes and current debate, particularly highly innovative arguments. The second part of the course addresses the crucial role played by ethnography in the production of anthropological knowledge. Ethnographic cases will be presented for to illustrate the different theoretical, methodological and qualitative research options. The third part of the course is an introduction to African studies as developed by cultural anthropologists. Authors, themes and problems of African anthropology will be compared, with particular attention to contemporary Africa, urban development and socio-cultural change.

The course will cover the following topics:

1. The origins of the anthropological discipline, from the pioneers to academic organisation.
2. The main anthropological schools (evolutionism, functionalism, cultural relativism, structuralism, interpretitivism, critical anthropology).
3. Introduction to the main research topics and the methodologies of cultural anthropology (culture, comparison, ethnographic method, cosmologies, rituals, identity, kinship and descent, reciprocity, the issues of mobility and globalization.
4. Ethnography as production of anthropological knowledge.
5. African studies and Anthropology with particular attention to contemporary Africa, urban development and socio-cultural change.

***READING LIST***

**UNIT 1**

One out of two:

- F. DEI, ANTROPOLOGIA CULTURALE, BOLOGNA, IL MULINO, SECONDA EDIZIONE, 2016.

- S. ALLOVIO, L. CIABARRI, G. MANGIAMELI, ANTROPOLOGIA CULTURALE. I TEMI FONDAMENTALI, MILANO, RAFFAELLO CORTINA EDITORE, 2018.

**UNIT 2**

- L. JOURDAN, GENERAZIONE KALASHNIKOV. UN ANTROPOLOGO DENTRO LA GUERRA DEL CONGO, BARI, LATERZA, 2010 (available in digital format, 2014).

UNIT 3

One out of two:

- S. F. MOORE, ANTROPOLOGIA E AFRICA, MILANO, RAFFAELLO CORTINA EDITORE, 2004.

- A. BELLAGAMBA, L'AFRICA E LA STREGONERIA. SAGGIO DI ANTROPOLOGIA STORICA, BARI, LATERZA, 2008 (available in digital format, 2015).

***TEACHING METHOD***

The lectures will be complemented by supporting material (slides and audio-visual and iconographic documents) which will be uploaded on Blackboard. There will also be meetings with experts and guest speakers on topics related to the course content.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

Students will have to take a final oral exam. The final mark will depend on: knowledge of the discipline’s main historical phases and of its achieved results, understanding of key issues covered during the course and of anthropological methods; proficiency in the use of the anthropological lexicon and its critical tools; knowledge of environmental and health issues from an anthropological perspective; ability to apply anthropological knowledge to one’s cultural and professional training.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

No prerequisites are needed.

*Students’ reception*

Prof. Edoardo Quaretta welcomes students at end of each class or by appointment to be agreed by email at edoardo.quaretta@hotmail.it