-. Sociology of Culture and Communication Processes

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COURSE AIMS AND INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

The course aims to provide the tools for an articulated knowledge of the main currents of sociology, the main authors who animated them, the fundamental theoretical concepts, and the methodologies used to study society and its main issues. Within this disciplinary framework, the course aims to deepen students' knowledge of cultural and communicative processes; particular attention will be devoted to sociological studies applied to the field of communication, the cultural industry and the media with special reference to the transformations in socialisation processes following the advent of the information society and the *network society*. Finally, attention will be given to the medial representation of the *other* and of otherness, and to the power of images in shaping our participation in the pain of others.

Knowledge and understanding

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

* know the epistemological foundations of the discipline;
* know the main traditions of sociology and the theoretical contributions from the most important authors;
* understand the main conceptual categories of sociological studies.

Ability to apply knowledge and understanding

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

* use the language and specific vocabulary of the discipline;
* recognise the relevance of sociological concepts and categories with respect to the main *network society* phenomena connected to the educational and training sphere.

COURSE CONTENT

The course is divided into three parts:

1. a first part dedicated to the history of sociological thought, represented through the contribution of its main authors (in particular the classics: Durkheim, Marx, Weber, Simmel and Parsons), the most relevant theories of the twentieth century (critical theory, phenomenology, theories of action) and the main issues addressed (socialisation, culture, globalisation);
2. a second part, complementary to the first, dedicated to the in-depth study of culture as a symbolic system that influences subjects in their social interactions, in the attribution of meaning to personal experiences, and in the dynamics of socialisation and training;
3. a single subject part dedicated to the media image of otherness, the representation of pain in others, and the activation of solidarity mechanisms through the media.

***READING LIST [[1]](#footnote-1)***

Part one: history and topics of sociological thought

L. Gherardi, *Scoprire la sociologia. Teorie e temi essenziali*, Pearson, Milan, 2021. [*Purchase from VP*](https://librerie.unicatt.it/scheda-libro/autori-vari/scoprire-la-sociologia-teorie-e-temi-essenziali-ediz-mylab-9788891913579-691979.html)

Part two: sociology of culture

R. De Biasi, *Che cos’è la sociologia della cultura*, Carocci, Rome, 2008. [*Purchase from VP*](https://librerie.unicatt.it/scheda-libro/rocco-de-biasi/che-cose-la-sociologia-della-cultura-9788843021604-219943.html)

Part Three: The Representation of Otherness

A. Manzato, *Vicini/Distanti. L'immagine mediale dell'altro*, Mimesis Edizioni, Milan, 2020.

TEACHING METHOD

Frontal lectures supported by slide presentations. The materials presented in class and other useful educational content will be made available on the Blackboard platform.

ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA

Students will have to demonstrate: (1) their knowledge of the epistemological foundations of the discipline, the main traditions of sociology and the theoretical contribution of the most important authors; (2) their ability to use the language and specific vocabulary of the discipline; (3) an understanding of and ability to use the main conceptual categories of sociological studies, recognising their relevance to the main network society phenomena connected to education and training.

An oral exam, with a single mark out of thirty, aimed at ascertaining students' knowledge of the entire reading list and the main theoretical categories presented therein. It will also be possible to take an interim written test on the reading list pertaining to the first part of the course in the months of January-February. The methods for taking the interim test, along with its format and scheduling, will be announced on the lecturer's webpage and on the Blackboard platform. The interim test will consist of a battery of eight open-ended questions; the mark accorded every single answer will contribute to the overall interim test mark; this assessment will be worth 50% of the final assessment. Should the student pass, the mark for the interim test - with the student's permission - will, together with the oral exam on the second and third parts of the course reading list, be used to calculate an average final mark. Should the student fail the interim test - or pass but refuse to give their permission for the result to be used - the oral exam will focus on the entire exam program. The scheduling of the written interim test will be published on the lecturer's webpage.

NOTES AND PREREQUISITES

Being introductory in nature, there are no prerequisites for attending the course.

**Should the current Covid-19 health emergency not allow face-to-face teaching, remote teaching will be guaranteed using methods that will be communicated in good time to students**.

Information on office hours available on the teacher's personal page at http://docenti.unicatt.it/.

1. The texts indicated in the reading list may be purchased at the University bookstores; they may also be bought from other outlets. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)