

Course	[Visual Anthropology]
Modules	[none]
credits (cfu)	[6]
hours	[36]
year running	[1]
semester	[1]
lecturer	[Edoardo Quaretta]
e-mail	[e.quaretta@unilink.it]
consultation time	After class or by appointment previously arranged by e-mail

### LEARNING AND SKILLS OUTCOMES

The course aims to provide students with the following learning and skills outcomes:

1. **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING:** expected outcomes are to acquire the ability to critically analyze an ethnographic film; to develop knowledge of the semiotic status of images; to acquire a basic knowledge of the history of photography and ethnographic cinema, of the main authors and the most significant productions in the field; to learn the fundamental aspects of the visual culture of Central Africa (DR Congo).
2. **APPLIED KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING:** expected outcomes are to get familiar with the basic methods of visual anthropology relevant to cultural anthropology, ethnography and more generally to qualitative research. To acquire knowledge of basic audio-visual tools applicable to fieldwork.
3. **MAKING JUDGEMENTS:** expected outcomes are to learn and develop the basic analytical tools to analyze and evaluate ethnographic films and anthropological audio-visual materials; to develop awareness of epistemological and ethical implications in the production of audio-visual materials in ethnographic contexts.
4. **COMMUNICATION SKILLS:** Through the analysis of audio-visual products and group exercises carried out during the course, students will become familiar with audio-visual communication tools applied in the research practice and production of visual anthropology.
5. **LEARNING SKILL:** through lectures, in-class exercises, mid and final-term papers and individual study, students will strengthen their skills of critical analysis and autonomy in bibliographical research related to visual anthropology.

### PRE-REQUISITE QUALIFICATIONS

[none]

### COURSE DETAILED CONTENTS

1. Introduction to visual anthropology, its methods and fields of application
2. 19th century ethnographic photography, the birth of visual anthropology and the first ethnological expeditions
3. Robert Flaherty and the invention of documentary filmmaking
4. Ethnographic film and filmmakers
5. The attributes of ethnographic film

6. Presentations of mid-term assignments
7. Jean Rouch's ethnographic films
8. Participatory ethnographic filmmaking
9. Observational and transcultural cinema
10. Contemporary Africa's visual cultures
11. Experimental photography and cinema by Sammi Baloji (DR Congo)
12. Presentations of final assignments

### **TEACHING METHODS**

lectures, in-class exercises, class discussions, mid and final-term paper presentations, individual study

### **TEACHING MATERIALS**

Students are required to prepare for the examination by integrating the teaching materials discussed during the in-class lectures with the following compulsory textbook:

#### **Attending students**

- 1) Heider K. G., *Ethnographic Film*, Revised Edition, Austin, University of Texas Press, 2006 [1976];
- 2) An article or chapter selected from the following collection of essays:
  - a. B. Street, "British Popular Anthropology: Exhibiting and Photographing the Other", in E. Edwards, *Anthropology and Photography 1860-1920*, Yale University Press, 1992, pp. 122-131;
  - b. J.-P. Olivier de Sardan, "The ethnographic pact and documentary film", *Visual Anthropology*, 12 (1), pp.13-25, 1999;
  - c. B. Jewsiewicki, "Collective memory and its images: Popular urban painting in Zaire – a source of 'present past'", *History and Anthropology*, 2(2), 389-400, 1986;
  - d. P. Henley, *The Adventure of the Real*, The University of Chicago Press, 2009, chap. 7 - "Images of Power", pp. 101-134 (*Les maîtres fous*);
  - e. P. Henley, *The Adventure of the Real*, The University of Chicago Press, 2009, chap. 8 - "Chronical of a Violent Game", pp. 145-175 (*Chroniques d'un été*);
  - f. M. Hasian, R. Wood, "Critical Museology, (Post)Colonial Communication, and the Gradual Mastering of Traumatic Pasts at the Royal Museum for Central Africa (RMCA)", *Western Journal of Communication*, 74 (2), 2010, pp. 128-149.

#### **Non-Attending students**

- 1) Heider K. G., *Ethnographic Film*, Revised Edition, Austin, University of Texas Press, 2006 [1976];
- 2) Non-attending students are required to prepare a presentation of a film alongside a related book to be selected from the following list of options (in case of problems in finding films or books, please email the teacher):

##### Option 1

Film: Gardner R., 1986, *Forest of Bliss*, Film Study Center, Harvard University, USA, 91 min;

Book: R. Gardner, A. Östör, 2001, *Making "Forest of Bliss": Intention, Circumstance, and*

Chance in Nonfiction Film, Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press.

#### Option 2

Film: H. Harris, G. Breidenbach, 1970, The Nuer, DER, 73 min;

Book: E. E. Evans-Pritchards, The Nuer: A description of the modes of livelihood and political institutions of a Nilotic people, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1940 (more recent editions are also appropriate);

#### Option 3

Film: Rouch J., Morin E., 1961, Croniques d'un été, Argos Film, Francia, 90 min;

Book: P. Henley, The Adventure of the Real, The University of Chicago Press, 2009;

#### Option 4

Film: Rouch J., 1955, Les Maîtres fous, Les Films de la Pléiade, Francia, 36 min

Book: P. Stoller, The Cinematic Griot. The Ethnography of Jean Rouch, Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1992.

#### Option 5

Film: D. MacDougall, Gandhi's Children, 2008, David MacDougall, 185 min.

Book: D. MacDougall, Transcultural Cinema, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1998.

## **FINAL EXAM**

### **Attending students**

Final assessment is divided in three steps: 1) presentation of a brief paper for the mid-term assessment (30% of the final grade); 2) presentation of an analysis of an ethnographic film for the end-of-course assessment (30% of the final grade); oral examination during the term's exam sessions (40% of the final grade).

### **Non-attending students**

Final assessment will be based on an oral exam on the topics covered throughout the course, on the program's reading materials and on films watched and analysed in class. Moreover, final evaluation will take into account analytical and communication skills, the ability to create links through bibliographical, visual and cinematographic materials proposed within the course.

## **ASSESSMENT METHODS**

Assessment methods concern:

1. **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING:** With reference to knowledge and comprehension skills, the final examination will assess the student's acquisition of the ability to critically analyse audio-visual production in the field of visual anthropology as well as their mastery of the fundamentals relating to the topics covered in the lectures.
2. **APPLIED KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING:** With regard to the application of the acquired knowledge and skills, the final examination will assess the student's ability to link the various topics covered and the ability to present the basic methods of visual anthropology applicable to anthropological and ethnographic research.
3. **MAKING JUDGEMENTS:** the final examination will assess the student's ability to evaluate ethnographic films and anthropological audio-visual materials; to develop awareness of epistemological and ethical implications in the production of audio-

visual materials in ethnographic contexts.

4. **COMMUNICATION SKILLS:** With reference to communication skills, the final examination will assess, in addition to the content of the answers, the ability to appropriately evaluate the terms of the language of the field and to effectively expound on the topics studied.
5. **LEARNING SKILL:** the final examination will assess the student's skills of critical analysis and autonomy in bibliographical research related to visual anthropology.

## **MARKING CRITERIA**

### **Attending students**

Final assessment will be the result of three steps:

- 1) mid-term evaluation will assess the ability to synthesize, critically analyze and present a short paper (30% of the final grade);
- 2) the end-course evaluation will assess the ability to technical analyze an ethnographic film through the knowledge acquired (30% of the final grade);
- 3) the final evaluation (oral examination) will consist of an oral exam based on the topics covered during lectures, program's reading materials, the audio-visual products and films analyzed in class (40% of the final grade).

### **Non-attending students**

Final assessment will be the result of an oral exam based on the topics covered throughout the course, on the program's reading materials and on films watched and analyzed in class. Moreover, final evaluation will take into account analytical and communication skills, the ability to create links through bibliographical, visual and cinematographic materials proposed within the course.