



UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK IN PRAGUE

Course: SSC202 Cultural Anthropology (6 ECTS/3 US credits)
Semester: Spring 2024
Prerequisites: None
Instructor:

1. Catalogue Description

The course will focus on main areas of anthropological thinking and key anthropological theories, methods and ethnographic techniques, with an emphasis on the contemporary global connection and its impact on people's everyday practices, behavior and reasoning in local contexts.

2. Course Purpose

This course is intended as an introduction to basic level knowledge and practice of Social and Cultural Anthropology. Its secondary focus is to demonstrate the usefulness of anthropological insight for psychology students by exploring how cultures and societies influence an individual's reasoning and mind.

For more than 150 years, Cultural Anthropology has been proving that diversity of cultures and societies is one of the main characteristics of humankind. In other words, Cultural Anthropology suggests that different cultural, social, economic, political or even material realities simultaneously reshape and are reshaped by people's lives.

The course outline will reveal that Anthropology's main scientific strength is twofold: A) systematic emphasis on relativist, reflexive and ethical attitude towards the people, cultures and societies we observe and B) its distinctive and constitutive research and representation method - ethnography based (not only) on participant observation.

Besides the history, ethics and methods of Cultural Anthropology, students will be introduced to development of anthropological thinking: from evolutionism, diffusionism and cultural relativism to more recent ideas brought by reflexive, spatial or ontological turn. Various topics will be explored through discussing canonic ethnographic texts and case studies referring to: race, class, gender or kinship; migration and (trans) nationalism; space, embodiment and segregation; power, politics and ideology; materiality and more-than-human subjects; climate change, etc..

3. Required Readings

Balzani, M., & Besnier, N. (2021). *Social and cultural anthropology for the 21st century: Connected worlds*. Taylor and Francis. (Available on Perlego: <https://www.perlego.com/book/3060318/social-and-cultural-anthropology-for-the-21st-century-connected-worlds-pdf>).

It is up to you to access this book before the class.

We will be using it from the first day of class onwards.

4. Additional Readings

The instructor will provide case studies, and students are encouraged to keep abreast of actual management issues and developments by their own research and readings.

Anderson, B. (2006). *Imagined communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*. Verso. (Available on Perlego: <https://www.perlego.com/book/731064/imagined-communities-reflections-on-the-origin-and-spread-of-nationalism-pdf>).

Barnard, A. (2000). *History and theory in anthropology*. Cambridge University Press.

Bryman, A. (2001). *Social research methods*. Oxford University Press.

Clifford, J., & Marcus, G. E. (Eds.). (1986). *Writing culture: The poetics and politics of ethnography: A school of American Research Advanced Seminar*. University of California Press.

Eriksen, T. H. (2016). *Overheating: An anthropology of accelerated change*. Pluto Press. (Available on Perlego: <https://www.perlego.com/book/664590/overheating-an-anthropology-of-accelerated-change-pdf>).

Geertz, C. (1988). *Works and lives: The anthropologist as author*. Stanford University Press

Hammersley, M., & Atkinson, P. (1995). *Ethnography: Principles in practice*. Routledge. (Available on Perlego: <https://www.perlego.com/book/1512034/ethnography-principles-in-practice-pdf>).

Hannerz, U. (1980). *Exploring the city: Inquiries toward an urban anthropology*. Columbia University Press.

Latour, B. (2007). *Reassembling the social. An introduction to actor-network theory*. Oxford University Press

Low, S. M. (2016). *Spatializing culture: The ethnography of space and place*. Routledge. (Available on Perlego: <https://www.perlego.com/book/1512681/spatializing-culture-the-ethnography-of-space-and-place-pdf>).

Marcus, G. E. (1995). Ethnography in/of the world system: The emergence of multi-sited ethnography. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 24, pp. 95–117.

Tsing, A. L. (2011). *Friction. An ethnography of global connection*. Princeton University Press. (Available on Perlego: <https://www.perlego.com/book/735308/friction-an-ethnography-of-global-connection-pdf>).

Van Willigen, J. (2002). *Applied anthropology: An introduction* (3rd ed.). Greenwood Publishing Group.

Other sources:

Code of Ethics of the American Anthropological Association. Online access at: <http://www.aaanet.org/profdev/ethics>

5. Learning Outcomes

Knowledge gained, Upon completion of this course, the students should be able to:

- refer to major theories, concepts and methods of Cultural Anthropology
- discuss the relative character of cultural norms, customs and behavior
- gain a critical distance towards contemporary social and political issues
- realize that anthropological research could be both inspiring and fun

Skills gained. Upon completion of this course, the students should be able to:

- use micro and macro perspective when analyzing connections and relationships in a globalized world
- design their own research project methodology
- realize a short-term fieldwork research based on participant observation in public spaces
- independently analyze the data they created during the fieldwork

6. Course Schedule

Week 1: Course orientation and overview: What is Anthropology? Subdisciplines of Anthropology. History, origins and basic concepts of Cultural Anthropology.

Recommended reading: Barnard, A. (2000). *History and theory in anthropology*. Cambridge University Press, pp. 47-79.

Week 2: Ethnography as a constitutive method of Cultural Anthropology. Doing ethnography as a scientific craft. Qualitative methods of inquiry and analysis. (Epistemological) reflexivity and ethics. Observed vs. observer. Research power relations. Turns and crises in Cultural Anthropology.

Bourgois, P. I. (2003). *In search of respect: Selling crack in El Barrio*. Cambridge University Press, pp. 19-47.

Optional but important reading:

Geertz, C. (2016). *The interpretation of cultures*. Harper Collins Publishers. (Available on Perlego: <https://www.perlego.com/book/679694/the-interpretation-of-cultures-text-only-pdf>). Chapter I: Thick Description: Toward an interpretive Theory of Culture.

Week 3: Alternative representations of anthropological research: Ethnographic film, visual research, auto-ethnography.

Ellis, C. (2005). *An ethnographic I. A methodological novel about autoethnography*. Altamira Press, pp. 24-57.

Week 4: Public holidays.

Experiential learning (date TBA): Excursion to Hůrka district in Prague (a multi-cultural neighborhood with highest percentage of settled non-Czech citizens in Czech Republic, approx 40% of local population).

Related Topic: Applied action and engaged Anthropology. How can we contribute to social change?

Heřmanová, M., & Lehečka, M. (2019). Arrival city: Invisible diversity at Prague's housing estates. *Informationen zur Raumentwicklung 2/2019*, pp. 58–67.

Week 5: Kinship, Gender and sexuality. “Biological” vs. “social” sex. Embodiment. Family and sexual relationships in history and 21st century.

Abu Lughod, L. (2013). *Do Muslim women need saving?* Harvard University press. (Available on Perlego. <https://www.perlego.com/book/1147783/do-muslim-women-need-saving-pdf>). Introduction: Rights and lives.

Week 6: Nationalism and ethnicity. Perspective on identities and nations in Modernity. Theories of Nationalism.

Holy, L. (1996). *Little Czech man and a great Czech nation: National identity and the post-communist transformation of society*. Cambridge University Press, pp. 16-54.

Optional but important reading:

Anderson, B. (2006). *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Verso. (Available on Perlego: <https://www.perlego.com/book/731064/imagined-communities-reflections-on-the-origin-and-spread-of-nationalism-pdf>). Chapter 2: Cultural Roots.

Week 7: Mid-term exam (Class 1-6 reading)

Week 8: Race, Class, Religion. Segregation and Marginalization. Origins of racism. Theories of class division, Bourdieu's field theory.

Truong, F. (2018). *Radicalized Loyalties: Becoming Muslim in the West*. Cambridge / Medford: Polity.

Chapter 2: On the Margins of the City. (available at Perlego:

<https://www.perlego.com/book/1536388/radicalized-loyalties-becoming-muslim-in-the-west-pdf?queryID=54db7b8ab15d3285cf686b787b295965&searchIndexType=books>).

Week 9: Politics and ideologies. Culture, language and politics. States, utopias and dystopias.

Yurchak, A. (2013). *Everything was forever until it was no more: The last Soviet generation*. Princeton

University Press. (Available on Perlego: <https://www.perlego.com/book/735934/everything-was-forever-until-it-was-no-more-the-last-soviet-generation-pdf>). Chapter II: Hegemony of Form: Stalin's Uncanny Paradigm Shift)

Week 10: Migration and (Trans) nationalism. People on the move. Fluid meanings of homes and boundaries.

Rozakou, K. (2020). The Violence of Accelerated time. Pp. 23-39 in. C. M. Jacobsen, M.-A. Carlsen, & S. Khoshravi (eds.), *Waiting and the temporalities of irregular migration (1st ed.)*. Taylor and Francis.

(Available on Perlego: <https://www.perlego.com/book/2013715/waiting-and-the-temporalities-of-irregular-migration-pdf>).

Week 11: Anthropology of the city. Space vs. place. Non-places. Lieux de Memoire. Space as a socio-material product. Space as a cultural object. City as a palimpsest.

Holston, J. (1989). *The modernist city: An anthropological critique of Brasilia*. University of Chicago Press, pp. 58-77.

Third exercise due: Analyzing the interview and fieldnotes, data segmentation & coding

Week 12: Media Anthropology and Digital Ethnography. Digital connection in globalized world. Netnography. Post-factual and post-truth era.

Lange, P., G. (2017). Participatory Complications in Interactive, Video-sharing Environments in Hjort, L, et al (eds.) *The Routledge Companion to Digital Ethnography*. Available at Perlego:

<https://www.perlego.com/book/1563434/the-routledge-companion-to-digital-ethnography-pdf>).

Week 13: Materiality and non-human ethnography. Multi-species ethnography, science/technology studies and symmetrical anthropology.

Brunclíková, K. (2016). Recyclable waste as a marker of everyday life routines. Pp. 100-120 in Sosna, D, &

Brunclíková, L. (2016). *Archaeologies of waste*. Oxbow Books. (Available on Perlego:

<https://www.perlego.com/book/498979/archaeologies-of-waste-pdf>)

Week 14: Anthropology of global change. The emergence of Anthropocene: The geological era of man.

Eriksen, T. H. (2016). *Overheating. An anthropology of accelerated change*. Pluto Press. (Available on

Perlego: <https://www.perlego.com/book/664590/overheating-an-anthropology-of-accelerated-change-pdf>).

Chapters 1 and 2.

Week 15: Course wrap-up. Presentations of fieldwork project outcomes

The full course schedule and outline will be provided by faculty before the start of the term.

7. Course Requirements and Grading

This course will be graded on the basis of:

Homework (reading)	15%
Discussions and overall participation	15%
Research project (based on observation)+ analytic review	30%
Research project Presentation	20%
<u>Midterm Exam</u>	<u>20%</u>
Total	100%

Homework (reading, 15%) & discussions and overall participation (15%)

Each week, we will discuss topics related to the required readings. All students should be prepared for discussions and be able to interpret and refer to the key arguments from the readings. Each week, 2 to 3 students will be assigned reading which they will present to the whole class and start the discussion. Students are welcome to present and debate both objective information as well as their personal opinions and accounts of their own real-life experience and feelings. All students can receive up to 30% of their total grade based on their ability to actively participate in these discussions (in a positive way).

Research project guideline and requirements (30%)

Students will work on research projects in small groups (up to 3 members) starting from week 6 onwards. Topics related to the people's practices and social behavior in urban spaces will be chosen and the students will design a research project with the help and approval of the professor.

Each project must consist of:

- *Research design*: research question and brief overview of methodology
- Short-term *participant observation* conducted in an urban space
- *Analytic review*

Research design (Week 6-9)

Research questions and methodology has to be submitted before week 9 via Turnitin (no more than 2 pages). Research topics related to the people's practices and social behavior in urban public spaces will be chosen and designed by the student groups with the assistance and approval of the professor. Theoretical framework based on relevant literature (at least one text from readings) should be included as well.

Participant observation and completion of analytical review (Week 9-14)

Student groups will conduct a participant observation in the City of Prague in order to be able to submit an analytic review before the end of week 14 (4 weeks research, 1 week analysing and writing a review) Reviews should be no more than 6 pages (approx. 2000 words; submitted via Turnitin as well).

In order to obtain full credit (30% of total grade), the Research Review should:

- Develop a clear sense of core arguments, establish their relationship to the question or research problem being posed in *Research design* and sustain a focused coherent development in order to arrive at a good conclusion.
- Show evidence of independently conducted fieldwork and present an adequate set of created data.

- Demonstrate good organization, structure and competence in writing and expression.

Research project presentation (20%)

During the last lesson of the course each team will have a 20-minute presentation and share findings with the rest of the class. Teams should be able to defend their projects, methodologies and analysis. At the same time they should be ready to answer questions raised by the professor and fellow students.

Midterm Exam (20%)

Midterm exam will be based on readings (week 1-6). Test will consist of 10 open questions on theoretical and methodological concepts of Cultural Anthropology (2 points each question, 20 points maximum).

Note: **Written work must contain citations in APA format. Guidelines and resources for proper referencing will be given to you and links will be put on e-learning. Papers submitted without any citations/references will be considered plagiarism and receive an automatic F.*

Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Percent (%)	Generally Accepted Meaning	Notes
A	95-100	Outstanding work	x
A-	90-94		x
B+	87-89	Good work, distinctly above the average	x
B	83-86		x
B-	80-82		x
C+	77-79	Acceptable Work	x
C	73-76		x
C-	70-72		x
D+	67-69	Work that is significantly below average	Credits for the course will not transfer to ESC
D	63-66		
D-	60-62		
F	0-59	Work that does not meet the minimum standards for passing the course	No credits awarded

8. Key UNYP Policies

Attendance

It is your responsibility to show up to class on time. If you are late you will be marked as absent for that hour. **If you miss more than 12 (twelve) hours of class for any reason, you will automatically fail the entire course. Pay strict attention to this. This class policy is standard UNYP policy.**

Academic Honesty

- The university's rules on academic dishonesty (e.g., cheating, plagiarism, submitting false information) will be strictly enforced. Please familiarize yourself with the *student honor code* or ask your instructor for clarification.
- For examinations: copying from your neighbor, communicating with another student, using a phone or anything similar will result in you failing the test or quiz.
- On written papers, properly note your sources with academic citations. Cutting and pasting from the Internet without accurately citing the source may be considered plagiarism. Students may be required to submit papers electronically, which could mean an automated check for plagiarism via the Turnitin resource. Students may also be required to defend the content of a paper orally to an instructor as a check on authorship.
- If you have questions about any of the above, please consult with the instructor.

9. General Requirements

- Students are expected to attend each class session and participate in a positive way.
- Students are expected to come to class fully prepared to discuss homework readings, projects or cases.
- Students are expected to turn in homework assignments at the beginning of the class period on the day they are due.
- Students are expected to leave their mobile phones, beepers, pagers, and so forth switched off.
- Students may not use laptops or netbooks for any reason other than taking notes.

Do not surf the Web during class time. If you do, you will lose the privilege to use a laptop or netbook.

- In the event of illness or emergency, contact your instructor *in advance* to determine whether special arrangements are possible.

10. European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS)

Students who complete the course will receive 6 ECTS credits, which are the equivalent of 3 American credits. (In other words, 2 ECTS credits equal 1 American credit hour.)

Further, 1 ECTS credit corresponds to 25-30 hours of work. Thus, a 6-credit ECTS course (equivalent to a 3-credit American course) will total 150-180 projected work hours. For this course, students are expected to spend time in the following course-related activities:

Class lectures and exams	45 hours
Reading class-related material	50 hours
Exam preparations	25 hours
<u>Research project & preparation (including teamwork)</u>	<u>50 hours</u>
TOTAL	170 hours

11. Technology Expectations

All assignments, excluding those that are carried out exclusively in class, must be completed on a computer. Students are assumed to be familiar with the use of the Internet and in particular with the gathering of data from the Worldwide Web. This will be a necessary tool for carrying out some of the course assignments (i.e., long essay or class presentations).

For completing research projects students are expected to use basic technical tools such as audio recorder (or a smartphone), camera (analogue, digital, smartphone camera is also okay), apps for field notes (Evernote or its equivalent).