# **African Studies and Anthropology**

# **Module Descriptions 2021/22**

# **Level I (i.e. 2nd Year.) Modules**

Please be aware that all modules are subject to availability.

If you have any questions about the administration of the modules, please contact us at calincomingexchangemodules@contacts.bham.ac.uk.

For these modules, you will need to be familiar with essay-based and reading-heavy modules. Students who have some background in literature, history, political science, sociology or anthropology will probably adapt most easily into these modules. Students whose main degree is in mathematics, biology, engineering etc. may find these modules difficult. If there is another module that you need to have studied before taking this, it will be stated in the module description.

Please note that at the time this document has been prepared (April 2021) the following information is provisional, and there may be minor changes between now and the beginning of 2021/22 academic year.

# **SEMESTER 2 MODULES**

## **African Popular Culture**

MODULE CODE: 20436

CREDIT VALUE: 20

ASSESSMENT METHOD: 1 x 1500 word book review (40%) and 1 x 2500 word essay (60%)

SEMESTER: 2 (Spring term only)

**DESCRIPTION**

This module deals with the creative forms and critical commentaries of ordinary people – as opposed to the social and political elites – in Africa. The module introduces students to a range of popular expressive forms, such as fiction, theatre, music, film, fashion, and the media. The module questions how people articulate their disappointments, nostalgia and aspirations in times of resistance to colonial and postcolonial dominations, media revolution, and intensifying global cultural flows. And also asks how popular culture can play a didactic role in instilling community values, pushing back against oppressive regimes, or imparting new visions of the world.

For further information, please contact the current module convenor, Dr Juliet Gilbert: j.gilbert.2@bham.ac.uk

## **Political Anthropology**

MODULE CODE: 35012

CREDIT VALUE: 20

ASSESSMENT METHOD: 1 x 1500 word book review (40%) and 1 x 2500 word essay (60%)

SEMESTER: 2 (Spring term only)

**DESCRIPTION**

Anthropologists’ examination of politics have enabled the discipline to go beyond earlier anthropological concerns with order and function to investigate how power and agency shape societies and history. This course explores how anthropologists have discovered politics, examined multiple meanings and categories of the political and sought to make anthropology politically engaged. Students will explore the cultural foundations of politics and develop an appreciation of the contested and shifting boundaries between what is meant to be within and outside the domain of politics. The course will situate anthropological explorations of politics within the spaces of the state, the nation and in relation to multiple ideas of citizenship and subjectivity. Building on this, the course will help students appreciate anthropology’s unique contributions to the study of the interactions between state and non-state actors and how cultural ideas of statehood and government shape imaginations and practices of the political.

For further information, please contact the current module convenor, Dr Marco Di Nunzio, m.dinunzio@bham.ac.uk

## **Urban Anthropology**

MODULE CODE: 31888

CREDIT VALUE: 20

ASSESSMENT METHOD: 1 x 1500 word book review (40%) and 1 x 2500 word essay (60%)

SEMESTER: 2 (Spring term only)

**DESCRIPTION**

By 2050, 68% of the world population will live in cities, making the city, a particular kind of settlement, the dominant way of spatially organising livelihoods and communities. This module explores anthropological approaches to the study of the city. We will question the place of the urban in anthropological thinking and discuss whether anthropologists have carried out an anthropology of the city or an anthropology in the city. We will follow ethnographers as they investigate the city as a place of often contradictory forms of togetherness and interconnectedness, exclusion and segregation. The module will cover themes such as ethnographies of marginality and urban economies, popular culture and urban lifestyle, architecture and the built environment, infrastructure and global flows of capital in order to guide students through multiple meanings and experiences of the urban. Students will develop an understanding of how power dynamics, inequalities, identities and aesthetics shape how individuals and communities live, act, and imagine the future in cities,

For further information, please contact the current module convenor, Dr Marco Di Nunzio, m.dinunzio@bham.ac.uk