



Political ethnography

Presentation

This class aims to introduce students to ways of approaching politics using ethnographic methods. The aim is to understand the notion of politics "from below" (Thompson) or "grassroots politics" (Revel). This approach has been the object of much international interest for the last twenty years. We will first define its contours, methods, and specific lines of reasoning. In the second part of the class we will examine different social science traditions to better understand the specificity of this approach: history (microhistory, the history of everyday life, history "from below"), political science (with an emphasis on the literature about ordinary relationships to politics - "everyday politics"), sociology (in particular, in the French case, the importance of the research developed in the framework of the sociology of the working classes), anthropology (in particular by studying some of James Scott's texts on the "weapons of the weak" and the "arts of resistance").

Recommended Prerequisite(s)

General training in social science; No specific prerequisites.

In brief

Number of hours : 18.0

Year : Fifth year

Validation : Continuous assessment

Contacts

Responsible(s)

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Bibliography

- Collovald A. & Sawicki F., *Le populaire et le politique. Quelques pistes de recherche en guise d'introduction*, Politix, n°13, p. 7-20, 1991.
- Oeser A., *Introduction. Penser les rapports de domination avec Alf Lüdtke*, Sociétés contemporaines, n°99-100, p. 5-16, 2015.
- Schatz E., *Ethnographic Immersion and the Study of Politics*, in Edward Schatz (ed.), *Political Ethnography. What Immersion Contributes to the Study of Power*, The University of Chicago Press, p. 1-22, 2009.
- Scott J., *La domination et les arts de la résistance. Fragments du discours subalterne*, Paris, Éditions Amsterdam, 2008.
- Schwartz O., *L'empirisme irréductible. La fin de l'empirisme ?*, postface à Niels Anderson, Le Hobo, Paris, Nathan, p. 265-305, 1993.

Formule pédagogique

The class is organized in six 3-hour sessions. During the first hour, a text – studied by the students prior to the session - is discussed collectively. The texts chosen are based on empirical surveys and provide insights into the concrete methods for conducting political ethnography. In the second and third hours a more general theoretical lecture is delivered. It is divided into six chapters: The ethnographic approach; Political ethnography: first delineations; Political ethnography and political science; Political ethnography and sociology; Political ethnography and history; Political ethnography and anthropology; International terrains.