Methodological Seminar

Researching families and migration using qualitative methods:
methodological issues in the study on multi-ethnic/mixed families

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2 December 2016, 9h-12h, Lecl B090

Based on a study of multi-ethnic/mixed families living in Italy, this presentation discusses if and how qualitative methods are useful to investigate cultural and symbolic dimensions of relationships.

Living in a multi-ethnic family is a challenge that implies that the couple, the families of origin and the broadest social context allow and facilitate the possibility of combining differences and negotiation as best as possible. These families represent a micro example of the meaning of living in a multicultural society nowadays at the macro level. Differences and similarities are played out every day in the life course of the couple and their families, and requires that the entire family group itself (including previous generations) redefines family arrangements. It becomes necessary to rethink relational dynamics, but especially to reconsider the hierarchies of values, both individual and familial, due to the different cultural belonging of the partners.

This presentation will focus in particular on methodological and procedural aspects of qualitative research, showing the weaknesses and strengths of the life-histories technique in the light of our results.

In the second part of the seminar, participants are welcome to briefly present and discuss their research questions, methodology and field constraints in the second part of the seminar. Presentations will be held in English but questions can be formulated in French, Spanish and Italian. Please send a one-page description of your research questions and methodology by Friday 25 November (by email to isabella.crespi@unimc.it).

In order to help us organise this seminar, registration is compulsory and should be done by email before Friday 18 November (by email to Sandrine.leveque@uclouvain.be).