UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Social Mediation

2122-1-F8701N069

Learning objectives

The course takes place in an institution where students will encounter sufference in its perhaps most tragic dimension, that is to say prison.

In its first part it will introduce the meaning of mediation by paralleling that of Greek tragedy.

In the second part, the course will highlight how every person's story is intertwined to that of others, between individual and collective consciousness, like two confronting gazes.

The learning objective is therefore self development in order to face conflict situations and to be able to empatically connect in sufference and renewal.

Contents

Doing mediation implies taking care of so called antisocial/antilaw behaviors with unusual methods within the social-institutional context. These behaviors ted to produce feeelings of misunderstanding, guilt, revolt, resentment, betrayal, rage, vindictiveness, dishonor and humiliation. In order to do mediation then, one needs to be able to hold the fear of the potential

distructiveness of these social feeelings and learn to take a place*among*people who are immediately affected by them. It is from this non-place that the mediator tries to contact the source of those conflicts generating voidness, the isolation of people in conflict in their own version of facts, their emotions, their solitude and separation from the other.

Mediation, in the humanistic perspective of Jacqueline Morineau, wants to open a new space in contemporary

societies. It intends to open a path along which emotions, affects and social feelings, once revealed and/or violated, can be expressed through the participation to a new rite.

Detailed program

The spirit of mediation practice can be found in every gesture, every act provoking sufference and sorrow to anybody, it can be a space in which this pain can be narrated and listened to (A. Ceretti*, Introduzione* allo *Spirito della mediazione* di J. Morineau). The course takes place in an institution where students will encounter sufference in its perhaps most tragic dimension, that is to say prison. In its first part it will introduce the meaning of mediation by paralleling that of Greek tragedy. However, it proposes a more specific theme, the mediation with oneself, by digging into the abysses of one's soul in order to find one's own demons and to recognize them.

We'll talk about the mask as a metaphor of alter ego and whatever is different from us. Generally speaking, people have a misconception of the idea of mask: it is understood as a device to hide. The nature of a mask is its duplicity. It has to do with polarity: it looks over to the inside and to the outside, towards the world of humans and that of demons, towards light and towards darkness. Masks also keep together these two polarities. Naturally this ambivalence needs to be mediated. The mask represents a tendency towards unity rather than dispersion. In this sense it is meaningful to mention the double mask of Giano two-faced: god of doors towards the inside and the outside, young and old, from the past and from the future, lord of the two ways, gifted with the third eye that all can see, the frontal eye that collects diversity. So the mask, is intended as the object in which all the aspects of unity and plurality coexist.

If wearing a mask in antique and traditional societies allowed, during collective initiating rites, to loose one's own personality to find a new one, today, wearing a mask has the meaning of mediating with oneself and with the other. So working on conflict and on the mediation with self means coming to terms with our double, with our multiple identities and finally with the projections of our shadows.

The shadow, besides hidden, removed or unpleasant aspects, also has positive instincts, creative impulses and good qualities. This determines the conflict between the self and its shadow, solvable only if the individual is able to mediate between its parts and if dialogue is permitted. In other words, it is necessary to subsume the ambivalence, the uncertainty, the recognition of one's own partiality and precariousness to start a process of inner transformation by welcoming what appears as dark and obscure and to ricompose our divided parts.

Prerequisites

Characteristics of admission and availability to enter the Institution of reclusion

Teaching methods

The course will be held inside the Prison of Opera (Milan). It will alternate interactive sessions with group work, role games and mediation practices. Attendance is encouraged in order to fully understand mediation practices in prison.

Language of the course will be Italian.

Assessment methods

The test will be oral and is the discussion of a written essay, which can be individually or group based, on a chosen topic of mediation agreed with the faculty.

If the essay is written by a group of students, it also needs to be presented in a theatrical form of max 12 mins.

Textbooks and Reading Materials

For attending students, a bibliography will be presented during the course.

For not attending students:

Mandatory:

AA.VV, *Università@Carcere. Il divenire della coscienza: conflitto, mediazione, perdono*, Anima edizioni, Milano 2015.

J. Morineau, *Lo spirito della mediazione*, Franco Angeli Milano 2003.

A. Giasanti, Ombre. *Il lato oscuro della società e la nuova etica*, Franco Angeli, Milano 2011.

Per choice:

AA.VV. Il carcere in città. La voce, il gesto, il tratto e la parola ovvero l'arte come evasione comune (a cura di I. Castiglioni, A. Giasanti, L. Natali), Franco Angeli Milano 2019.

A. Carotenuto, *I sotterranei dell'anima*, Bompiani, Milano 1993,

2008, pp.73-79.

A. Pizzorno, *Saggio sulla maschera* in "Studi culturali", II,1, 2005.