



UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Ethics of Relationship. Theory and Practice

2122-2-F8501R035

Course title

Other, stranger, foreign. Three philosophical categories for pedagogy today.

Topics and course structure

Educational action daily encounters the stranger and the foreign. Pedagogical theories are therefore called to face the phenomenon of the coming of the other and to explore its meaning in its different dimensions. But how many are the conceptualizations of otherness and how many are the figures of strangeness? How to define the foreigner, with historical, cultural, anthropological, legal, political and especially philosophical references? Finally, how to elaborate local pedagogical practices and a pedagogy of hospitality, in the light of the new characteristics of migrations? The idea of combining an ethics of hospitality with welcoming politics clashes with the paradoxes of identity boundaries. Three factors are necessary: 1. conceptual analysis (identity, difference, otherness, plurality); 2. history of ideas (the stranger in the models of Athens, Rome, Jerusalem and for enlightenment tradition); 3. Phenomenological description of the experience of encounter with strangeness. The major theoretical references will be Jacques Derrida's deconstructionist approach and Bernhard Waldenfels's phenomenological approach; alongside these will be discussed the critical positions of Donatella Di Cesare and Michel Agier. In the background there will be the model of cosmopolitan right of universal hospitality formulated by Immanuel Kant and the figure of refugee according to Hannah Arendt.

Objectives

The aim of this course in relational ethics is to provide the student with the theoretical tools required to read educational phenomena and relationships – with educational consultancy and coordination roles in mind – and with a focus on ethics.

Specific learning objectives:

1. Knowledge and understanding of the main theoretical models explored during the course.
2. Independent critical reflection on course contents.
3. Ability to apply course knowledge and models to specific situations and contexts

Methodologies

Introductory lectures and discussions on the course's key themes and theoretical bases; guided analysis of the course books; active learning sessions based on audio-visual materials and worksheets; joint recap sessions based on outlines presented in PowerPoint or guest lectures.

Online and offline teaching materials

Course books, PowerPoint presentations, worksheets and other documents for individual exercises and group work, audio-visual materials.

Programme and references for attending students

The course is divided into three parts: 1. First part, introductory and preparatory: the possible variants of pedagogy of hospitality, through a comparison with intercultural models; conceptual distinctions and history of ideas relating to the grammar of the stranger; the cultural scenarios: Europe and the coming of the other: *hospes*, *xenos*, *gher* (Di Cesare). 2. Theoretical debate and discussion of the experiences and experimentations of encounter with migrants, between unconditional right to hospitality and finished welcoming politics. Paradoxes generated by Kant's model based on international law and cosmopolitan right; refugee concept and condition according to Arendt; the coming of the other, between unconditionality and ambiguity, hospitality and hostility, the "crime of hospitality" according to Derrida; Agier's variants: public hospitality, domestic hospitality, municipal hospitality, widespread hospitality. 3. Man as a border-being and strangeness as the constitutive character of experience in its phenomenological components, according to Waldenfels. Responsive rationality and the moving boundaries of the relationship between proper and stranger: body, space, time. The polysemic perspectives of the phenomenon: the exteriority, the stranger, the strange, the extraordinary; relative strangeness and radical strangeness.

Bibliography

- D. Di Cesare, *Stranieri residenti. Una filosofia delle migrazioni*, Bollati Boringhieri, Torino 2017, only pp. 159-201 (tot. pag. 42)
- H. Arendt, "Noi profughi", in *Ebraismo e modernità*, Feltrinelli, Milano 1986, only pp. 35-49 (tot. pag. 14)
- H. Arendt, "Il tramonto dello stato nazione e la fine dei diritti umani", in *Le origini del totalitarismo*, Einaudi, Torino 2009, only pp. 372-419 (tot. pag. 47)
- J. Derrida, *Sull'ospitalità*, Baldini & Castoldi, Milano 2000, only pp. 39-132 (tot. pag. 93)
- J. Derrida, *Cosmopoliti di tutti i paesi, ancora uno sforzo*, Cronopio, Napoli 1997 (tot. pag. 44)
- I. Kant, *Per la pace perpetua*, Feltrinelli, Milano 2014, only pp. 43-107 (tot. pag. 64).
- M. Agier, *Lo straniero che viene. Ripensare l'ospitalità*, Cortina, Milano 2020, only pp. 15-165 (tot. pag. 150)
- B. Waldenfels, *Fenomenologia dell'estraneo*, Cortina, Milano 2008 (tot. pag. 157)
- A. Camus, "L'ospite", in *L'esilio e il regno*; Bompiani, Milano 2018, pp. 71-89 (tot. pag. 19)

Programme and references for non-attending students

The course is divided into three parts: 1. First part, introductory and preparatory: the possible variants of pedagogy of hospitality, through a comparison with intercultural models; conceptual distinctions and history of ideas relating to the grammar of the stranger; the cultural scenarios: Europe and the coming of the other: *hospes*, *xenos*, *gher* (Di Cesare). 2. Theoretical debate and discussion of the experiences and experimentations of encounter with migrants, between unconditional right to hospitality and finished welcoming politics. Paradoxes generated by Kant's model based on international law and cosmopolitan right; refugee concept and condition according to Arendt; the coming of the other, between unconditionality and ambiguity, hospitality and hostility, the "crime of hospitality" according to Derrida; Agier's variants: public hospitality, domestic hospitality, municipal hospitality, widespread hospitality. 3. Man as a border-being and strangeness as the constitutive character of experience in its phenomenological components, according to Waldenfels. Responsive rationality and the moving boundaries of the relationship between proper and stranger: body, space, time. The polysemic perspectives of the phenomenon: the exteriority, the stranger, the strange, the extraordinary; relative strangeness and radical strangeness.

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Assessment methods

Attending students: oral exam.

Assessment will consist of a final oral examination of the student's knowledge of the course material (required reading) and the topics discussed in class. The examiner will evaluate candidates' ability to critically analyze, rework, and apply the philosophical categories studied.

More specifically, in relation to the criteria laid down in the official annual course description (SUA_Cds):

- With respect to *Organizing knowledge of multiple theoretical models, methods and instruments*, the oral examiner will ask candidates questions designed to verify their knowledge of the theoretical models presented during the course.
- With respect to *Analyzing, understanding and interpreting problems affecting educational settings*, the oral examiner will verify candidates' ability to read and interpret, in light of the models presented during the course, concrete problems, situations, and settings, by inviting them to discuss case studies analyzed in class or their own experience in the education sector.
- With respect to *Preparing for educational consultancy*, in the course of the oral examination, the examiner will assess candidates' awareness of the complexity of consultancy practice and their ability to reflect on and rework associated meanings and problems.

Non-attending students: oral exam.

As above, except that the questions will evaluate the student's knowledge of the prescribed reading materials without reference to the additional analysis conducted in class.

Office hours

Prof. Vergani receives students on Wednesday from 11.00 to 13.00. Tel. 4896 U6 4th Floor, Room 4146 (students requiring an appointment should request it in advance via email). Routine information may be requested via email, or before or after classes.

Programme validity

The current programme is valid for two academic years.

Course tutors and assistants
