



UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

History of Philosophy

2223-2-E2401P076

Learning area

Learning area III. Knowledge of an interdisciplinary nature

Learning objectives

Knowledge and understanding

- Define, from the point of view of the history of ideas, a given theoretical question.
- Read a philosophical or a psychological text, putting it in connection, on the one hand, with a tradition of thought and, on the other hand, with a specific theoretical problem.

Applying knowledge and understanding

- Identify the complexity of the philosophical and psychological questions, identifying their intersection with the other human sciences and with the social reality.
- Use the acquired abilities in new theoretical contexts.

Contents

What is consciousness?

Can we go beyond the mind-body duality?

Contingency and necessity

Beyond the dualism of individual and environment

Biological and social determination of personality and freedom

Time and consciousness
The notion of Ego
Mind and brain. Neuroscience in discussion

Detailed program

What is conscience? What is its emergence in human psychic life (and also in animal life, see for example the research of the neuroscientist Giorgio Vallortigara) and what is the function of this experiential moment, which perhaps, after the twentieth-century revolution of depth psychology, may also be considered in part marginal within the globality of the phenomena of the mind, but which maintains a centrality, which is the same as that connected to the notion of ego (at least in part, the Freudian ego, for example, is an eminently unconscious instance)? Investigating the psychic phenomenon of consciousness means finding oneself in front of complex and unavoidable issues, starting from the body-mind dualism in its different variants, from the traditional philosophical-metaphysical one, which sees in Descartes its main and best known representative, up to the contemporary elaborations of neuroscience, and to the question of the ego, the self and the unity of the person. In fact, exploring the nature and dimensions of awareness brings us back to the question of the unity of psychic life, awareness being first and foremost, directly or sideways, awareness of that spontaneous but debated and controversial notion that is usually called "self". The topic of consciousness will be dealt with taking into consideration its neurobiological dimension. One objective of the course is in fact to discuss the extent of the contribution of neuroscience to the question of conscience and related topics (brain and mind above all).

- The texts of the exam bibliography will be read and commented on during the course, the problems encountered explained and contextualized.
- The exam program is the same for attending and non-attending students

Prerequisites

Specific previous knowledges are not required

Teaching methods

Lecture, texts reading and commentary, discussion on the analysed topics

Assessment methods

Oral examination, aiming at evaluating:
the knowledges acquired;
the ability of reconstruction the arguments of the texts;
the adequacy in using the specific language;
the critical ability to connect and compare the conceptual problems encountered in the texts. There is no provision for in itinere tests

Textbooks and Reading Materials

An anthology of texts prepared by the teacher.

The texts will be made available to students, of course in accordance with publishing laws, through the elearning platform. For any question students can write to me directly at marco.vanzulli@unimib.it

Sustainable Development Goals
