UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

History of Contemporary Philosophy

2627-3-E1901R100

Course title

RECOGNITION INTERPRETED FROM THE MARXIST TRADITION

Topics and course structure

Course topics and structure

This year's course aims to focus on a phenomenon that characterises social relationships in general: recognition. Recognition comes into play when we encounter people from places that are unfamiliar or only vaguely familiar to us, when one of the parties involved asks to be allowed 'their own' space and/or to be recognised for 'who they are', or when, quite simply, they ask to be able to express themselves freely, etc. These situations can be interpreted in 'intimist' or phenomenological terms, but they can also be interpreted – and this is what will be proposed in class – by moving beyond the individualistic (which focuses on the self isolated from the world) and dualistic (self-other) dynamics to frame the issue at the level of structure and society as a whole.

An **introductory section** of the course will be devoted to setting out the general framework within which the subsequent lectures will take place, providing broad philosophical guidelines and basic concepts that will enable students to engage with the texts and authors even without specific philosophical expertise.

A **first part** will be devoted to presenting the overall theoretical framework within which relations of recognition can be conceived. We will examine the first part of Marx and Engels' *German Ideology*, which is devoted to a critical analysis of Feuerbach's thought.
The course will provide students with knowledge and skills useful for training in view of the various working environments indicated in the didactic regulations of the CdS of Educational Sciences, from School Institutions, Educational Services, Local Authorities, the third sector and the private social sector, to informal and non-formal education in general. It will enable the acquisition of skills and knowledge functional to the role of professional

educator and educator and of technicians and techniques of social reintegration and integration.

A **second section** will be devoted to the way in which Fanon reinterprets and critiques the Hegelian master-slave dialectic. Fanon will enable us to reflect on the structural inequalities arising from processes of racialisation and segregation.

A **third section** will explore the ideological social structures that shape physical and mental education, from which each individual approaches others in various processes of recognition.

A **fourth section** will focus on further analysis of the framework presented, enabling us to develop certain reflections by K. Crenshaw and T. Morrison.

The **final section** will be devoted to the way in which C. Guillaumin interprets the pervasiveness of racist ideology in the processes of recognition within contemporary European societies.

It will enable the acquisition of all the skills necessary to pass the examination.

Previous specific philosophical knowledge is not required.

For any requirements, the lecturer is available for clarification meetings.

Objectives

The course will provide students with useful knowledge and skills to train for the various fields of work indicated in the teaching regulations of the Education Sciences degree programme, from educational institutions to educational services, local authorities, the third sector and the private social sector, and informal and non-formal education in general. It will enable students to acquire skills and knowledge that are functional to the role of professional educators and technicians in social reintegration and integration.
This course aims to support the following learning outcomes in particular:
1. Knowledge and understanding
– Develop a critical and articulated knowledge of the dynamics involved in recognition and what recognition activates;
2. Applied knowledge and understanding
– Apply concepts, knowledge and a critical epistemological perspective useful for dealing with educational situations and issues;
3. Independent judgement
– Acquire and consolidate analytical and critical thinking skills relevant to educational situations, taking reflective and proactive ethical, political and epistemological positions.
4. Communication skills
– Development of the ability to communicate effectively the dynamics of relationships and their socio-institutional implications in different work contexts, with the consequent ability to activate appropriate procedures with both professional and non-professional partners;
5. Learning skills
– Ability to understand, interpret and evaluate complex situations of interaction, and to be able to act appropriately within them, taking into account the various social factors at play;
– Ability to organise and rework knowledge;
– Ability to identify methods and tools to support one's own and others' personal and professional growth;
– Ability to understand the implications and repercussions of professional activities on socio-political processes.

Methodologies

The course is delivered through 32 hours (76%) of traditional teaching and 10 hours (24%) of interactive teaching, for a total of 42 hours *in person*. The two methods are alternated.
The types of teaching used are:

1. lectures with theoretical explanations and conceptual analysis;
2. videos that will be shown in the classroom and accompanied by group discussion (these may be the subject of short reflection papers at the request of the student);
3. **participatory learning through the active involvement of students in critical discussions and practical exchanges** between peers and with the teacher on problematic issues in applying the philosophical concepts being learned, through the analysis of documents, viewing of films, and group work with feedback in the classroom.
   The course is taught in Italian.

Online and offline teaching materials

The teaching materials used during the course will be made available to students in parallel with the lectures.
Texts required for the examination can be requested to the lecturer if difficult to find.

Programme and references

Mandatory texts:
1. K. Marx, F. Engels, *Ideologia tedesca*, Editori Riuniti, Roma 1975 (edizione integrale): pp. 5-70.

2. Frantz Fanon, *Pelle nera maschere bianche*, ETS, Pisa 2015 (capp. IV e VII)

3 Toni Morrison, *Giochi al buio*, Sperling & Kupfer, 1994 (passi scelti)

4. One of the following two texts:
a. K. Crenshaw, *Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics*, University of Chicago Legal Forum: Vol. 1989, Article 8 (https://chicagounbound.uchicago.edu/uclf/vol1989/iss1/8/).
b. C. Guillaumin, *L'ideologia razzista*, Il Melangolo (pp. 25-164; 229-250)

If you find different editions or a different year of publication, please contact the lecturer.

Optional supplementary texts:

- G.W.F. Hegel, *Fenomenologia dello spirito*, La Nuova Italia, Firenze 1973, 2 voll.: vol. 1, pp. 66-78; 143-164.
  If the student finds it helpful, their understanding of Hegel's text can be aided by the use of Jean Hyppolite, *Genesi e struttura della "Fenomenologia dello spirito" di Hegel*, La Nuova Italia, 1999, pp. 7-97 (Parte I. Aspetti generali della "Fenomenologia"), pp. 173-230 (Parte III. Dall'autocoscienza naturale all'autocoscienza universale).

- V. Carofalo, *Un pensiero dannato. Frantz Fanon e la politica del riconoscimento*, Mimesis, Milano-Udine 2013 (cap. III)

Assessment methods

There are no ongoing assessments. **Only the final exam is required**, which consists of an **oral interview**.
The choice of an oral interview as the exam method is consistent with the objectives of the course, as it allows for interaction with the student through dialogue, thereby assessing their critical understanding of the course topics, their philosophical analysis, and their ability to connect theory and practice.

There are two possible examination methods. Each student is free to choose which method they prefer.
(1) The first examination method, consisting of questions, assesses knowledge of the texts and the ability to develop a reflective, analytical and critical argument around the core concepts highlighted in the texts. The exam begins with each student presenting a topic of their choice, followed by one or more questions on the other exam topics.
(2) The second exam method requires students to independently prepare a speech lasting a minimum of 10 minutes and a maximum of 15 minutes, exploring one or more topics covered in the course programme. When presenting their speech, students must make explicit and precise reference to concepts, authors and theories found in the texts indicated in the exam bibliography and to at least one of the activities proposed during the course. At the end of the speech, students may be asked some in-depth questions relating to their knowledge of the texts and topics covered in the course. At the request of the student, the presentation of the paper produced in relation to the material used in class may be assessed.

At the request of the student, the presentation of alternative topics for further study, previously agreed with the lecturer, may be assessed.

The *final mark* takes into account the assessment of three aspects (whose weight in the final mark is expressed as a percentage in brackets):

- knowledge of the concepts and topics covered in the texts to be studied and the ability to establish connections between the main thematic areas covered (50%) (according to the Dublin descriptors, the following are assessed: Knowledge and understanding);
- ability to articulate discourse and develop analysis (20%) (according to the Dublin descriptors, the following are assessed: Learning ability; Application of knowledge and applied understanding; Independence of judgement);
- language and presentation skills (30%) (according to the Dublin descriptors, the following are assessed: Communication skills).

Assessment will be on a 30-point scale, based on the following grading scale:

1. Unsatisfactory
   Insufficient preparation on the main topics covered in the syllabus and course reading list; very limited and scarcely independent ability to argue, analyse and think critically; insufficient ability to link theory and practice and to identify relevant connections between the texts and course topics; incorrect presentation skills and use of subject-specific vocabulary.

2. Pass – Pass with distinction (18–23)
   General preparation, and in some respects uncertain or incomplete, on various topics covered in the syllabus and course reading list; ability to argue, analyse and engage in critical thinking at times limited and lacking in independence; difficulty in linking theory and practice and in identifying relevant connections between the texts and course themes; presentation skills and subject-specific vocabulary partially correct.

3. Fair (24–27)
   Adequate preparation on the main topics covered in the syllabus and course reading list, but lacking in depth on some more specific themes; ability to argue, analyse and engage in critical thinking is present, but

not always precise or independent; fair ability to connect theory and practice and to identify relevant links between the texts and course themes; presentation skills and subject-specific vocabulary are generally correct.

4. Good – Excellent (28–30/30)
   Comprehensive and in-depth knowledge of the topics covered in the syllabus and course reading list; ability to argue, analyse and engage in structured, independent critical thinking; good/excellent ability to link theory and practice and to identify relevant connections between the texts and the course topics; good/excellent presentation skills and command of the subject-specific vocabulary.

Office hours

The lecturer is available to students by appointment, in person or remotely, to be arranged by e-mail.

Programme validity

2 years

Course tutors and assistants

Sustainable Development Goals

QUALITY EDUCATION | GENDER EQUALITY | REDUCED INEQUALITIES