# Philosophy of Religions

## Prof. Dario Sacchi

***COURSE AIMS AND INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES***

The course aims to provide students with the tools to critically approach the “religious fact”, by highlighting its fundamental structures and retracing some phases of the reflection carried out on it in a significant historical moment: the central decades of the 19th century when, even in the context of the debate on the Hegelian heritage, the attention of many of the leading thinkers tends to focus more and more on the anthropological and existential implications of religion in general, and of Christianity in particular.

In particular, the intended learning outcomes are to:

1) promote critical reflection on some supporting structures of the religious discourse, dealing with the cultural and anthropological orientations that define religion as a fundamental moment of human experience;

2) promote a historical and philosophical understanding of the religious debates that have contributed to the definition of a religious vocabulary over time;

3) analyse in a critical way the different texts that make the reader feel “what religion is about”.

At the end of the course, students will be able to:

1) reflect on the categories of the religious *iuxta propria principia*, in a constructive debate with other human expressions;

2) acquire the critical distance that only historical distance can bring, in order to understand, assess, and appreciate different “phenomena”;

3) read texts with an analytical approach, use a proper language and develop proper argumentation skills.

***COURSE CONTENT***

In the first semester, with an institutional function, the following questions will be dealt with in a systematic way: What do we mean by religion, if experience confronts us with so many religions that are so different? Is religion something that can be rationally discussed? Is the belief in God true or false? If God exists then why does evil exist? Does religion really offer an answer to man's quest for meaning? Is there a true religion?

In the second semester, we will ask ourselves which religious and metaphysical perspectives are compatible with human freedom and, more generally, what meaning freedom may have in a theological context: as a starting point for such reflections we will examine the position taken on this by F. W. J. Schelling, also revisited in light of some contemporary interpretations.

***READING LIST***

For the first semester:

A. Aguti, *Filosofia della religione. Storia, temi, problemi*, La Scuola, Brescia.

Further information will be provided during the course.

For the second semester:

F. W. J. Schelling, *Ricerche filosofiche sull’essenza della libertà umana*, various editions. Further information on this second part will be provided during the course.

***TEACHING METHOD***

Classroom lectures.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

Oral exams at the end of the course. In the assessment, elements such as the following will be particularly appreciated: clarity of presentation, the use of an adequate subject-specific lexicon and the ability to critically argue the topics addressed, also through the comment on the texts examined during the course.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

There are no prerequisites for attending the course.

Further information can be found on the lecturer's webpage at http://docenti.unicatt.it/web/searchByName.do?language=ENG, or on the Faculty notice board.