# History of Contemporary Philosophy (Second-level degree)

## Prof. Giuseppe D'Anna

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

Pandemics and wars give a picture of us as of a civilization in crisis. The question is the following: what can philosophy do in the face of crisis, in the face of the possibility of the destruction of human life? The contemporary era has already faced events of radical gravity and philosophy has themed and addressed them from different perspectives. The course aims to examine the thought of Albert Schweitzer, a culture theologian and philosopher very dear to Cassirer, with the purpose to show how he addressed the role that philosophy must have in the face of a civilization crisis. In fact, Schweitzer argued that philosophy cannot be asleep in moments of danger, but, like a sentinel, its task is to keep watch and, through the tools it has forged throughout history, show humanity the way forward and the respect for life and the common good.

1. Provide students with an overall historical-philosophical and critical-conceptual framework of Albert Schweitzer's general thought.

2. Conduct an analysis of Schweitzer's position on the concepts of crisis, philosophy, civilisation, history of philosophy, respect for life.

3. Analytically and critically testing Schweitzer's theoretical-conceptual and historical-philosophical positions with respect to current reality.

By the end of the course, students will:

1. Be acquainted with and have gained in-depth knowledge about Albert Schweitzer’s thought in general and, more specifically, regarding the concepts detailed in course objective no. 2.

2. have acquired and developed the ability to apply the philosophical lexicon and conceptual devices learned by analysing the text to the historical and philosophical context examined on the course, and also to apply the same skills to other historical and philosophical contexts.

3. be able to communicate and explain philosophical theories in relation to the topics covered, taking into account the conceptual devices and lexical tools acquired on the course.

***COURSE CONTENT***

Oggetto d’analisi del corso sarà costituito dall’opera di Schweitzer *Filosofia della cività*. Dopo una prima e attenta introduzione al pensiero dell’autore, verrà preso in considerazione analiticamente il modo in cui Schweitzer, opponendosi a soluzioni irrazionali e pessimistiche del concetto di crisi, tematizza, attraverso un’attenta analisi della storia della filosofia, le soluzioni filosofiche, razionalmente e spiritualmente fondate, attraverso le quali è possibile prevedere e uscire da ogni crisi di carattere globale che metta seriamente a rischio l’esistenza stessa dell’umanità. È in questa prospettiva che Schweitzer formula il suo principio del “rispetto per la vita”.

***READING LIST***

A. Schweitzer, *Filosofia della civiltà,* a cura di Sossio Giametta, Fazi, Roma 2014.

***TEACHING METHOD***

The course will be delivered by means of lectures with active student participation. Students can also submit papers for presentation and discussion during the course. Visiting experts on Schweitzer will also hold seminars in which students will be invited to interact. The material available to the student will be optimised with the support of the Blackboard platform on the University website ([*http://blackboard.unicatt.it*](about:blank)).

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

Students will be assessed by means of an oral exam.

The exam is designed to ascertain: 1) that students have read the course texts closely and in full; 2) students’ ability to present the content and logical structure of these texts faithfully and accurately; 3) students’ aptitude for presenting arguments and clearly expressing even difficult and complex concepts; 4) student’s use of appropriate style and lexicon.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

Students must have a text bookish knowledge of the history of contemporary philosophy. Further information may be provided at the beginning of lectures and posted on the lecturer’s noticeboard in the Department of Philosophy (Edificio Gregorianum, 3rd floor, room 308).

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.