Moral Philosophy

## Prof. Alessio Musio

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

The course aims to introduce students to the study of moral philosophy, along a path that crosses the fundamental *figures* : that of *freedom*, in the face of the not obvious alternative between *good* and *evil*; of *decision*, in its connection with the topic of *renunciation*; of *sincerity*, in opposition to the experiences of *lies* and *bad faith*; of *relationships*, in terms of the alternative between *indifference* andrespect for *oneness*.

At the end of the course, students will thus be able to outline a moral reflection commensurate with the challenges of the present time, knowing how to recognise opportunities and limits of the *subjectivistic* ethical background that, while stripping the importance of the moral alternatives themselves, seems to render *money* the only common language, impoverishing relationships and the human experience itself.

***COURSE CONTENT***

In the first part, the course aims to clarify the meaning of ethics, highlighting what makes it inevitable *to decide* and *choose* and taking into account the limited nature of what can be *known about* oneself and others (a topic that opens up during the course of the discussion around the figure of the *secret*). Hence the question will be asked to what extent man is able to *control* his own existential story, opening up to the ethical declination of *sovereignty*. Through the negative *figures* of *resentment*, *melancholy* and *bad faith*,we will then try to reflect on the conditions of a *morally good* life, in order to outline an *ethic of relationships* capable of respecting the *value* of personal *uniqueness* beyond the *indifference* of always substitutable and replaceablerelationships.

The second part of the course aims to propose, through the reading of a classic of twentieth-century philosophy, such as Georg Simmel's *Filosofia del denaro* , a path that helps students think *first-hand* about the meaning and impact of *money* on the human experience, within a reality that now seems incapable of opposing any resistance to its grip; the aim is to respond to the continuous and creeping education towards cynicism and indifference typical of the evolution of monetary civilisation itself.

Summary table of contents:

– The notion of the "human condition": subjectivity and freedom. The other as a "secret" and the revelation of the self.

– Describe, evaluate, hierarchise. The implication between choice and renunciation, the hierarchy of goods and its non-arbitrary character.

– The question of moral temporality, or rather, the attitude that man must have towards his past, present and future.

– The role of money in the human experience: its association with the desire between emptiness and lack, the reversal of the "means to an end" relationship, the dissolution of the fundamental distinction between *people* and *things*.

***READING LIST***

A. Musio, *Chiaroscuri. Figure dell’ethos,* Vita e Pensiero, Milan, 2017.

G. Simmel*, Filosofia del denaro*, trad. it. A. Cavalli - L. Petrucchi, Ledizioni, Milano 2019 (in particolar: pp. 5-38; pp. 179-243 and pp. 307-367).

***TEACHING METHOD***

Lectures. Three hours per week.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

The oral examination assesses the following: 1) students’ understanding of the reading material; 2) their ability to present contents; 3) their ability to discuss and clearly express course topics whilst identifying connections between them; 4) students’ mastery of appropriate language; 5) accuracy and effectiveness of presentation.

Above all, students should demonstrate their understanding of key topics discussed during the course. During the oral examination they should show that they are able to navigate between basic topics and issues discussed during the course, with particular reference to: the relationship between choice and the sacrifice of constructing one’s own moral identity; the methodological and ethical distinction between moments of description and assessment; the link between subjectivism and sovranity; sincerity towards oneself and others; the role of indifference in human relations.

Students will be assessed on accuracy of their answers, use of specific terminology, construction and consistency of argumentation, ability to identify links between concepts and open questions.

Assessment:

30 with honours: excellent, sound knowledge, excellent expressive skills, complete understanding of concepts and topics.

30: very good, complete knowledge, accurate and well-articulated expressive skills.

27-29: good, satisfactory knowledge, generally accurate expressive skills.

24-26: quite good expression, but not complete and not always accurate.

21-23: generally good but superficial knowledge. Expression often not appropriate.

18-21: sufficient.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

Given that this course is *introductory*, there are no prerequisites for attendance. However, students should be interested and be intellectually curious about moral philosophy and are advised to consult a book on the history of philosophy for in-depth study of references made to writers during the course.

In case the current Covid-19 health emergency does not allow frontal teaching, remote teaching will be carried out following procedures that will be promptly notified to students.

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.