# Ethics of the earth

## Prof. Roberto Maier

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

The course offers to the students a critical approach to the paradigm of sustainability, showing how philosophy, particularly moral philosophy and anthropology, can contribute to clarify implicit ideas in different models of sustainability.

L’insegnamento propone agli studenti un approccio critico al tema della sostenibilità, mostrando loro come il pensiero filosofico — con particolare attenzione al profilo antropologico ed etico — possa contribuire a chiarire i presupposti talvolta impliciti di diversi modelli di sostenibilità.

Learning outcomes:

KNOWLEDGE AND COMPREHENSION

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

* Understand moral and anthropological issues connected with sustainability in its different models.
* Recognize the existence of different epistemological models, understanding their paradigms (sometimes implicit), appreciating their gains, and identifying their limits.
* Understand the gains and the pertinence of a phenomenological approach, rooted in the analysis of human experience and its complexity, rather than in abstract schemes and theories.

USE OF KNOWLEDGE AND COMPREHENSION

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

* Dwell in the complexity of human experience, with a plurality of sources and an open dialogue, without being stuck in conflictual contrapositions and mutual excommunications.
* Use the philosophical instruments to overcome the tension between anthropocentrism and ecocentrism, through a better understanding of the nexus nature-culture.
* Assess the anthropological impact of choices made in the ambit of sustainability, considering the symbolic dimension, often neglected by the most common models.
* Acknowledge the importance of education towards a real sharing between the stakeholders.

AUTONOMY OF JUDGEMENT

At the end of the course, it is desirable that the student (to whom not solutions, rather instruments will be given) can gain a critical conscience and an autonomy of judgement to understand the contemporary debate about the ecological crisis.

COMMUNICATION SKILLS

At the end of the course, the student will have understood the gains of a dialogical approach and will be more inclined to a common thought.

LEARNING ABILITIES

At the end of the course, the student will have understood and possibly interiorized the necessity to continue his knowledge of human experience, drawing not only from moral philosophy, but also from the symbolical world and from the esthetic experience (art, poetry, literature)

### **COURSE CONTENT**

1. The beginning of the ecological movement: new moral issues. A cosmos ‘without shelter’, the right to existence, the unaware evil.
2. Overcoming the critic to anthropocentrism. A possible ecological anthropology, beyond the subjective/objective simplification.
3. The ecological movement: Deep ecology and Shallow ecology.
4. The environmental concern outside the ecological movement: the European critic to capitalism
5. Gains and ambiguity of the paradigm of sustainability.
6. The critic to technocracy. Conviviality and sustainability.
7. The symbolical role of money.
8. Science, anti-science, fake news. The Cartesian dream and its end in the post-modern society.
9. Animal welfare as a chance to rethink the Living. Phenomenology of perception (M. Merleau-Ponty). A possible dialogue with neuro-sciences?
10. Transhumanism and post-humanism. Is it time to forget the subject?

### **BIBLIOGRAFIA**

The lecturer will upload his notes on Blackboard, with full bibliography both for attending and non-attending students.

M. Tallacchini (ed.), *Etiche della Terra. Antologia di filosofia dell’ambiente*, Vita & Pensiero, Milano 1998.

More bibliography will be uploaded on Blackboard, together with the slides used during the lectures.

### **TEaching method**

The course involves the use of different teaching methods: lectures, discussion of business cases, practical exercises, and group work.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

The methods of assessment are the following:

1. Oral exam for all the students: two questions, one chosen buy the student (60% of the final grade), one question chosen by the examiner (40% of the final grade). The student will show the understanding of the main ideas and of the proposed authors. Every personal elaboration and ability to argue with consistency will also be appreciated. Andendig students will also be evaluated for every intervention.
2. Students who wish can prepare a groupwork (2-4 components, 60% of the final grade) about a topic previously decided with the lecturer. These students will have to pass an oral exam anyway, with a question chosen by the examiner (40% of the final grade). The ability to work in group will also be evaluated.

### **PREREQUISITES**

Being an introductive course, no prerequisites are required about contents. Intellectual curiosity will be necessary.

### **OFFICE HOURS FOR STUDENTS**

The students can reach the lecturer both online and in presence. The contact informations are available on the lecturer’s personal page: <http://docenti.unicatt.it/>