PL/TH300 – Citizenship and Religion in a Multicultural society: a New Clash of Identities in Italy and Europe?

PROF. ALESSANDRA GEROLIN – PROF. PAOLO MONTI

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In recent years, European societies have become increasingly pluralistic and religiously diverse. In particular, the influx of migrants and refugees coming from the nearby regions of North Africa, Middle East and the Balkans has determined the presence of an unprecedented variety of cultures and religions in Italy and in Europe. This situation has been challenging traditional views of citizenship, national sovereignty and common goods. Besides the risk of cultural and social conflicts, embodied by the rise of international terrorism, the current situation represents a unique occasion to reflect on crucial features of social life as well as to engage a transformative public debate with old and new neighbours. The course explores perspectives that philosophers and political theorists have been articulating to understand these changes and the new role of citizenship in an age of unprecedented religious and cultural diversity.

COURSE CONTENTS

The course will cover the following subjects:
- From the Italian city of the XIII century to the European Union in a global world: shifting models of citizenship and political participation
- The thin line between private and public space: why does politics matter to us?
- Migration and cultures: cultural pluralism as a social fact and as a philosophical problem
- Secularization and Post-secularization: the public significance of religions in a changing society
- Fear and conflict: the problem of violent extremism and the strategies for peace

PREREQUISITES

No specific background is required.

METHOD OF TEACHING

The course is based on four complementary approaches:
1. Case studies that illustrate situations of conflict, integration, or public controversy across the past and recent history of Europe.
2. Lectures that present the philosophical articulation of the problems at stake and the contribution to their solution that comes from the history of ethical and political ideas.
3. Questions and open discussion.
4. Final assignment to be presented and discussed in the final weeks of the course.
COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Students are expected to:
   a. Regularly attend class sessions and actively contribute to in-class debate
   b. Deliver one assignment and present it to the class in the final two weeks of the course
   c. Take two written tests: a mid-term exam and a final exam

CREDITS

6 ECTS

GRADING

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<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage of Final Grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>Attendance and class participation</td>
<td>20 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>Home assignments + class presentation</td>
<td>20 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm exam</td>
<td>30 %</td>
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<td>Final written exam</td>
<td>30 %</td>
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COURSE READINGS AND MATERIALS

The lecturer's slides will be available on Blackboard after the lessons.

RULES OF CONDUCT

Exam dates communicated in the syllabus for the midterm and final cannot be re-scheduled. Unexcused absences will result in a failing grade.

In cases of unforeseeable circumstances such as illness or injury on the day of the exams, the student must submit a medical certificate and communicate his/her absence to the Professor and UCSC International Office via email prior to the exam. If the student does not justify his/her absence through sufficient documentation and with adequate notice before the final test, the student will receive an automatic Failed.

SCHEDULE

Lesson 1: Course overview and introduction to the topic: Public and private spheres
Lesson 2: A philosophical history of Europe I: Italian Middle Ages
Lesson 3: A philosophical history of Europe II: Wars of religion and revolutions
Lesson 4: A philosophical history of Europe III: Totalitarianisms and others evils
Lesson 5: A philosophical history of Europe IV: Liberal democracies and justice
Lesson 6: Building a cathedral: the case of Milan (Guest speaker)
Lesson 7: Private and common goods. Why we need the others
Lesson 8: Bound together: communities, citizens and the problem of a united Europe
Lesson 9: EU’s current crisis and alternative visions for the future
Lesson 10: What does it mean to be a citizen? Law, culture, deliberation/home assignments

Lesson 11: Midterm exam

Lesson 12: Between societies and states: the quest for what is common
Lesson 13: Pluralism as a problem: the debate on multiculturalism in Europe
Lesson 14: Ex pluribus unum? Political models of cultural co-existence
Lesson 15: Migration and Islam: from the first generations to the Syrian crisis (Guest speaker)
Lesson 16: Do we still live in a secular age? The philosophy of Charles Taylor
Lesson 17: After secularization: the philosophy of Jürgen Habermas
Lesson 18: Secularism in France: the controversy on the Islamic veil
Lesson 19: Violence and fear: the challenge of terrorism to European societies
Lesson 20: Assignments presentation and discussion I
Lesson 21: Assignments presentation and discussion II
Lesson 22: Assignments presentation and discussion III
Lesson 23: Assignments presentation and discussion IV

Lesson 24: Final exam

COURSE EVALUATION

At UCSC we highly value student opinions as they are among our most important resources for assessing and improving the quality of teaching.

The course evaluation will be available on the Blackboard two weeks before the end of the course.

Note that you will not be able to view your final grade if you do not submit the survey for the course.

The survey is made of multiple choice questions and open questions. The evaluations will remain anonymous. Professors will receive an average score of each answers (except for the open question).
INSTRUCTORS BIO

**Alessandra Gerolin** received her PhD in Philosophy from the Catholic University of the Sacred Heart, Milan (2004-2007). She studied also at the University of Cambridge and the University of Nottingham under the supervision of Prof. Jeremy Morris and Prof. John Milbank. Before taking up her position as Lecturer in the History of Philosophy at the Catholic University of Milan, she held a post-doctoral research fellowship at the same university. She teaches ‘History of contemporary philosophy’ and ‘Themes and Issues in philosophy’ in the faculty of Education. She is fellow at the Centre of Theology and Philosophy at the University of Nottingham and collaborates with the Centre for the Social Doctrine of the Church, based at the Catholic University of Milan. She has published various books, including *Persona, libertà, storia. Studio su Lord Acton* (2009), *Coscienza dell'ordine e ordine della coscienza. Il pensiero filosofico e sociale di Frederick Denison Maurice* (2010), *Oltre l'idea moderna di lavoro. Suggestioni filosofiche e teologiche dal pensiero anglosassone* (2011), as well as articles in national and international academic journals. Her current research project focuses on a critique of ‘nomolatry’. Her interests include the history of contemporary philosophy and political philosophy.

**Paolo Monti** earned a Ph.D. in Philosophy in 2005, with a research on issues of normative ethics and public ethics in contemporary American philosophy, with special reference to the work of Robert Audi. He has been Visiting researcher at Notre Dame University in 2004 and 2006, working on issues related to moral epistemology, ethical intuitionism and the relationship between religion pluralism and public discourse. Also Visiting researcher to the Department of Bioethics of the NIH in 2009 on issues related to public deliberation and ethics of the healthcare systems and visiting to Georgetown University in 2011 researching on paradigms of public reason and democratic institutions.

He worked from 2007 to 2010 at the Center for Clinical Bioethics and Healthcare Governance at Fondazione IRCCS Ospedale Maggiore Policlinico, a public research hospital based in Milan, on projects concerning public deliberation in healthcare, informed consent and patients’ empowerment. From 2011 to 2013 he was research fellow at ASSET – Studium Generale Marcianum, Venice, with an interdisciplinary project on public reason in pluralistic societies. He has published and edited various books and he is author of several articles in national and international academic journals. He is currently Lecturer at Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Milan. His research focuses on public ethics and the role of religions in the public sphere.

**E-MAIL ADDRESSES**

[alessandra.gerolin@unicatt.it](mailto:alessandra.gerolin@unicatt.it)
[paolo.monti@unicatt.it](mailto:paolo.monti@unicatt.it)