



DIPARTIMENTO DI CIVILTÀ E FORME DEL SAPERE



UNIVERSITÀ DI PISA

International Programme in Humanities

Fall 2020

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Introduction to Philosophy: The Question of Beauty

Aims of the course

The module in **Introduction to Philosophy** aims at giving a general historical and systematic outline of the Western philosophical thought. In the first part of the annual philosophical course students will become familiar with aesthetical concepts and authors which have become classic for this discipline. In the second semester the module in Aesthetics will complete the general theoretical frame which characterises beauty as aesthetic idea.

Contents

This module will take into account the nature of beauty as one of the most enduring and controversial themes in Western philosophy. With the nature of art, beauty is one of the two fundamental issues in philosophical aesthetics. Beauty has traditionally been counted among the ultimate values, with goodness, truth, and justice in Western thought. It is a primary theme among ancient Greek, Hellenistic, and medieval philosophers, and was central to eighteenth and nineteenth-century thought.

The module in Introduction to Philosophy faces the question of beauty giving account of some of the fundamental ideas which determined the philosophical status of Beauty.

Methodology

The course will mainly consist in reading text and discussing their content.

The lecture of two hours (c.t.) will be divided in two parts. After an introductory presentation (with power point, images, short texts to start the conversation) a specific reading will be (re)read, analysed and commented. All the texts will be uploaded in .pdf before the lecture, in time to allow everyone to be prepared for the collective discussion.

Evaluation

The final mark will be based on:

1. the interest and participation in the lectures
2. final written test (usually on the final day of the course)
3. oral exam (to be chosen in one of the two sessions: January or February)

For any question students can be received by the lecturer at the Department per appointment writing an email to: lossi@iol.it



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Bibliography

The bibliography is all in English translations to give everyone the possibility to get an equal preparation.

Readings (they will be uploaded):

Plato, *Symposium* (parts discussed during the lectures)

Aristotle, *Poetics* (chapter 3)

Hume, *Of Tragedy* (parts discussed during the lectures)

Kant, *Critique of the Capacity of Judgement* (Introduction)

Recommended, not compulsory:

A. Nehamas, *Only a Promise of Happiness. The Place of Beauty in a World of Art*, Princeton 2007.

U. Eco, *On Beauty. History of a Western Idea*, (2002; Eng. tr. 2004), pp. 37-50.

D. Hyland, *Plato and the Question of Beauty*, Indiana 2008, pp. 27-63.

Time and Schedule

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Oral exam

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