



UNIVERSITÀ DI PISA

HISTORY OF THE LATE ANCIENT PHILOSOPHY

CRISTINA D'ANCONA

Anno accademico	2019/20
CdS	PHILOSOPHY AND FORMS OF KNOWLEDGE
Codice	266MM
CFU	6

Moduli	Settore/i	Tipo	Ore	Docente/i
STORIA DELLA FILOSOFIAM-FIL/07 TARDO-ANTICA (S)		SEMINARI	36	CRISTINA D'ANCONA

Learning outcomes

Knowledge

Post-classical philosophical thought, often neglected, proves to be pivotal in mature understanding of the history of philosophy. Of special importance is the Imperial age, with its renewal of interest in Aristotelianism (Alexander of Aphrodisias) and Platonism (Plotinus). The course in Late Ancient Philosophy of the Fall Semester 2019 will be devoted to Plotinus' treatise *Sense-perception and Memory* (IV 6[41]). Here Plotinus takes issue with Aristotle's account of memory as it features in *On Memory and Recollection*. Non doubt that memory is rooted in sense-perception, as Aristotle claims; however, neither can be described in a way that entails a passive stance on the soul's part. Sense-perception is not a pathos affecting the soul; rather, it is an activity that soul constantly performs during our life in union with the body. As a consequence, memory cannot be described as a storage of past affections either. Connected to the many apories on soul that Plotinus discussed earlier in his works, this short writing helps understanding his epistemological stance as a response not only to Aristotle, but also to Alexander of Aphrodisias on the one side, and to the Stoics on the other.

Assessment criteria of knowledge

Classes are given in seminarial form and attendance is advised. The learning activities consist in the participation in discussions. Submission of oral/written reports on voluntary basis is encouraged.

Skills

The successful student, no matter whether or not attending the classes, is expected to be familiar with the main topics of Ancient philosophy. The philosophical analysis of one of the texts studied during the classes is part and parcel of the evaluation process.

Assessment criteria of skills

Oral and written reports on voluntary basis. Final exams.

Behaviors

Team work and discussion are encouraged, but the main quality that is meant to be developed is the attitude to the careful reading of ancient, often neglected texts.

Assessment criteria of behaviors

Exchange with students on regular basis.

Prerequisites

Basic course in Ancient Philosophy. No Greek required - the text will be translated during each class and a working translation will be handed out on regular basis.

Teaching methods

Those interested in this course are expected to follow our method of careful, patient reading of the primary texts.

Syllabus

Sense-perception and Memory



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An Analytical reading of Plotinus' treatise IV 6[41]

The treatise *On Sense-perception and Memory* consists of three chapters. Given that sense-perception is not a pathos affecting the soul, memory cannot be conceived of as the storage of affections either. How vision occurs. (Chapter 1). Other sense-perceptions: none is a passive affection of the soul (Chapter 2). This applies also to memory and the way in which soul performs recollection (Chapter 3).

Bibliography

Plotini *Opera* ed. P. Henry - H.R. Schwyzer, Oxford Classical Texts, vol. II, pp. 130-136

(the Greek text will be handed-out weekly together with the working translation)

H. Blumenthal, "Plotinus' Adaptation of Aristotle's Psychology: Sensation, Imagination, and Memory", in R. Baine Harris (ed.), *The Significance of Neoplatonism*, International Society of Neoplatonic Studies, Norfolk 1976, pp. 41-58.

E. K. Emilsson, *Plotinus on Sense-Perception. A Philosophical Study*, Cambridge U.P., Cambridge 1988.

Further Readings

R. Chiaradonna, *Plotino*. Carocci, Roma 2009.

"Plotin", in *Dictionnaire des Philosophes Antiques* dir. R. Goulet, CNRS Ed., Paris 2012, pp. 885-1068.

R.A.H. King, *Aristotle and Plotinus on Memory*, De Gruyter, Berlin 2016.

Non-attending students info

Those who will not attend the classes are advised to get in touch with:

cristina.dancona@unipi.it

Assessment methods

Final oral exam.

Notes

start: September 23, 2019

Chair of the Jury: Prof. Cristina D'Ancona

Members of the Jury: Prof. Bruno Centrone, Prof. Maria Michela Sassi

Alternate Jury:

Chair of the Jury Prof. Giovanni Paoletti,

Members of the Jury: dott. Elisa Coda, dott. Francesco Pelosi

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