

Title	The challenge of racism today: developing critical thinking through four philosophical approaches
Teacher	Prof. Mario Vergani (University of Milano-Bicocca) Prof. Claudia Baracchi (University of Milano-Bicocca) Prof. Marco Vanzulli (University of Milano-Bicocca) Prof. Stefano Pippa (University of Milano-Bicocca)
Language	English
Short description	<p>The cycle of lectures is designed as an exercise of critical thinking, which improves reflexive and argumentative abilities.</p> <p>This year, it will provide PhD students with some philosophical approaches to understand the widespread phenomenon of racism, even in its current resurgences.</p> <p>Each lecture will start with a brief presentation of some fundamental theses and models of analysis of the topic by the speakers, followed by a discussion. The lectures are open to first, second, and third year doctoral students working in scientific, humanistic, and technological areas of research. The cycle of lectures is organized in the context of the PhD program “Education in the Contemporary Society”, Department of Human Sciences for Education.</p> <p>The speakers will provide the attendants short texts and/or video material to read before the lecture.</p> <p>The lessons will be held in English.</p>
Target audience	PhD students from all the courses offered in Bicocca.
CFU	1,5
Hours	12
Participants (min/max):	5 - 30
Calendar:	<p>1.</p> <p>March 10th 2021, 15:00 – 17:00</p> <p>Prof. Mario Vergani (University of Milano-Bicocca)</p> <p>Title of the lesson: Racism and Hate Speech Theory</p>

Abstract: The Lecture provides the basic concepts of Speech Act Theory in their application to the Hate-speech problem. How to distinguish between the status of speech as discourse, expression of a simple opinion, and a linguistic conduct that produces violent consequences? What are the effects of such language on the constitution of self? The Lecture, with examples taken from current events, will invite to reflect on the ethical and political implications. Finally, what are the educational resources confronting racism from this point of view?

2.

April 14th 2021, 15:00 – 17:00

Prof. Claudia Baracchi (University of Milano-Bicocca)

Title of the lesson: **Racism, Exploitation, Slavery**

Abstract: In the broadest sense of the word, discrimination is a mode of consciousness, the ability to discern, distinguish, differentiate. The expression “discriminating mind” indicates a subtle and clear perception. Yet, far from simply being a matter of refinement, of perceiving things in their distinctness, discrimination has come to signify practices of unjust assessment, enforced separation, humiliation, exploitation, unequal access to opportunity, mostly on the ground of social prejudice, ideologies of purity, and a callous defense of privilege and entitlement. In this lecture we consider the phenomena of racial discrimination and segregation in connection with slavery, an institution mistakenly attributed only to our past or to other cultures.

3.

May 20th 2021, 15:00 – 17:00

Prof. Marco Vanzulli (University of Milano-Bicocca)

Title of the lesson: **Racism as a modern Western historical Form**

Abstract: Racism is always connected to a given society and to the way in which the system of production and political life are structured. The lecture will try to show first how racism as we understand it is a creation of Western modernity (and must therefore be carefully distinguished from forms of ancient ethnic exclusion and exploitation linked to slavery and from all pre-colonial contexts) and then it will indicate the connection between racism and the world of labour, with examples showing the functionality of contemporary racism in different contexts and its interrelation with the concepts of class and nation, which, albeit in ambiguous and not flatly deterministic ways, play a fundamental role through forms that are fixed as tradition but that are reconfigured over time in new contexts.

4.

June 8th 2021, 15:00 – 17:00

Prof. Stefano Pippa (University of Milano-Bicocca)

Title of the lesson: **Is the social contract (also) a racial contract?**

Abstract: The lecture will address the notion of “racial contract” as proposed by Charles Mills. In his book of the same title, Mills investigates how both modernity as a whole and the current predicament, whose dominant philosophico-political justification is constituted by the idea of a “social contract” as the foundation of political legitimacy, is underwritten by deeper mechanism of exclusion based on a racial divide. Drawing both on Mills and on examples from our current conjuncture, the lecture will focus on the way in which the “racial contract” continues to norm individuals and is enforced through violence and ideological conditioning.