



**TURIN WELCOME DAY PROGRAMME**  
**DIPARTIMENTO CULTURE POLITICA E SOCIETÀ**  
**LUNGO DORA SIENA 100 – TORINO**  
**BLOCK D, THIRD FLOOR, ROOM 3D 233**

**11:00** Greetings of the head of the Department of Cultures, Politics and Society prof. Franco Garelli

**11:15** Scientific seminar.  
The ontological turn in social theory. A critical overview,  
prof. Luigi Pellizzoni, University of Trieste  
Chair prof. Mario Cardano

**12:45** Presentation of the teaching activity in Turin

The contemporary city: from the past to the future  
prof. Giovanni Semi

Qualitative Research Design  
prof. Mario Cardano

Sexuality family and gender  
prof. Raffaella Ferrero Camoletto

Life courses and welfare regimes  
prof. Cristina Solera

**13:15** Buffet

**14:15** Visit to the library and the main facilities of the Campus



## **The ontological turn in social theory: a critical overview**

**Luigi Pellizzoni (University of Trieste)**

Beginning in the 1990s, a major wave has been emerging in social theory. We can talk of a wave because it involves a variety of disciplines – sociology, geography, philosophy, anthropology, humanities, science and technology studies – and because it is increasingly recognized as such, under the label ontological turn and comparable expressions (new materialism, co-production, material turn etc.). Basically, we are confronted with a departure from the post-modern focus on culture and linguistic deconstruction towards a re-evaluation of materiality, yet not as a return to traditional dualistic forms of realism, but arguing about the reciprocal implication of subject and object, cognition and matter. Moreover, theoretical arguments are often intertwined with political ones, the turn to ontology allegedly outlining a new season of emancipatory politics. The landscape is evolving quickly, and is characterized by a variety of interests and approaches, which hampers a comprehensive account. In my presentation, however, I will seek to identify some common traits and elaborate on major strands, including those flourishing in the neo-Marxist, feminist and STS fields. I will attempt a critical assessment, asking in particular whether there are connections between this theoretical movement and the broader social change occurred in these years, and whether its critical strength is commensurate to the challenges of the new politics of nature and technoscience.