

Meet MSU's new Post-Doc!



Dr. Antonella Tramacere studied philosophy at La Sapienza in Rome, received her PhD in Neuroscience at the University of Parma (Italy), and most recently was affiliated with the Lichtenberg Kolleg, the German Primate Center and the Max Planck Institut for the Science of Human History in Germany. She has developed research projects through collaborations with the Lab of Symbolic Cognitive Development at the Riken Brain Institute in Japan, the Center for Philosophy of Science at the University of Pittsburgh, and the Center for Mind, Behavior and Cognitive Evolution at the Ruhr University of Bochum in Germany.

Her research areas are philosophy of neuroscience and biology. She has analyzed neuroscientists' discoveries related to the development of specific brain circuits (i.e., the Mirror Neuron System) in different animal species to understand the role of brain mechanisms and experiences in the development of cognitive traits that contributed to the evolution of culture (empathy, imitation, language and self-awareness). She is interested in investigating how neurobiology and socio-cultural experiences interact in the development and evolution of mental states, from perceptually-linked to more abstract ones, and to identify these states across individuals and species through appropriate behavioral and biological markers.

Dr. Tramacere will work as a post-doctoral researcher with Professor John Bickle this Fall semester at Mississippi State University. They will analyze the contributions of neuroepigenetics, the study of the regulation of gene expression in the nervous system under the influence of environmental factors, in the emergence of mental events. They aim to understand how epigenetic mechanisms are linked to properties of mental states, such as content and stability across time. Ultimately their goal is to bring recent neuroepigenetic findings to wider philosophical attention by emphasizing their relevance for accounts of reduction, mechanisms and causation. This project will include weekly on line "chats" with philosophers and scientists across North America and Europe working on related topics, and an on-line three-day workshop on these topics, October 9-11, with 24 speakers, including four invited keynotes. These events will be free and open to philosophers and scientists across the region.

A schedule for these events is forthcoming. For more information contact John Bickle at jbickle@philrel.msstate.edu.