

**PUBLIC SELECTION BASED ON QUALIFICATIONS AND INTERVIEW FOR THE AWARDING OF NO. 1 EXPERIENCED GRANT LASTING 12 MONTHS FOR CONDUCTING RESEARCH PURSUANT TO ART. 22 OF LAW NO. 240/2010 AT THE DEPARTMENT OF LETTERS, PHILOSOPHY, COMMUNICATION (SC 11/C1 - THEORETICAL PHILOSOPHY - SSD M-FIL/01 - THEORETICAL PHILOSOPHY) COFINANCED PRIN (CUP. F54I19000630001) - TYPE B**

*announced with decree of the Chancellor Rep. no. 784/2019 of 02.12.2019 and posted on the official registry of the University on 09.12.2019*

**RESEARCH PROJECT**

**“The dispositional/categorical divide in the metaphysics of properties”**

**Research structure:** Department of Letters, Philosophy, Communication

**Duration of the grant:** 12 months

**Scientific Area:** 11 – History, philosophy, pedagogy, and psychology

**Academic recruitment field:** 11/C1 – Theoretical philosophy

**Academic discipline:** M-FIL/01 – Theoretical philosophy

**Scientific Director:** Prof. Andrea Clemente Maria Bottani

The distinction between dispositional properties (like fragility) and categorical ones (like roundness) is enjoying an intense surge of interest in recent years. Dispositional properties –as opposed to categorical ones– are taken by their supporters to play a crucial role in a wide variety of debates in metaphysics, philosophy of science, philosophy of mind, and beyond.

Yet, despite its importance, the dispositional/categorical divide is not entirely understood; there was never an orthodox or widely accepted characterization of what counts as a dispositional or a categorical property –and in fact a disagreement on the “mark of the dispositional” (an expression mimicking Brentano’s “mark of the mental”) underpins many existing debates concerning dispositional properties. The size and theoretical sophistication of the current literature offer better resources to discuss these crucial matters than the ones available twenty years ago; as such, the discussion about the dispositional and categorical character of properties can, and should, be carried out now.

The goal of this project is therefore in the first place to shed some light on the dispositional/categorical divide, by investigating existing criteria of dispositionality and categoricity to evaluate their plausibility with respect to the background metaphysics, and the overall role that dispositional properties are supposed to perform in one’s philosophical landscape. Some of the questions to be explored in the project may be the following: is there any hope for a relational, or “directional” account of dispositionality to work, despite the existence of non-manifesting dispositions? What is the role to be played by quidditism, if any, in the dispositional/categorical divide? Are dispositionality and categoricity mutually exclusive, or are “mixed view” of properties acceptable?

Secondly, in light of these results, the project purports to evaluate the many applications of dispositional properties as they have been put forward in the literature. A particularly interesting application to consider is the one in philosophy of mind, and more precisely in the distinction between the mental and the physical; the discussion about the nature of dispositionality intersects the discussion about the nature of the mental in more than one way; on the one hand, the mental and the dispositional appear to share certain features that make a treatment of the latter in terms of the former particularly appealing; on the other, specific positions concerning dispositional properties are often deployed in the discussion of many arguments in philosophy of mind.