

THINKING THE NONHUMAN AND THE CLIMATE CRISIS

EARLY-STAGE RESEARCH WORKSHOP

FRIDAY, 17TH FEBRUARY 2023
INSTITUTE OF PHILOSOPHY, CZECH ACADEMY OF SCIENCES
ACADEMIC CONFERENCE CENTRE
HUSOVA 4A, PRAGUE 1



ANIMAL ETHICS

NONHUMAN AGENCY

CLIMATE CRISIS



Filosofický ústav AV ČR
Institute of Philosophy



IRLaB

Interdisciplinary Research Lab for Bioethics



Akademie věd
České republiky
Czech Academy
of Sciences



DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY
AND RELIGIOUS STUDIES
Faculty of Arts
Charles University

Workshop description

According to David Schenck and Larry R. Churchill, bioethics has failed to address the challenges posed by the climate crisis and the Anthropocene. Their remarks hint at something identified earlier by Donna Haraway, who argued in *When Species Meet* that most of contemporary bioethics “acts as a regulatory discourse after all the really interesting, generative action is over”. In other words, bioethics has been mainly concerned with defining legal and prescriptive frameworks for (bio-)medical practices, not so much with nature, its biodiversity and climate crisis. In response to this failure, Haraway, Schenck and Churchill foreground the importance of conceptualising – and practicing – care for both the human and nonhuman as part of the bioethical agenda.

Taking inspiration from this, the Interdisciplinary Research Lab for Bioethics (IRLaB, based at the Department of Applied Philosophy and Ethics of the Institute of Philosophy of the Czech Academy of Sciences) is hosting a workshop for early-stage researchers working on the ethical issues of the nonhuman and the environmental crisis. In cooperation with IRLaB, the workshop is organised by Julita Skotarska, a PhD candidate from the Department of the Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies at Charles University. The event aims to present ongoing projects in Prague and its vicinity and deepen cooperation between different local academic institutions. It stems from recognition of the benefits that networking and learning from others working on similar subjects at similar stage could bring both individually and collectively. It will also enable greater integration of scholarly attention dedicated to the nonhuman and environmental crisis in the Czech Republic.

The workshop will be divided in three sessions. Starting with a particular case of the nonhuman, the themes will expand to address wider issues of the climate crisis. The first panel will concentrate on ethical attempts to embrace the nonhuman animals within contractualism and enactivism. The second panel will consider nonhuman agency, drawing on process philosophy and a particular case study of glaciers analysed through the lens of vital materialism. The last panel will identify some of the challenges in thinking about and relating to the climate crisis, examining attitudes towards it and the emotional states it triggers. It will be followed by a discussion on future events that could continue to address the issues raised during the workshop.

All are welcome, and those working on similar themes are encouraged to contact the organisers at julita.skotarska@gmail.com, to help strengthen future collaboration and cooperation.



Schedule

9.30 am: Welcome and introductory remarks

Session 1 Animal ethics

9.45: “Rawlsian Contractualism and Non-Human Animals”, Areti Theofilopoulou (IRLab, Institute of Philosophy, Academy of Sciences)

10.15: “Does the Dog (have to) Know He is a Dog? The Enactive Approach and the Ethics of Understanding Non-Human Animal Cognition”, Mira Tan Reyes (Centre for Ethics, University of Pardubice)

10.45: Q&A / Discussion (30 min)

11.15: 15-minute break

Session 2 Nonhuman agency

11.30: “The Problem of Agency in the Global Climate Crisis”, İrem Güven (Centre for Ethics, Pardubice University and Leiden University)

12.00: “Speculating on Glacial Subjectivity – Posthuman Reflections from Research Stay in Iceland”, Julita Skotarska (Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies, Charles University)

12.30: Q&A / Discussion (30 min)

13.00-14.30: Lunch

Session 3 Approaches and reactions to climate crisis

14.30: “Attitudes towards the Environment, Their Ethical Relevance and the Possibilities of Their Transformation”, David Rozen (Centre for Ethics, University of Pardubice)

15.00: “Existential-Phenomenological Perspective on Ecological Emotions”, Petr Vaškovic (Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies, Charles University)

15.30: Q&A / Discussion (30 min)

16.00: 30-minute break

16.30: Discussion (30 min)

17.00: Concluding comments, etc.

