



Institute of Philosophy
Slovak Academy of Sciences, v. v. i.
&
Department of Philosophy
University of Vienna



BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

Intercultural Approaches to Practical Environmental Philosophy

(international conference)

February 23, 2023

Institute of Philosophy SAS, v. v. i.
4th floor (meeting room)
Klemensova 19
811 09 Bratislava 1
Slovak Republic



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Kenneth MALY

(University of Wisconsin-La Crosse)

A Buddhist Approach to Urban Ecology

The 2500-year-old Buddhist and Daoist practice and teachings inform our understanding of ecology. These teachings include: the world and life as made up of intertwining interdependent conditions rather than separate things; a synergetic and dynamic nondual wholeness; direct lived-experience rather than theory and concepts. Practicing Buddhist urban ecology includes: compassion in community, reverence for the natural, eco-justice extending to the nonhuman, awareness of habitat, awareness of seasons/flora/fauna in the urban bioregion, and applying “no-harm” to our purchasing and usage. The “urban watershed sangha.”



Petr URBAN

(Institute of Philosophy, Czech Academy of Sciences)

Introducing the Center for Environmental and Technology Ethics – Prague (CETE-P)

In this talk I will introduce the EU-funded international research Center for Environmental and Technology Ethics - Prague (CETE-P) which was recently created at the Institute of Philosophy of the Czech Academy of Sciences. The Center aims at a long-term cooperation with other, similarly oriented institutions abroad as well as local universities and research institutes in the Czech Republic. It will offer expert advice to the Czech policy-making and legislative bodies in order to contribute to policy formulation in the area of environmental protection and the use of new technologies. The Center will also contribute to an informed public debate. The team of the new research centre will be assembled under the leadership of one of the most respected experts in the respective research fields, Mark Coeckelbergh from the University of Vienna.



Güncel ÖNKAL

(Maltepe University, visiting research fellow at the Institute of Philosophy, SAS)

Reconsidering Environmental Ethics for Co-Action in Anthropocene: An Intercultural Research Project

This talk will introduce the conceptual details of research project that continues in the Institute of Philosophy, Bratislava. The scope of the project is to develop international, intercultural and sub-disciplinary understanding of environmental risks and their reflections in the scientific literature, higher education facilities, local policies, societal life style. The main question here is to ask what the barriers for co-action are in Anthropocene. Is it still possible to teach ethical awareness; and how? What are the cultural barriers? How does EU develop this ethical awareness through politics? Are there differences between countries for the sake of philosophizing the policies and attitude towards nature? If we see the unbalanced relationship between ecological politics and environmental ethics then there will be room to revise the foundations of environmental ethics. Today environmentalism under globalism is not responding the ethical awareness of philosophers, rather it becomes a policy making applied field for sustainability. Co-action - as proposed here - is the central (umbrella) theme that refers a philosophically enhanced structure for the agency of a green activism which ought to be resulted in constitutional, collective, coordinated, cooperating, contributing, complementary, cognizance, consciousness.



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Graham PARKES

(Department of Philosophy, University of Vienna)

**Can Humanity Survive the Anthropocene?
It Depends on Who We Think We Are**

The question in the title arises because we're doing such a lousy job of dealing with the climate crisis. Our dysfunctional relationship with the Earth System stems in large part from our being on the losing side in a 'War of Ideas' (their term) waged by a group of rich libertarians over the fundamental question of who we are as human beings. We begin by stepping back to gain some perspective, through considering some ancient views of who and how we are as humans, from Indian Buddhism and ancient Greek mythology. For the modern libertarians, we are basically free and independent individuals who are in economic competition with other individuals for all the satisfactions that late capitalism has to offer. In recent times the super-rich have allied themselves with the libertarian Titans of Big Tech, who add a strong dose of Cartesian mind-body dualism to the formula. Leaving aside its dire consequences for the environment, this is still a sadly inadequate view of what it is to be human. Far more beneficial and fulfilling ideas of who we are can be found in non-Western traditions of thinking, and especially in Chinese philosophy. Better to think of ourselves as nodes in a complex web of interrelations with our fellow human beings, the biosphere, and the rest of the Earth System. Since we can find similar views in our own philosophical tradition, we have good grounds for a dialogue with China about cooperating on tackling the climate crisis. On the basis of these kinds of understanding, we can take a variety of steps toward saner and more fulfilling ways of living—and avoid finishing off the human race before the Anthropocene even gets going.



Eva DĚDEČKOVÁ

(Institute of Philosophy, Slovak Academy of Sciences)

**A Few Remarks on Intercultural Philosophy from the
Perspective of Cosmological Philosophy**

In my short presentation I would like to introduce the central ideas of cosmological philosophy (E. Fink, F. Nietzsche) with an emphasis on the possible creative contribution as well as constructive critique of intercultural philosophy in the context of practical environmental philosophy. What are the possibilities and limits of intercultural philosophy in this context? Can we find common ground across cultures, or is this an age-old dream? Will global environmental threats finally become the basis for humanity's cooperation? If so, what needs to be done so that all can participate equally in intercultural dialogue?



Mădălina DIACONU

(Department of Philosophy, University of Vienna)

The Aesth/Ethics of Landscape: An Intercultural Perspective

The concept of aisth/ethics (Aisth/Ethik) was introduced by Wolfgang Welsch to emphasize the ethical dimension of aesthetic values. In a somehow similar way, I argue that different concepts of landscapes involve equally different approaches to the environmental ethics and environmental policy. To demonstrate this claim, I propose a non-exhaustive taxonomy of landscapes that includes the contemplative, explorative, lived, and living/sentient landscape. The equation of the landscape with a scenic view is rooted in the early modern European culture, while other cultures produced alternative understandings of landscape that can inspire a sustainable landscape planning and tourism policy.



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Bianca BOTEVA-RICHTER

(Department of Philosophy, University of Vienna)

Migration and Environment

The connection between migration/migrants and the environment is essential, it determines our future as well as the future direction of our society. On the one hand migration can be initiated by environmental destruction, and on the other hand we have many fellow citizens with a migration background whom we need as companions for environmental protection. However, what is needed to understand migrating people and how can we establish this relationship (migrants and nature) as a successful co-partnership? Based on the Japanese philosopher Watsuji Tetsuro's extended concept of the subject and applied to migrating people, a new connection to nature can be established, which reveals nature as a part of the human being and as a comrade, thus enabling its protection as protection of the self.



Daniel BUSCHMANN

(Institute of Philosophy, Slovak Academy of Sciences)

Adorno meets Zhuangzi: Non-dominative Nature Relations as a Possible Pathway of Socio-Ecological Transformation in the Anthropocene

Are the works of Horkheimer and Adorno still relevant today? This issue would be an intellectual glass bead game if it was not for the radical presence of social and environmental crises in the Anthropocene. With good reason, students in 1969 disturbed the lecture of Adorno and with good reason today's young activists of Fridays for Future, Extinction Rebellion or the Last Generation disturb public spheres to demand attention to the scope of present crises as well as answers how a transformation towards sustainability is possible. I argue that critical theory bears a social responsibility to inform such 'invariant epistemological interest' in emancipatory knowledge. A retreat to the critical ivory tower is unworldly in the nascent Anthropocene. Therefore, my thesis is that Daoist philosophy lends itself here in order to continue investigation into societal transformation where critical theory ends. In particular, I explore in how far two dialectic concepts – societal nature relations and wu-wei – complement each other in the critique of nature domination in the Anthropocene and in the ambition to imagine human-nature relations beyond nature domination. I content that both concepts can be understood within a common framework – that of dialectical thinking – and suggest that the 'method of wu-wei' can inspire a new praxis of non-dominative or an-archic societal nature relations. I therefore claim that the intercultural dialogue with Chinese philosophy can not only contribute to a renewal of critical theory but also yield valuable insights for the praxis of socio-ecological transformations. I thus conclude that political philosophy in the Anthropocene must be the crowbar for the solidified thinking within us.



Katarína PODUŠELOVÁ

(Institute of Philosophy, Slovak Academy of Sciences)

The Problem of Life in the Anthropocene Discourse from Philosophical-Anthropological Perspective

The Anthropocene, as a multi-meaning phenomenon, is also a thought horizon that offers an opportunity to rethink the question of what life is and how to act towards sustaining it and preserving its diversity on a planetary scale. The altered state of the Earth's geological and climatic conditions suggests that a specific form of life (Homo sapiens/Anthropos) is threatened with, if not extinction, at least the demise of its civilised way of life. This threat is specific precisely because it arises from the creation of the conditions for life and the realisation of life by Homo sapiens/Anthropos itself. This paper is devoted to the analysis of the problem of life in the discourse of the Anthropocene from a philosophical-anthropological perspective. The aim is not only to show that this discourse points to the demand for a change of perspective on already existing relations, but above all to the emergence of new relations between biotic and abiotic life that have not been reflected in philosophical anthropology so far.