

Gatojeta, please be seated. Distinguished colleagues, their audience, Professor Annabelle Dufour, welcome to our auditorium, Omnia, for this special occasion.

In a few moments, Professor Annabelle Dufour will present her inaugural address. She has been appointed special professor of humanistic philosophy and the human nature relationship.

Her position is partly funded by the Socrates Foundation and is embedded within the philosophy chair group headed by Professor Rachel Enkeny. And this is something to celebrate. Here in Vättinger, special professorships are installed to complement the chairs.

Special chairs broaden our scientific scope and ensure that Vättinger science is connected to society.

This is in line with our motto, to explore the potential of nature to improve the quality of life. We are a leading university in agriculture and food sciences and in environment and ecology.

With the appointment of Professor Annabelle Dufour as special professor, I'm sure we'll stay on that path.

Professor Dufour began her career in 1999 as a philosophy teacher at a secondary school in France. For a decade, she gained experience in working with students and at the same time combined teaching with research.

Her first academic milestone was her PhD thesis in 2008 on the relationship between imagination and reality in the work of Husserl and Merleau-Ponty.

These are both key figures in the field of philosophy, though they hold different views on the role of the body and consciousness. Since then, she has focused on the interactions between human and non-human imagination and on how engaging with animal imaginations can help overcome denial and paralysis in the face of climate change.

She then continued her academic journey with postdoctoral research in the U.S. and the Czech Republic and in 2015 moved to the Netherlands. At Radboud University in Nijmegen, close by, she further developed her skills as a lecturer and researcher and a year ago became a full professor in philosophical anthropology.

In January 23, she also accepted her current position as special professor of humanistic philosophy and the human nature relationship, a five-year appointment.

At our university, Professor Dufour focuses on a specific project, animal subjects, phenomenology, and animal sciences.

This project explores how animals can be recognized and studied as subjects rather than exclusively as objects.

On the one hand, she says that empathy and mutual awareness between humans and animals have rarely been examined in a systematic way in animal sciences. On the other hand, phenomenology offers a different approach to the embodied experience and to human-animal relationships, but it also needs to overcome its anthropocentric blind spots.

Thereby, her approach bridges empirical methods with other ways to look at animals.

A major milestone in societal impact came in 2022 when she won the Radboud Science Award for her research on animal imagination.

This recognition gave Professor Dufour the opportunity to engage a broader audience in discussions about improving animal welfare.

Together with teachers, she developed a program that raises awareness about these issues, helping to cultivate empathy and responsible relations with non-human animals from an early age.

The scientific and societal impact of her work is remarkable, including not only articles in leading scientific journals, but also five published books.

Under her supervision, two PhD dissertations were completed with another eight projects currently ongoing.

Dear audience, it's almost time to listen to Professor Dufour. Clearly, she's a true representative of the Wageningen approach to science as she combines excellent research with striving for impact. I'm looking forward to her inaugural lecture entitled Humanism and Phenomenology of Animal Subjects. Annabelle, the floor is yours. Thank you very much.

Honorable Dean of Education, esteemed colleagues, dear guests.

Coming from animal studies and animal phenomenology, I am suspicious of any anthropocentric approach. Humanism understood as exceptionalism is not my place.

However, according to well-supported etymology, the word human derives from the Proto-Indo-European root, DGMON, which referred to mother earth and to humans as earthlings, beings made of clay.

That's the human-humous correspondence.

And DGMON designates the matter of earth. It defines humans as mortal beings, destined to return to earth in contrast with gods that are associated with the sky.

And therefore, with a playful stretch, one could say that humanism is originally geocentric.

In this regard, I am particularly proud to continue the long tradition of Socrates' professors at Wageningen University in the field of environmental philosophy and the human nature relationship.

The admirable work of my predecessors has laid a solid foundation for humanism that is both decent and gentle. And I'm quoting here Wouter Aterberg, and I'm so sorry I couldn't find a picture. So if someone has a picture, please send it to me.

So decent and gentle humanism, but also, and I'm quoting here, Aunts-Arterhouse, courageous, a humanism that criticizes its past of oppression and exclusion of the earth from the sphere of meaning, of women from the sphere of reason, and of rationalized others from the sphere of humanity.

My predecessors have strongly advocated for humanism that recitiates humans in their earthly existence.

This humanism also combines social engagement with in-depth humanistic reflection.

In this sense, Corfander Villa left a lasting mark by applying humanistic methods to counter polarization and traditions of ruthless blinding and divisive competition in her approach to current ecological challenges surrounding meat consumption.

So the humanism that underpins my research is rooted in key values of classical humanism and orientation towards the earth and the search for our own resources without reliance on any transcendent authority.

At its core lies the virtue of humility inseparable from compassion.

Conceived as fundamentally earthly, humanism, as I understand it, acknowledges the powers and limitations of each individual and emphasizes the exchanging and mutualisms within the earth system, without which individual and collective worlds would actually collapse. Worlds, I insist, plural.

Indeed, I subscribe to ecocentrism, like my predecessors, by contrast to anthropocentrism, as long as we keep in mind that ecocentrism is also a polycentrism, Gaia is all of us, and many more human and non-human subjects, a diversity of perspectives or centers or poles that is neither always unified nor entirely harmonious.

This brings me to the link between humanism in my approach and the question of non-human subjects. In the human tradition, the subject in the humanistic, humanistic, sorry, tradition, the subject as the agent of its own actions and as a center of its own perspectives endowed with self-awareness and self-knowledge as always play the central role.

These responsible subjects, so I just give you an example of one of the first self-portraits and with also this motto van van Eyck, which is, as I can, I want an artistic self-awareness and mastery.

But this responsible subject has also been traditionally conceived as rational, lucid, autonomous and detached.

I actually disagree with this narrow and anthropocentric definition, yet I still consider the concept of the subject to be decisive. First, as Dona Haraway has shown, we are increasingly willing to recognize many animals as other subjects with their own tastes, initiatives, perspectives and effects.

So the concept of subject is changing.

Second, to regard a being as a subject entails ethical consequences.

A subject must be treated ethically and conversely, an epistemological approach that acknowledges animals as subjects already implies a certain form of respect.

And third, that's my third point here, the concept of imaginative intersubjectivity, emphasizing the way subjects interact and depend on one another in their very essence, can help us explore the tensions and difficulties inherent in a multi-subjective and multi-perspectival Gaia.

And here I'm thinking of the work of Lin Margulis or take on the concept of Gaia as, indeed, like essentially symbiotic. Intersubjective is a bit of a stretch, but it's also the case I made in my last book on imagination and the climate crisis.

So as a result, it is, I contend, highly relevant to up our game in the science of subjects. In this respect, a gap remains to be bridged, the gap between phenomenology and animal sciences. So phenomenology, first in the history of Western philosophy, phenomenology founded by Edmund Husserl and developed by thinkers such as Heidegger, Beauvoir, Sartre, Merleau-Ponty and Levinas, among many others, is the science of phenomena, the study of how things appear to us and the study of the structures of experience from a first and second subjective experience

as its starting point in an absolute manner.

Namely, by highlighting that objectivity is first and foremost intersubjectively constituted, even the reference to a non-subjective reality, is still a thought.

So phenomenology arose as a response to the widespread objectification and reductionism in modern culture, the tendency to treat reality and even human experience as mere things to be measured and categorized.

In other words, a third person approach.

The aim of phenomenology is to reintegrate subjectivity into science and philosophy, treating first and second person perspectives not as problems but as sources of insight. Phenomenology provides us with methods to develop rigorous knowledge of subjectivity without reducing it to objects, so statistics, neural processes and so on and so forth.

So actually phenomenology is twofold.

It is a science, a science of subjectivity, but it is also a form of ethics.

So phenomenology investigates the fundamental structures of experience. Perception, imagination for instance, moods volition, and these are the type of subject of studies for phenomenology and it demonstrates how the real world is deeply shaped by them. It proceeds by methodically guided reflection and descriptive analysis.

But phenomenology is also a transformative ethics.

Indeed, the structure of experience are not static. They are not thing-like.

They unfold dynamically, shaped by how we engage with the world, including others. Reflection also opens access to a field of action or an action, a space where our choices, practices and moments enact and transform these structures. A couple of examples, so reflection for instance, adds a layer of depth to each experience. It engages and it also increases responsibility. Another example is the way supportive or discouraging family and work environment can make a subject more creative and active or reduce them to the shadow of a subject stripped of autonomy and vitality.

Another example, famous to the people in animal studies, you can think of the moment when you feel watched by an animal. It's the famous example of Derrida feeling observed, even judged by scats. In that instant, the entire structure of experience, so subject, object and even world, momentarily rearranges itself into a relation of fragile reciprocity marked by the uncanny split between two foreign worlds that touch without merging. The phenomenological method then consists in a formative, ethically and scientifically formative play with phenomena.

If I alter my perspective, my attention, my bodily engagement, my perceptual orientation or underlying beliefs, then reality itself shifts, though always only to a limited and specific extent that can be discovered precisely through such experimentation. So phenomenology engages in existential exercises through which my subjectivity grows in depth and empowerment, a power in line with the Delphic know yourself.

So to summarize, so it's definitely this twofoldness of phenomenology as a transcendental science and as transformativ ethics, and they both, of course, fuel each other.

So the phenomenological reflection leads us to a field that precedes realism, much more plastic and inventive than the everyday reality allows. And indeed, so we

start from naive humanism, but thanks to the phenomenological reflection, that's the whole goal, we move to a more transitional and operative space.

Humanism actually requires engaging the world at a deeper level than the everyday naive realism that sees things and facts as being what they are, completely independently of subjects, a reality that would remain unchanged if all living beings suddenly vanished.

Deep humanism at an ontological level demands that we connect to the transitional and operative space where reality is still taking shape, where meaning objects and multiple subjects emerge, where beliefs develop and our responsibility and capacity for imagination and action are at their greatest.

So that's a little bit rough.

But just to summarize things, naive realism is really this idea that things are, and people are just juxtaposed.

And well, that's my rendition of what would be the transitional and operative space. Maybe the next slide will also help you understand what I have in mind. So I have argued that the phenomenological reflection does not return us to a Cartesian ego, but instead discloses a liminal, limbo-like plastic realm where the dichotomies and rigid categories of reality have not yet crystallized. In this suspended space, dogmatic claims about what is or is not are set aside. And in this transitional and operative space, the human-animal divide is no longer self-evident.

First, because the human-animal radical divide is a controversial cultural construct.

And second, because we also have to acknowledge that we quite spontaneously and irresistibly perceive many nonhuman animals in a confusing manner in an empathic way and through an unsettling intersubjectivity.

I'll return to that in a minute. So this is where I connect phenomenology to this photograph borrowed from the work of the Slovenian artist and philosopher Mayas Meraka, and it comes from her canine project.

This project is inspired by Deleuze and Guattari, their notion of becoming animal but also higher way, becoming with animals.

But it's also based on feminist reflections on motherhood, empathy, and the profound transformations in our perception of animals and ourselves when empathy is intensified, even through the artificial intensification of hormones.

I am drawn to this particular portrait because of the way it overlays and confuses the classical subject center jar of portraiture and self-portraiture.

Its format is ultra-classical, recalling the ID photographs.

The subject faces the camera head-on, framed from the shoulders upward, dressed in what appears to be a lab coat.

Sorry, too fast. Yet instead of a recognizable human face, we encounter a ghostly substitution, the blurred silhouette of a furry body with discernible eyes, hardly discernible eyes, the whole image further distorted by the motion blur of the photographed subject. So the historical link between the jar of portraiture and the development of an ego-centered ontology has been extensively studied, but what portraits make visible, however, is the ambiguity of the ego itself.

The ego, theoretically grounded in interiority, introspection, is nevertheless mediated by outer appearance, by its body, by the gaze of others, and by its relations with others. So the ambiguity, this ambiguity resonates with the dynamic character of the subject, such as studied by phenomenology, and is also insuperable from the human-animal relation.

Indeed, the ego has often been articulated by contrast. Humans are allegedly, in the humanistic tradition, beings with selfhood, interiority, reason, and representation, while animals are often reduced to instinct and exteriority. Yet, when empathy with animals deepens, whether through lived relationships, scientific discovery, or artistic provocation, such as in the case of Smedakar's work, the supposed opposition collapses.

Animals begin to appear not as contrasting figures or external foils, but as co-constitutive others.

Their presence reshapes how we conceive our own subjectivity.

What a science of subjects thus finds is a multiple subject as the network from which my never-finished identity emerges.

It's a network that I am shaped by and that I shape. Animal phenomenology actually started with Jakob von Uchskul, the Baltic German biologist and precursor of ethology, biosemiotics, and animal phenomenology.

Uchskul studied the worlds umvelten, experienced by different animals, and emphasized that there is no single tree. It's an example of in one of the most famous books. So he says there is not such a thing as one single tree.

But there actually are a myriad of worlds coexisting.

So humans may see a tree as a unified object, but if you add the experience of, for instance, earthworms or squirrel, so a squirrel, for instance, experiences the tree as a network of paths, hiding spots, launch points for leaps, insects perceive a terrain of microhabitats, bark crevices, roots, and soil at the base of the tree. Birds sense layers of perches, nesting sites, and food sources, each part functionally distinct.

So the tree here, actually, sorry, again, my, let's say, weird rendition of the concept, it's almost impossible to represent it. And Uchskul is also quite clear about that. So basically, the tree here dissolves into a multiplicity of interactive elements for other species.

Its boundaries, surfaces, and features are perceived in entirely different registers.

So reality is a matter of scale, feature, clustering, interpretation, and use, and it is plastic. Although Uchskul, later followed by Heidegger, often emphasizes the relative rigidity of these non-human animal worlds, he occasionally notes examples of ambiguity and shifting interpretations in animal experiences. And that's what I studied in my book, *The Imaginary of Animals*, to be sure humans are particularly gifted at this imaginative place, exploring possible realities in science fiction, transposing themselves into other species' perspectives, and studying how various cultures shape the world. But the reference to a rich non-human animal imagination can actually be substantiated based on recent research in philosophy and animal sciences. So this book is devoted to these plastic, imaginative animal worlds.

Imagination then turns out to emerge within animal morphologies, behaviors, and

languages, as well as in epigenetics and ecosystems. So I mentioned earlier that a major gap remains to be bridged between biology and phenomenology. The challenge of animal sciences is to further integrate a subject-centered approach.

On the other hand, the challenge of phenomenology is to further integrate animal subjects to its analysis. And this is where my animal project that is central to this special chair comes from. So I will start with a short-case study.

So the story of Barbara Smuts.

In *Encounter with Animal Minds*, it's a beautiful article, Barbara Smuts, an American anthropologist and psychologist internationally recognized for research on baboons, dolphins, and chimpanzees, explains that she was initially asked not to interact with the baboons she was observing. More experienced primatologists had advised her in this way to ensure critical distance. So I quote from her article, so the idea was that by ignoring the animals, we would discourage them from paying attention to us. However, she adds, the baboons soon told me otherwise.

Smuts realized that one of the baboons she was observing was in fact talking to her, I quote from the article, insistently. She tried to ignore the address, but it provoked anxiety in the primates, and eventually she had to face the facts. It was impossible to discourage them from paying attention to her and engaging with her as a social being, as a subject with whom they could communicate.

All the time, she began to respond and was thus drawn into what she describes as an illuminating intersubjective relationship with baboons and later with many other non-human animals characterized by reciprocal awareness.

My subjective identity, she writes, seemed to merge with theirs. Her sensitivity to the environment, as she describes, was gradually shaped by theirs, and she entered a field of co-feeling, I quote again, and co-perception that quite literally blew her mind. She describes that this experience by explicitly borrowing the concepts of empathy and co-created shared world from phenomenology, emphasizing that these concepts enter intention with a mechanistic and function-oriented approach classically developed in natural sciences. So Smuts explains how the conundrum, so whether to respond or not to respond, fostered a reflective attitude in her. Her essay is an insightful and rich piece of phenomenological reflection. For instance, she learns to recognize the selves of baboons also in the way they bodily negotiate the flexible boundaries of invisible personal spaces. A description of being talked to and addressed as a subject by a subject opens up a profound discussion about what it means to be recognized as such and how interaction unfolds through greeting, hailing, responding, and so Smuts actually outlines a whole repertoire of animal intersubjective experiences that needs to be further elucidated phenomenologically.

So she mentions just a short list, relaxing in each other's company, breathing together, anticipating intention.

So I quote, as I approached a bubble cliffs, I felt confident that if a baboon wanted to attack me, I would know it intimacy.

The concept of becoming a baboon shared awareness, experiencing the world intuitively, and developing selves in community.

Now, drawing on Smuts story and analysis, I will define three phenomenological concepts.

The first one is the concept of subject. In her article, Smuts insists on the contrast between subjects and object, and she highlights that baboons are stressed

out by objectification and how they take action to counteract the subjectification process that Smuts started. A subject is a singular individual relating to the world through their own perspective and agency. Subjects have their own experiences, intentions, feelings, and ways of relating to others. And like an object, which can be observed and studied without response, a subject can notice us, respond to us, and treat us as part of their world.

Somehow, Smuts first refuses to fully engage baboons as subjects. She refuses to integrate them into her world as subjects with their perspectives and with their need for live dialogue and live coordination.

She refuses also to share their world. We actually quite commonly find it quite offensive when someone treats us like a piece of furniture or speaks about us in the third person in our presence.

But offensive could be further unpacked here by refusing to engage them as subjects, so the second person approach, so you, and not the objectifying them.

Smuts cuts the baboon out of a part of their world. She cuts them off from the possibility to exert their agency within it, and she becomes a possible menace for them. This is the deeper meaning of recognition, and this is why baboons do everything to break the spell of objectification and its freezing or deadening power.

So let me explain this further by resorting to both biology and existentialism.

We can think of subjects as emerging inner life, own umbert, and inner outer dialectics.

Each of us is like a small pouch folded out of the larger world, and I borrow this concept from Meloponte's concept of fold, which was inspired by topology as a branch of mathematics. So the matter folds itself into a material structure, the living body, that creates its own norms, regulation, specific or even individual ecological niche, which comes with an ontological shift, a precarious and finished subject with its own perspective and agency emerges.

So this pouch is not sealed off, and it is open through semi-permeable membranes, just as living cells depend on membranes that let things in and out. Subjects live by being in constant exchange with their surroundings. This means that our inner world is never fully separate or self-sufficient.

It is shaped and reshaped by interaction with other beings, with the environment, and with whatever addresses us or whatever we address in the moment. So this is also why existentialist philosophers like Sartre, Heidegger, Beauvoir argued that subjects are to be understood in the framework of a new ontology. A subject is a being that can never be finished. It is ecstatic, so outside of itself, beyond itself, non-continent with itself, always in the making, interested, curious, anxious, and creative.

And that actually means that subjectivity is not a stable fortress, but a fragile and stable folding.

Hence the crucial importance of live engagement, of responding actually.

Because of its precariousness, you can never take a subject for granted. This is why objectification is a violence, because subjectivity is a way of constantly engaging the world live.

The second concept, and I want to linger over, not very long though,

intersubjectivity is a complication of the concept of subject. It can be understood against the backdrop of biological mutualistic conceptuality. In phenomenology, intersubjectivity refers to the individual subjects.

Our thoughts and existential orientations, always already by default, as an intrinsic part of our identity, integrates the thoughts and perspectives of others.

The perspective of others are not merely external influences, they are always an integral part of our own world. So my identity, even at the level of body schema, for instance, is shaped through interaction with other bodies, the caring or uncaring movements of my parents, the interactions with the family dog, or the wild geese whose peaceful flight I have often observed.

So their movements and existential orientations serve as models, as reference, as impulses for my own.

So the term intersubjectivity can be a bit misleading if understood as designating a process that brings together already isolated subjects.

Rather, it designates a relational reality where individual subjects emerge.

But the term intersubjectivity is in fact very relevant in that it emphasizes a relational reality where a diversity of subjects play a role.

Collective processes, symbiosis, or networks of intersubjectivity also involves tensions, disagreements, conflicts, and ongoing renegotiations.

Ethologists thus often observe that becoming familiar with the group of animals goes hand in hand with discovering the individual characters and creative contributions of each member of the group. In this way, intersubjectivity is a relevant concept because it acknowledges the diversity and agency of multiple subjects while situating them within a shared relational space. Then the last concept I will dwell on here is that is actually central to Smutt's article is the concept of empathy.

While intersubjectivity describes the relational entanglement of subjects, empathy from the Greek *em*, in, and *pato*s, feeling refers to a specific mode of engaging with another subject. It is the capacity for and the act of perceiving the feelings, thoughts, and experiences of another subject.

Importantly, empathy does not automatically imply sympathizing or sharing those feelings.

Rather, it involves recognizing that another is, for instance, happier sad.

Understanding their orientation in the world and perceiving their judgments is a form of empathy.

Empathy is actually both a basic everyday experience and a philosophically contested concept, particularly regarding what it means to represent another's experience from a first person perspective.

To give an example of a sticking point, Smutt's, in her article, heavily frames her empathy with baboons as a fusion. She sees the world as part of a collective subjectivity. This is extremely interesting, but also extremely controversial.

That can definitely be an aspect of empathy, but it must also not be trusted blindly.

Over-identification risks overlooking the blind spots and aspects of the other's perspective that remain hidden to us. So as a basis for discussion, I propose a working definition, but it's definitely provisional. Empathy is a partial perception of another subject, thoughts, and emotions.

It is a direct, lived experience, neither purely projective nor purely inferential. Empathy involves a complex interplay of probing or checking. I cannot only project on the other. I also have to check on a regular basis that I am not just making everything up. So it doesn't mean feeling exactly what the other feels, but tentatively feeling or thinking along with them in a multi-perspectival way. Smutt's works provides rich empirical material for phenomenology, but the next step is the development of a phenomenology or the fundamental structures of empathy, articulating its key dimension. So what is the role of perception? What is the role of memory? What is the role of imagination? And so on and so forth. And how they interact at stake is also to understand how it can be cultivated with human and non-human others, and clarifying how potential ethical pitfalls can be avoided.

Phenomenology always begins with careful reflection, examining exactly what happens when I empathize, and with meticulous description of one's own experience.

But from there, it proceeds to generalization through empirical research and imaginative theoretical variations.

For example, consider this imaginative variation.

If the other and I were to become one, what I have called fusion, it's what also I think what Smutt's calls fusion, but it would also require a more refined analysis. Could there still be empathy? So if we are just one, is there empathy? And for now, I will just leave this to your consideration. Now, what remains to be done exactly?

The main focus of my research at the University is the project Animal Subjects, which explores how animals can be recognized and studied as subjects rather than exclusively as objects. So the project proposes to join the forces of phenomenology and animal sciences. In the context of a pressing search for methods that can enhance the epistemological and ethical recognition of animals as subjects in animal sciences, I contend that a principled and pragmatic convergence of phenomenology and animal sciences to fundamentally rethink our relationships with non-human animals is a genuine missing link.

Here we really have a truly strange gap. Phenomenology and the natural animal sciences develop approaches that dovetail particularly well, each possessing strength where the other as lacuna, allowing them to complement and enrich one another. The intuition that animals are not simply objects is widely shared in society and science, but to approach animals as subjects meets with a serious obstacle in natural sciences as the latter require the methodical objectification of animals.

So it's a thorough investigation of living beings, but it's in a third person. Empathy has become the elephant in the room in contemporary animal sciences.

Widely at work, it is mostly dismissed as irrelevant and fails to be addressed as an adult methodically.

In research laboratories, for instance, around the world, employees routinely give animals first names despite actually being discouraged from doing so. And as Erard emphasizes or observes, these and official names rarely appear in publications except sometimes in field studies of primates, but they're used daily, which is already like a sign of tension or cognitive dissonance.

So this practice reveals a deeper conflict at the heart of scientific world with animals. How are we to reconcile treating them as research objects while acknowledging their subjectivity? The Cambridge Declaration on Consciousness stands as a testimony to the same difficulty. It officially brings animal consciousness into the field of animal sciences and simultaneously leaves it out. Philip Lowe, the original author of the Declaration, relies upon the latter to publicly advocate veganism, claiming that scientists know that many animals are conscious and they suffer. But the Declaration itself cautiously suspends such assertions and only states that many animals possess the neurological substrates that generate consciousness. However, the existence of similar neural structures or behaviors in humans and animals is not a sufficient argument to claim that some animals are actually conscious beings.

And it's also what Marian Stump Dawkins has emphasized. And I quote here, the mystery of consciousness remains, and it's really about the Cambridge Declaration on Consciousness. The mystery of consciousness remains, the explanatory gap is as wide as ever.

So animals are a subject of study that raises ethical questions such as, how would you feel if you were a laboratory animal unable to choose any of your life circumstances? And I'm quoting here from the PETA, of course, it's an activist, org website.

quotes from the PETA. As such, animals also challenge the methods traditionally implemented to study animals in natural sciences, as well as a paradigm that makes their subjectivity an alleged mystery. Thinking of Nagel here, excluded from the scientific study. The subject must be understood on its own terms. In this sense, animal subjects have to be met by humans on equal ground in an encounter that can change both party's world and identity. The subject is to be understood and engaged, rather than reduced to our knowledge, namely fully explained according to our criteria.

And here, so definitely phenomenology, to a certain extent, proposes to do that. So yes, what this project is about is to bridge animal senses in phenomenology.

And here there are actually some existing bridges.

So I mentioned smuts, but Matsuzawa is also another important figure in my project.

So Tetsuro Matsuzawa is a Japanese primatologist.

He situates his approach to animal against the backdrop of a traditional holistic ontology, instead of a Cartesian dualism.

He has created the methods and the laboratory design in which chimpanzees are regarded as core researchers, and where they actually take parts in experiments at their discretion. The entire protocol is intended to leave room for the expression of their initiatives. He also organizes art exhibitions with the works of art created by chimpanzees. But that's definitely the whole setup that is very different from what we find most of the time in Western research.

So Franz de Waal is also a major figure here. In Primates and Philosophers, Franz de Waal attempts to dialogue with philosophers.

But the result is, if you have read the book, to summarize this point, extremely frustrating. He's not very happy with philosophers. de Waal concludes that generally, philosophers are obsessed with the idea that there is an abyss between the human and animal realms. He seems to believe, and to a certain extent I think he is right, that the main defenders, the strongest supporters of animal rights,

are scientists. Still, he brushes over two things, at least in this book. First, all the scientists who advocate for animal and let's say an animal-friendly science bump into quite severe criticisms from many of their peers. Second, not all philosophers adhere to this principle of the human-animal radical difference. Phenomenology actually starts from the idea that there is a direct relation of empathy and intersubjectivity between humans and other animals. Several natural scientists have proposed to change their method in order to do justice to animal subjectivity and actually mentioned a possible cooperation with phenomenology. Here I'm going to quote, or as I mentioned very quickly, a couple of figures. Beutendijk, both phenomenologists and animal scientists, is definitely an important figure for me. Franz was a most elder who works in animal welfare and she created the qualitative behavior assessment and she explicitly refers to phenomenology as a tool here. Jesper Hofmeijer is a biosemiotician and he also refers to this possibility of a, let's say, stronger cooperation between biology and phenomenology.

Griffin, for those of you who are also familiar with cognitive pathology, was often criticized for his kind of naive approach to animal awareness, but I find him bold and definitely it opens a lot of interesting paths. Well, you're not going to be surprised to see him wearing his woman care. Definitely her work on animal agency is a major influence on my work.

I'm just, she's here. Kenneth Shapiro has also written a beautiful article on phenomenology incorporating with science and it's entitled, What is it to be a Dog? and it's also a qualitative method.

Dominique Lestell is a phenomenologist, but he also founded a philosophical anthology.

Martin Dranton, yes, here too. Your work on philosophy, hermeneutics and the human-animal relationship was also very important for me.

And Erika Ryonakowski, who also wrote, there are not that many articles on phenomenology and sciences, but her article is particularly inspiring. So last point, animal subjects, new integrative methodologies, is also a method in which I would like to develop, implement interviews with animal scientists.

And I'm almost done. Don't worry. But still, I would like to say a few things about phenomenological interviews, why phenomenological interviews are important to me.

It's a qualitative semi-structured method. It's really about bringing phenomenologists and animal scientists together.

It's inspired by Gadamer and Husserl's work.

A major article here is Alexander Lauterbarus about this very specific method.

The idea is that the interviewees are non-phenomenologists and phenomenologists are the interviewers, but it's definitely a dialogue. The idea is also to guide interviewees to suspend a focus on objects and the world outside of us, and instead reflect on the way they engage their surrounding and other subjects.

It helps. So the interviews help the interviewees revisit their experience and discover its perceptive temporal, spatial, affective, and interpretive structure.

It invites interviewees to use imaginative variation as well.

So exploring how their experience might differ under other circumstances in order to identify what is actually essential.

This method is also hermeneutical because it's also based on the idea that our experience is also shaped by our biases, implicit judgments.

And so the reflection and the interview methods are also meant to bring these underlying judgments or underlying beliefs to consciousness and to analyze them and to think of also alternative approaches. So at a more advanced stage, the interviewees and interviewers can discuss specifically defined alternative conceptual and methodical apparatus.

On that topic, I'm organizing a workshop if you're interested. Please contact me. This will be on November 5 and 12.

And I would like to end by wholeheartedly thanking the philosophy group at Wageningen for welcoming me so warmly, for the incredibly rich and rigorous research they conduct, and for their stimulating collegial spirit.

A special word for Bernice Bobincarck and Zoe Robay, always supportive, always my first contact persons for whom I have the utmost admiration. I am so much looking forward to attending your future inaugural lectures.

Yes, I will be there. Thanks to Martin Fanlone. I don't know if he's here, but for willing to invite me to go supervise his PhD dissertation on insects and pain. My gratitude also goes to Jan van der Stoop. He's not here today. He's Bison de Oerre in Christian philosophy. And he did so much to help me integrate into the philosophy group. And thanks to Rachel Ankeny. I love the philosophy group when I first joined, but I love it even more since you became chair. The support for excellent teaching and research here is truly exemplary. My thanks to Veronica Vasteling, who is probably still stuck in the traffic.

She was supposed to sit here as really my first support person.

Thanks to Veronica and Martin, actually, because it's with them that the very first version of this project was drafted. Their support at the time I was doubting everything was invaluable.

Thanks to my colleague at Radboud. Actually, another Orazi is coming. But I really want to give a special thanks to her, Jan van der Heijder, who was my supervisor a couple of years ago and suggested me to apply for the Socrates chair at Warringen. I had no clue what it was. So thank you for the advice. Thanks to the Socrates Tichting. It's really an honor to have become part of this beautiful tradition. Thanks to my colleague, Socrates Orelers, current and past, and a couple of words from my family, probably, and friends will watch the video.

I hope they are indeed family and friends in France, a couple of other countries, Czech Republic, the U.S. If you watch the video, I miss you and I love you. Iqué présent. Thank you.