

WIJSBEGEERTE *Philosophie* 철학 *Filosofie*
Φιλοσοφία 哲学 *Filosofia* *Filosofia* Общественные науки

UJ Philosophy Colloquium

Wednesday 1 March, 2023. 11:20-12:50

Humanities Common Room

Towards a Phenomenology of Grieving for the Earth

Professor Louise Du Toit

Stellenbosch University



This paper briefly proposes that the phenomenological method lends itself to analysis of processes of slow intimacy. It then discusses different dimensions of the affect of grief and the manifestation of it as mourning, using this method. Freud's influential distinction between mourning and melancholia as different emotional responses to the affect of grief will be introduced to guide the further theoretical discussion. Mourning after loss of a beloved person is both an expression of a slow intimacy of the past and the prolongation of that intimacy after the loss. Grief the analysis shows, is not contained in the mind but extended throughout the body (following Merleau-Ponty's work) and even beyond the body borders. Mourning involves and includes objects, multiple senses, and other persons. Mourning might also be anticipatory and piecemeal, starting even before the actual loss takes place, accompanying that loss throughout the before, during and after. After this analysis of modern western and individual grief for persons lost, the paper poses the question about how we collectively should/could mourn the loss of the more-than-human. The main features of grief and mourning are extended to the notion that we should learn how to mourn the inevitable, impending, and unfolding, losses of individual animals, species, habitats, landscapes, rivers, lakes, forests. Here I turn to grief or mourning explicitly couched as interpersonal, inter-species, collective, and importantly, activist.

The Future.
Reimagined.



@ujphilosophy

