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**Željko Kaluđerović**

## Presocratics and Other Living Beings

**Summary:** *Advocates of the questioning of the dominant anthropocentric perspective of the world have been increasingly strongly presenting (bio)ethical demands for a new solution of the relationship between humans and other beings, saying that adherence to the Western philosophical and theological traditions has caused the current environmental, and not just environmental, crisis. The attempts are being made to establish a new relationship by relativizing the differences between man and the non-human living beings, often by attributing specifically human traits and categories, such as dignity, moral status and rights to non-human living beings. The author explores antecedents of the standpoints that deviate from the mainstream Western philosophy, in terms of non-anthropocentric extension of ethics, and finds them in the fragments of first physicists, which emphasize kinship of all varieties of life. Pythagoras, Empedocles, Anaxagoras and Democritus, in this context, considered certain animals and plants as sacred, i.e. they believed that they are, in a sense, responsible for what they do and that they apart from being able to be driven by a natural desire, being able to breathe, feel, be sad and happy, also have a soul, power of discernment, awareness, the ability to think, understanding and mind. Finally, the author believes that solutions or mitigation of the mentioned crisis are not in the simple Aesopeian levelling of animals and plants “upwards”, but in an adequate paideutic approach which in humans will develop an inherent (bio)ethical model of accepting non-human living beings as creatures who deserve moral and decent treatment and respect.*

**Key words:** *Pre-Socratics, kinship, humans, non-human living beings, protection, welfare.*

The advocates of questioning the dominant anthropocentric<sup>1</sup> view of the *cosmos* by non-anthropocentric expansion of ethics, are becoming increasingly louder in raising (bio)ethical requirements for a new resolution of the relation



<sup>1</sup> Aristotle's paragraph from the Politics (1256b15-22) is emphasized as a paradigm of the leading western tradition and its unquestionable anthropocentrism. Consult: [Singer 1998: 158]. See also: [Калуђеровић and Миљевић 2019: 105-131].

between humans and other living beings.<sup>1</sup> Attempts are being made to establish a new relationship by relativizing the differences between man and non-human living beings, i.e. by attributing specifically human qualities and categories, such as dignity,<sup>2</sup> moral status and rights, to animals, but also, especially in regards to plants, of the ability of sight, feeling, memory, communication, consciousness and thinking. It seems just as inspiring today as it was in ancient times to ask and to look for the answer to the question of whether animals<sup>3</sup> and plants are able and to what extent to develop their feelings. Can they memorize, and if so, which forms of memory they possess? What is their communication like and how sophisticated it is? Ultimately, are animals and plants conscious beings which can think distinguishingly, and can it be said to have a kind of neurology?<sup>4</sup>

If some of the answers to these questions are positive or positively inclined, we usually talk about a discovery of a surprising world, of animals (and plants) as complex beings that live rich and sensual lives, of their relation and analogy with humans, i.e. about a revolutionary concept that is not older than half a century. Leaving aside, for the moment, a deeper discussion about the

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<sup>1</sup> Some of the leading authors, whose views are representative of contemporary discussions about the new regulation of the relationship between humans and animals are undoubtedly Peter Singer (*Practical Ethics, Writings on an Ethical Life*), Tom Regan (*The Case for Animal Rights, All That Dwell Therein*) and Klaus Michael Meyer-Abich (*Praktische Naturphilosophie, Wege zum Frieden mit der Natur*). They, to put it briefly, believe that animals are beings capable of suffering, which have their own interests and needs that are partly similar to the basic needs of men; if there is such a similarity, then, the principle of equality requires that the interests of animals are respected equally as the similar interests of humans; animals finally have their own value, which for some derives from their consciousness, while for others additional importance lies in the kinship of humans and animals. **For more details consult: Kaluđerović 2020.** ("The Reception of the Non-Human Living Beings in Philosophical and Practical Approaches". In *Epistēmēs Metron Logos*) forthcoming.

<sup>2</sup> Human dignity has often been linked to Immanuel Kant's second formulation of the categorical imperative: "Act so that you use humanity, as much in your own person as in the person of every other, always at the same time as end and never merely as means". See: [Kant 2002: 46-47]. Consult also: [Eterović 2017: 104-110].

<sup>3</sup> The definition of "animal" can not be easily or unambiguously determined. According to "European Convention for the Protection of Vertebrate Animals used for Experimental and Other Scientific Purposes", "animal" means any live non-human vertebrate, including free-living and/or reproducing larval forms, but excluding other foetal or embryonic forms. In the Preamble of this convention it is stated that animals have capacity not only for suffering but also for memory, so therefore man has a moral obligation to respect all animals. European Convention for the Protection of Vertebrate Animals used for Experimental and Other Scientific Purposes: <http://conventions.coe.int/treaty/en/treaties/html/123.htm>.

<sup>4</sup> More elaborately on these and similar dilemmas, especially in relation to plants, see: [Chamovitz 2017].

meaning of certain terms, such as “communication”, “consciousness” and “opinion”, in order to be able to talk about their truthfulness in regards to non-human living beings, the author of this paper believes that the departure from mainstream Western thought and philosophy is not a novelty of the second half of the XX century. Namely, different animal rights movements were organized in Europe much earlier. In London, for example, already in 1824 the first society for the prevention of cruelty to animals was established, whereas a regulation pertaining to animal welfare<sup>1</sup> in the UK was adopted in 1911, and, including numerous amendments, it is still in force today.

In a classic passage that Jeremy Bentham wrote even earlier, namely in 1780, it is asserted: *“The day may come when the non-human part of the animal creation will acquire the rights that never could have been withheld from them except by the hand of tyranny. The French have already discovered that the blackness of the skin is no reason why a human being should be abandoned without redress to the whims of a tormentor. Perhaps it will some day be recognised that the number of legs, the hairiness of the skin, or the possession of a tail, are equally insufficient reasons for abandoning to the same fate a creature that can feel? What else could be used to draw the line? Is it the faculty of reason or the possession of language? But a full-grown horse or dog is incomparably more rational and conversable than an infant of a day, or a week, or even a month old. Even if that were not so, what difference would that make? The question is not Can they reason? or Can they talk? but Can they suffer?”* [Bentham 1780/2017: 143-144].

The search of antecedents of levelling the differences between humans and other living beings, stems from the very origins of science i.e. from the first philosophers of nature, on the basis of whose extant fragmentary manuscripts it can be established that they anticipated most of the latter modalities of non-anthropocentric approaches. In order to understand the views of philosophers of nature who were active in the so-called cosmological period, it is necessary to leave aside dualistic conceptions, especially those that on the Cartesian trail emphasize the sharp distinction between matter and spirit. For early *physicists*, in particular, there was no inert matter that due to the logical necessity would require the division of the first principle into the material and efficient element. When accepting any principle as the sole source of origin, automatically, at least to the same extent, its inherent mobility was borne in mind as well.

In short, the standing point of the first philosophers still belonged to the age when there was no serious distinction between body and soul, organic

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<sup>1</sup> Animal welfare is usually, however estimated based on internationally accepted concept of the so-called "Five Freedoms": [http://www.aspcapro.org/sites/pro/files/aspcasv\\_five\\_freedoms\\_final\\_0\\_0.pdf](http://www.aspcapro.org/sites/pro/files/aspcasv_five_freedoms_final_0_0.pdf).

and inorganic.<sup>1</sup> In their minds rather figured some kind of mixture of corporeal and mental elements, as this is the time when it was difficult to imagine the body without a soul or the soul without matter. The first philosophers, consequently, understood thinking as something corporeal similar to sensation and generally understood that like is understood as well as perceived by like (*De An.*404b8-405b10, *De An.*405b13-19). The expected consequence of such approach is the assertion of some Presocratics that not only man but also all other beings have consciousness, thought and thinking.

The rapid development of technique and technology in this century, as well as in the previous one, has put man in a completely new moral situation. The new situation is reflected in the fact that modern man must assume responsibility for the effects that are not the result of the actions of any individual, but represent the collective act, as Edmund Husserl would say, of an “anonymous subject”. The effects of modern technique suggest a completely new situation for traditional social and humanistic sciences, since the postulate of an anthropocentric image of the world is essentially derogated in the sense that people as species are unquestionable in their existence on the Earth. Ensuring the survival of the human species in the foreseeable future is a task to whose achievement new knowledge in some of them should contribute, especially in ethics<sup>2</sup> or bioethics.<sup>3</sup> In order for this fact to be confirmed, they need to re-examine the power of technique, whose deeds thus acquire a philosophical sign, given the importance they have in the lives of the human species.

In the meantime, nature has begun to vigorously “protest” against excessive human activity by changing the climate on Earth (“global warming”), but also by increasing the number of diseases and plagues in humans and animals. Burning stakes during the crisis of so-called “Mad Cow”, “Bird Flu”, “Swine Flu” diseases, or the latest “African Swine Fever”, to name some, are just a warning to people and a hint of much more serious problems they may face. As an imperative, a new order in life is introduced, where one will be-

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<sup>1</sup> As it is evident from Aristotle's claim that Thales thought that the stone (magnet) has a soul because it can cause movement (εἴπερ τὸν λίθον ἔφη ψυχὴν ἔχειν, ὅτι ... κινεῖ). Diogenes Laertius (I,24), relying on the authority of Aristotle (*De An.*405a19-21) and of Hippias (DK86B7), claims that Thales and ascribed to non-ensouled beings, i.e. to non-living beings (ἀψύχοις) to have soul (ψυχάς) as well, repeating the example with stone magnet and adding the amber. Consult also: [Kaluđerović 2015a: 471-482].

<sup>2</sup> It would be possible therefore, on the trail of Hans Jonas, to establish a new imperative: “*We should not compromise the conditions for an indefinite continuation of humanity on earth*” [Jonas 1990: 28]. See also: [Jurić 2010: 153-165].

<sup>3</sup> Fritz Jahr coined the original term Bioethics and formulated a Bioethics Imperative: “*Respect every living being on principle as an end in itself and treat it, if possible, as such!*” [Jahr 2012: 4]. Consult: [Zagorac 2018: 155-167].

come aware that the Earth can no longer tolerate man's often ruthless acts, but requires the cooperation of man with the world surrounding him.<sup>1</sup>

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Indirectly preserved Pythagoras' views confirm a universally known fact that he was the first to bring to Greece the doctrine that all living beings that were born are kindred (ὁμογενῆ). The idea that all forms of life are kindred brought into connection not only humans with animals and plants, but also indicated that human soul, however the truth is only after purification, can achieve melding with eternal and divine soul, to which it belongs by its own nature (Sext. *Math.* IX, 127). This kinship of all varieties of life was a necessary prerequisite for the Pythagorean doctrine on the transmigration of souls (παλιγγενεσία) [Herodot 2009: 102; Huffman 1999: 70. In Long 1999].

Xenophanes reports about *palingenesis* as the Pythagoras' doctrine by a well known statement that once when Pythagoras saw some people beating a dog and advised them to stop, since in the yelping of the dog he recognized the soul of his friend (DK21B7).<sup>2</sup> This fragment shows that the Pythagorean belief in renewal or rebirth of the soul was already so widely known in the sixth century BC that it got parodied. Pythagoras' recognition of his friend's soul embodied in a dog illustrates, on the other hand, the transfer of personal identity on the ψυχή, which means that a personality somehow survives in the migrations of the soul and that there is a continuity of identity. The conclusion that can be derived, at least implicitly, is that ensouled beings, therefore animals, but also certain plants, in a sense, are conscious beings [Protopadakis 2019: 24-29].

A structural difficulty of such a view is how to fit the kinship of entire nature with logical implications that thus plants should not be consumed either since they, according to Pythagoreans, are living beings and a part of the communion of nature. As Diogenes Laertius (VIII,28) reports Alexander Polyhis-

<sup>1</sup> Parts of comments have been taken and paraphrased from: [Kaluderović 2018: 31-44].

<sup>2</sup> From this fragment (DK21B7) it is evident why kinship of all beings which is associated with the doctrine of the transmigration of souls is at the basis of the Pythagorean ban on the eating of animal flesh (DK58E). Since the topics discussed in the Pythagorean fraternity caused controversy, and that they themselves are difficult to systematize and interpret consistently, it is not surprising that attitudes about (non) use of animal meat are not uniformly understood in the latter times. In short, the views of Pythagoreans ranged from the belief in a complete ban on the use of animal meat in the fraternity (DL,VIII,13; DK14.9), through refraining from eating just certain species of animals (DL,VIII,33, DL,VIII,34; DK58C4, DK58C6; Porphyry: 65. [https://books.google.rs/books?id=pu5hAAAACAAJ&printsec=frontcover&dq=porphyry+on+abstinence+from+animal+food+pdf&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjWkejdnr\\_TAhVBtxoKHTY1BxIQ6AEIJAB#v=onepage&q&f=false](https://books.google.rs/books?id=pu5hAAAACAAJ&printsec=frontcover&dq=porphyry+on+abstinence+from+animal+food+pdf&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjWkejdnr_TAhVBtxoKHTY1BxIQ6AEIJAB#v=onepage&q&f=false)), to a categorical denial of any bans on meat consumption (DK14.9; DL,VIII,12). For more details see: [Steiner 2005; Dombrowski 1984].

tor notes that in the *Memories of Pythagoras* he found the solution to the paradox. Pythagoreans believed that all things live which partake of heat, and this is why the plants are living beings (ζῶα), but not all have a soul (ψυχήν). The soul is a detached fragment of ether (αἰθήρ), the one hot and the one cold. The soul is different from life,<sup>1</sup> it is immortal (DK36B4) because immortal is also that from which it separated [Guthrie 1962: 202]. Plants, therefore, have a life, but not all of them have souls which means that some of them are suitable for consumption.<sup>2</sup>

Pythagoras, however, believed that food helps in education of men, if it is of good quality and regular, so he consented to eating everything that leads to a healthy body and a keen mind. He was also convinced that adequate food favors the skill of prophecy, purity and chastity of the soul, i.e. of sobriety and virtue.

By putting human beings into the same rank with animals, Pythagoras demanded they must be viewed as kins and friends and not to be harmed under any circumstances.<sup>3</sup> He thought that this promotes peace, because if men started to abominate the slaughtering of animals as something illegal and unnatural, they would not regard killing of a human being as an honorable act either, and therefore would not initiate wars. This "indirect" duty towards animals was later recognized by Clement of Alexandria, Maimonides, Thomas Aquinas, Kant, and some modern philosophers, and is still today used as an

<sup>1</sup> Werner Jaeger makes a similar conceptual distinction interpreting Anaximenes. He says that Anaximenes uses the word ψυχή in the sense of "soul" and not in the sense of "life", and this he explains by the fact that the air (αἴρ) is bearer of life. For Anaximenes the basic substance, according to Jaeger, is already alive and it refers to the visible corporeal world as the soul to the human body. Consult: [Jaeger 1967: 79]. See also: [Kaluđerović 2016: 75-88].

<sup>2</sup> Plants that were not acceptable as food were broad beans (lat. *Vicia faba*) and mellows (lat. *Malvaceae*). For the detailed reasons why Pythagoreans abstained from eating bread beans and mellows see: Consult: [Jamblich 2012: 69].

<sup>3</sup> Pythagoras was the first philosopher who sometime after 530 BC practiced the use of barley cakes, honey and olive oil instead of animal sacrifice (Iamblichus, in the part when he is talking about everyday life of Pythagoreans says that before dinner they used to make sacrifice of "fumigations and frankincense" (θυμιάτων τε καὶ λιβανωτοῦ), and adds that "flesh of sacrificial animals, as they rarely fed on fish" (κρέα ζῶων θυσίμων [ιερείων], τῶν δὲ θαλασσίων ὄψων σπανίως [χρησθαί]) was also placed before them. See: [Jamblich 2012: 63]. Earlier in the book Iamblichus notes that it is incorrectly attributed to Pythagoras that he instructed athletes to eat meat instead of dried figs (Ibid, p. 17; this story is also repeated by Diogenes Laertius [Laertije 1973: 270]). The founder of the fraternity also prescribed that ensouled beings are not to be used for nutrition, since they are kindred to humans by means of community of life, identical elements and relationships between them, as well as by unified breath that pervades them all.

argument why we should not carry out experiments on animals.<sup>1</sup> The reason is potential subsequent dehumanization of man himself.<sup>2</sup>

Empedocles, a century later, says that all beings think (πεφρόνηκεν), i.e. that they have understanding or consciousness, and adds that this is so by the will of Fortune. Related to this is his claim from the end of fragment 110 (DK31B110), that everything can have thinking and have its share of thought.<sup>3</sup> In the introduction to this fragment it is even possible to find the thesis that all parts of fire, whether they are visible or not, can have thinking (φρόνησιν) and the ability to think (γνώμην), rather than a share of thought (νόματος). Sext Empiricus adds that it is even more astounding that Empedocles holds that everything has a discernment facility (λογικὰ), including plants.<sup>4</sup> This view shows that according to Empedocles as well, who even more explicitly asserted it than Pythagoras, the idea of kinship of all living not only has a vital-animal meaning but to a certain extent the mental meaning.

In his verses Empedocles is also telling about the sacrifice by using water, honey, oil and wine, i.e. he sings about old times when love and compassion for the kin were above everything else, about absence of killing and the treatment of other living beings as one's own household members. Instead of living beings i.e. animals, people, according to him, tried to propitiate the queen Kupris (Κύπρις βασίλεια) (Aphrodite) by sacrificing<sup>5</sup> myrrh, frankincense and honey, statues and "with pictures of animals" (γραπτοῖς τε ζώιοισι). In these times, according to the philosopher of Akragas, everything used to be tame and gentle towards man, including birds and wild animals. The sacrificing which Empedocles mentions did not include destruction of plants either, which also is probably due to the fact that in fragment 117 (DK31B117) he

<sup>1</sup> On scientific experiments on animals consult: [Aramini 2009: 403-405; Frey 2005: 91-103].

<sup>2</sup> Porphyry writes the following: "The Pythagoreans, however, made lenity towards beasts to be an exercise of philanthropy and commiseration" (οἱ δὲ Πυθαγόρειοι τὴν πρὸς τὰ θηρία πραότητα μελέτην ἐποιήσαντο τοῦ φιλανθρώπου καὶ φιλοκτίριμονος). See: [Porphyry: 116]. Parts of comments have been taken and paraphrased from: [Kaluderović 2017: 97-108].

<sup>3</sup> Empedocles' view, from the fragment 110 (DK31B110): "That they all have thinking and [have] [its] share of thought" (πάντα γὰρ ἴσθι φρόνησιν ἔχειν καὶ νόματος αἴσαν) can be relatively easily correlated with Parmenides' view that: "All things have some kind of cognition" (πᾶν τὸ ὄν ἔχειν τινὰ γνώσιν) (DK28A46). As far as Parmenides is concerned, i.e. the relevance of his views for subsequent establishment of non-anthropocentrism, paradigmatic is fragment 16 (DK28B16). For more details consult: [Kaluderović 2014: 394-396].

<sup>4</sup> That this is not so unusual view as Sextus Empiricus writes, confirm quoted paragraphs of Pythagoras as well as the fragments following Anaxagoras and Democritus.

<sup>5</sup> The very idea of sacrifice is often regarded as a morally mediated communication of people with gods or deities. See: [Žirar 1990].

recorded that he had been a boy and a girl, a bird and a fish, even a plant i.e. a bush (θάμνος).<sup>1</sup>

Empedocles says (DK31A70) that trees represent a primordial form of life (*"first living things"* (πρῶτα τὰ δένδρα τῶν ζώων), which had survived even to his time. Moreover, they had existed even before the Sun spread and the day and night were distinguished.<sup>2</sup> Doxographer Aetius, who reports the thoughts of the Sicilian, indicates to the analogy of plant and animal life, confirming it by using the term life (ζῶα) for the trees, the word that was usually restricted to animals. Empedocles, just as Pythagoras, if we use modern terminology, was convinced that there was no sharp genetic difference between plant and animal worlds.<sup>3</sup>

Empedocles urges his disciples to abstain from eating all ensouled (living) beings (ἐμψύχων), since eaten bodies of living beings (ζώων) are where penalized souls reside. He believes that he himself is one of them, the one who has killed and eaten, and that it is by purification that prior sins in connection with food should be treated. Sacrificing a bull and eating his limbs, as this philosopher from Sicily says in part of the original fragments entitled as "Purification", was *"the greatest abomination"* (μύσος ... μέγιστον) for man. Anyone who gets his hands dirty by murder shall experience the fate of *"evil demons"* (δαίμονες οἴτε), that is for 30,000 years<sup>4</sup> he shall wander outcast far away from the blissful, leading a hard life and shall incarnate in the forms of many creatures. That is exactly what Empedocles claims about himself, that he is *"banished by the god and a wanderer"* (φυγᾶς θεόθεν καὶ ἀλήτης). Subject of man's exile from the divine home is taken, then, by Plotinus and Porphyry, repeated in different contexts in the works of Aurelius Augustine, and used by Plutarch as a consolation for political persecution. Basically, according to Empedocles the sin that broke the golden era of tranquility and general leniency was killing and eating animals.

<sup>1</sup> Empedocles obviously, as well as Pythagoras, held the view that one's soul may transmigrate both among humans and among animals and plants.

<sup>2</sup> In the Bible, in the first book of Moses ("Genesis"), for a comparison, it is said that the night and day, were distinguished and named on the first day and the Sun on the fourth day of creation, while grass, plants and trees were created not earlier than on the third day. For more details consult: [Biblija, Sveto pismo Starog zavjeta, „Prva knjiga Mojsijeve“ 2007: 9-10].

<sup>3</sup> Therefore, without any hesitation he makes comparisons and analogies that today may seem strange, at least. For example, that *"tall olive trees ... bear eggs first"* (ώιοτοκεῖ μακρὰ δένδρα πρῶτον ἐλαίας), i.e. that the nature of seeds is equal to the nature of eggs (DK31B79). Or, that hair, leaves, scales and thick feathers of birds are the same (DK31B82), while an ear the philosopher from Sicily calls a fleshy sprout (DK31B99).

<sup>4</sup> That is three times ten thousand years, while one myriad (ἑτῶν μυρίων) according to Plato (Phaedr.248e) is the time required for the soul to return to the place it came from.



Empedocles' case shows that men are living beings that make mistakes and that they owe to animals the justice that is based on the mutual kinship. When Aristotle in *Rhetoric* (1373b6-17) talks about the special and general laws, the general laws he simply called natural laws. The explanation of natural laws is linked with general understandings of the just and unjust in harmony with nature,<sup>1</sup> which, according to him, has been recognized by all nations. The Stagirites believes that with Empedocles it is just that very kind of law, i.e. that the philosopher from Agrigento referred to that right when he was forbidding to kill living beings,<sup>2</sup> since it is impossible for ones to do that justly and the others to do that unjustly. Empedocles (and Pythagoras) claims (DK31B135) that for all living beings applies only one legal norm, and that those who had hurt a living creature shall receive punishments that cannot be redeemed.

Empedocles' (and Pythagoras') followers repeat that men are kin not only to each other or with the gods, but with living beings which do not have the gift of speech. Something common that connects them all is a breath (πνεῦμα), as a kind of soul (ψυχῆς), which extends throughout the entire *cosmos* and unites men with all of them. Therefore, if man would be killing or eating their flesh, they would commit injustice and sin towards deities (ἀσεβήσομεν) to the same extent as if they destroyed their relatives (συγγενεῖς). For that reason the Italian philosophers advised man to abstain from ensouled (living) beings (ἐμψύχων) arguing that it is a sacrilege committed (ἀσεβεῖν) by "those who drench altars with warm blood of the blessed" (βωμῶν ἐρεύθοντας μακάρων θερμοῖσι φόνοισιν) (DK31B136). Transmigration, thought Empedocles, means that men are literally killing their relatives, i.e. that the man who eats meat can eat his son, as well as the son can eat his father, or that children can eat their mother because they changed form.

Anaxagoras, then, often cited the mind as the cause of what is good or right, while in other places he asserts that soul is the cause. The philosopher from Clazomenae asserts that the mind exists in all living beings (ζώοις), both large and small, in both the valuable and in those less valuable (*De An.*404b1-

<sup>1</sup> According to Aristotle (*Met.*1015a13-15): "From what has been said, then, it is plain that nature in the primary and strict sense is the substance of things which have in themselves, as such, a source of movement" (ἐκ δὲ τῶν εἰρημένων ἢ πρώτῃ φύσιν καὶ κυρίως λεγομένη ἐστὶν ἡ οὐσία ἢ τῶν ἐχόντων ἀρχὴν κινήσεως ἐν αὐτοῖς ἢ αὐτά). [Aristotle 1991: 1603]. See: *Met.*1014b16-17, *Met.*1014b17-18, *Met.*1014b18-20, *Met.*1014b20-26, *Met.*1014b26-32, *Met.*1014b32-35, *Met.*1014b35-1015a5, *Met.*1015a6-19; *Phys.*193b12-18, *Phys.*192b8-193a2, *Phys.*193a9-17, *Phys.*193a17-30, *Phys.*193a30-193b12.

<sup>2</sup> Stagirites writes (*De An.*412a14-15): "By life we mean self-nutrition and growth and decay" (ζωὴν δὲ λέγομεν τὴν δι' αὐτοῦ τροφὴν τε καὶ αὔξησιν καὶ φθίσιν). [Aristotle 1991: 656]. Consult also: *Protr.* B74, B80; *De An.*434a22-25; *De Sensu* 436a18-19; *Phys.*255a5-7; *Top.*148a29-31.

5).<sup>1</sup> Anaxagoras did not always consider mind (νοῦς) as something that corresponded to thinking (φρόνησιν). Aristotle, however, believes that the mind is not equally inherent in all living beings, not even in all of the men, while in some Anaxagoras' fragments νοῦς simply means ψυχή in general. Somewhat later (*De An.*405a13-14) the Stagirites cautiously repeats that it seems to him that the philosopher from Clazomenae still distinguishes between the soul and the mind. The objection placed at the expense of Anaxagoras is that he treats soul and mind as having the same nature, regardless of the fact that he sets mind as a principle.<sup>2</sup>

William K. C. Guthrie said that in Anaxagoras the degrees of reality showed that the soul at its lowest level is that what gives the living beings power of self-motion, while the ability of cognition of beings is at higher levels. When he postulated mind as the principle of all movement Anaxagoras linked all the layers of reality. For animate beings mind is an internal faculty but for inanimate things it is an external force [Guthrie 1965: 316]. Implicitly present in Empedocles, the idea of degrees of reality will be further elaborated by somewhat older philosopher, Anaxagoras, perhaps the first on in the long line of the history of theory of levels from Antiquity to Nicolai Hartmann [1973]. It is not, therefore, surprising to find the places where it is stated that the plants also possess a certain degree of sensation and thought. In addition, Anaxagoras (and Empedocles) says that plants are driven by desire, that they have feelings, sadness and joy (DK59A117).

Anaxagoras also asserts that plants are animals (ζῶα εἶναι), and as evidence of his claim that plants can feel "sorrow and joy" (λυπεῖσθαι καὶ ἡδεσθαι), he mentions the changing of leaves. Despite the arguments of other ancient philosophers that plants and many animals do not breathe, the philosopher from Clazomenae was of the opinion that plants do breathe (πνοήν) (*De*

<sup>1</sup> Aristotle probably has in mind the parts of Anaxagoras' fragment 12 (DK59B12). The Stagirites wondered whether Anaxagoras identified *Nous* and *psyche*, or he made the difference between them (About this dilemma writes Harold Cherniss [Cherniss 1964: 293]). The burden of decision-making about this issue is not reduced by reference to Anaxagoras' fragment 11 (DK59B11), in which he asserts that in everything there is a share of everything, except mind, but there are some things in which mind, too, is present. Archelaus, imitating Anaxagoras, held (DK60A4) that mind is equally peculiar to all living beings, i.e. that every living being uses mind and that the difference occurs only in the speed of its use.

<sup>2</sup> The Stagirites probably best expressed his disappointment with Anaxagoras' use of mind in *Met.*985a18-21. Theophrastus says (DK62.2) that Kleidemos does not hold, as Anaxagoras, that mind is the principle of everything. Probably the *Nous*, according to Kleidemos, may not be different from the rest of the soul. In the following fragment (DK62.3), Theophrastus writes that Kleidemos thinks that plants (τὰ φυτὰ) consist of the same elements as living beings (ζῴοις), and if they consisted of more opaque and colder elements, they would be further from being living beings (ζῶια).

*plantis* 816b26).<sup>1</sup> Anaxagoras, moreover, in the (Pseudo) Aristotelian manuscript *Περὶ φυτῶν* (*De plantis*) was presented, together with Empedocles and Democritus, as the proponent of the thesis that plants have mind and ability to think. The mind is, according to Anaxagoras, present in all living beings (humans, animals and plants) and it is the same in all of them. The differences between these beings are not a consequence of essential difference among their souls, but a consequence of differences among their bodies, which either facilitate or hinder fuller functioning of *Nous*.

The idea of kinship of entire nature was not an exclusive Italian paradigm but its traces can be found in the Ionian tradition as well. Anaxagoras adopted a widely spread notion that life was originally generated out of moisture, heat, and earth. He actually says that living beings were first created “in the humidity” (ἐν ὑγρῶι) and later from one another. Air for Anaxagoras contains seeds of all things, and they were brought down from *aer*, together with water, and they generated plants. To this Theophrastus’ statement on Anaxagoras, a Christian thinker Irenaeus adds that previously said applies to animals as well, i.e. that “animals resulted from seeds that fell from heaven to earth” (*animalia decidentibus e caelo in terram seminibus*) (DK59A113). Irenaeus says about Anaxagoras that he was nicknamed an atheist (*atheus*), perhaps because for him the heaven is no longer the father who needs to fertilize the mother Earth by rain, in order for the rain, as his seed, then to grow in the warmth of the bosom of the Earth. Pericles’ friend explains things by mimicking to a certain extent mythological forms, however in a rationalized discourse of his viewpoints the seed simply descends to Earth from heaven by rain and germinated with the aid of heat.

At the end of the series of Presocratics, whose views are relevant for the latter attempts to establish non-anthropocentrism, there is Democritus, who was about forty years younger than Anaxagoras. He is mentioned together with Empedocles as a proponent of the viewpoint that it is necessary to identify φρόνησις with αἴσθησις (*Met.*1009b12-31).<sup>2</sup> In the manuscript *On the Soul* (404a27-29) it is said that for the philosopher from Abdera soul and mind are the same things, since the phenomenon (φαινόμενον) is the truth

<sup>1</sup> From such a perspective the attitude Diogenes of Apollonia (DK64B4) that men and all other animals (ζῶια) live upon air by breathing it, and this is their soul (ψυχή) and their reason (νόησις), when this is taken away, they die, and their reason (νόησις) fails, seems very “common”.

<sup>2</sup> In the part of fragment 105 (DK68A105) Philoponus, in Aristotle’s footsteps, asserts that Democritus says that the soul is not divided into parts and that it has not many abilities, adding that thinking and sensation are the same thing and proceed from the same δυνάμειως. Aetius confirms (DK67A30) that for atomists thinking and sensation have to depend on the physical mechanism. Leucippus and Democritus, according to his interpretation, consider that sensations (αἰσθήσεις) and thoughts (νοήσεις) are only changes of the body.

(GC315b9-15).<sup>1</sup> In the following part of this manuscript the thesis about the identity of soul and mind in Democritus is repeated, together with the claim that he does not consider the mind as a kind of power to achieve the truth.<sup>2</sup>

Democritus (and Parmenides and Empedocles) argued that animals have a kind of ability to think. He believed that animals are responsible for what they do, and that they can be the subject of a just punishment. In fragment 257 (DK68B257), the Abderite writes that only some i.e. certain animals may be killed. The following fragment specifies that unpunished shall remain the one who kills the animals that cause harm and which want (θέλοντα) to cause harm. Now the question is raised what are these “some” animals that may be killed? What are the animals that cause harm and can act intentionally? Democritus may have invoked the distinction, which was attributed to Pythagoras, among wild animals like foxes, reptiles, lions or wolves that could be killed without any fear and farm animals, cattle or horses, which should not be killed, because they probably belonged to someone and were subject to standardized care. Wild animals are ἀδίκειν which means “behave badly” or simply “harm”, while the term δίκαιος implies that domestic animals are “as they should be”, or that they behave “appropriately” and “trained”. In the following fragment 258 (DK68B258) Democritus said that everything that unfairly (παρὰ δίκην) causes harm should be killed. Are there any creatures that do harm fairly (κατὰ δίκην)? A potential positive answer lies in the early understanding of the noun δίκη as “something normal”, what is “normal”, and therefore also “right”. Wolves and foxes which ravage forests do not behave παρὰ δίκην. They do it when they break into corrals with sheep or yards with chicken, so they should be killed at all costs because then they “cause unjust harm”. The fragment 259 (DK68B259), finally, refers to the fact that the ferocious beasts and reptiles should be killed because they are enemies in any framework [Kaluđerović 2015b: 167-177].

The philosopher from Abdera believed, similarly to Parmenides and Empedocles, that there is a small part of the soul in all things, and therefore in plants as well.<sup>3</sup> Given that he derived thinking (φρονεῖν) from the composi-

<sup>1</sup> The clues for not making a distinction between νοῦς and ψυχή Democritus could also find in Homer (*Il.*XXIII,698; *Od.*XVIII,136) and Herodotus (*Istorija*, VIII,97.2).

<sup>2</sup> Aristotle similarly records in *De An.*405a8-13 and in *De Resp.*472a6-8.

<sup>3</sup> Following the trail of Parmenides, Democritus in the fragment 117 (DK68A117) argues that dead bodies have a share in a kind soul, and that they have ability of sensation as well. That plants can see, feel, memorize, think and consciously alert their neighbours when trouble is near it was known even two thousand years ago, although at the time it was not possible to use arguments and knowledge associated with the process of photosynthesis, the similarity of the genes of plants with human and animal genes, cell division, growth of neurons and functioning of the immune system. Presocratics were thinking within the framework of ensouled physicality, intellectualized materiality and logicized sensuality.

tion of the body, Democritus (DK68A135 (58) simply says that it occurs when the soul is in a suitable condition with respect to its mixture. Plutarch reports that Democritus' disciples thought that a plant is an animal that grows from the soil (ζῶα ἔγγεια).<sup>1</sup> Unnamed disciples of the philosopher from Abdera believed, in other words, that there was no substantial difference between plants and animals, except that the plants are rooted in the soil.<sup>2</sup>

Some Presocratics were, if we would review what was previously stated, convinced that there was an intrinsic affinity of the entire nature, so without a lot of normative acts but on the basis of a deep belief in their own closeness with other living beings they refused to harm them and use them as food. By leveling animals "upwards",<sup>3</sup> i.e. by attributing similar or identical emotional and intellectual characteristics to all living beings, the first Greek philosophers paved the way for subsequent attempts at scientific, philosophical but also legal modifications of their status, which culminated in the last century.

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The last around fifty years on the European continent were marked by dramatic changes in the area of ethical-moral and legal-political regulation of the protection and welfare of animals. They are the result of legislative activities

<sup>1</sup> The same thought Plutarch attributed (DK59A116) to Anaxagoras' and Plato's disciples. Plato in the *Timaeus* (77a) says that the plant is "another kind of animal" (ἕτερον ζῶον) and that "a nature akin to that of man" (τῆς γὰρ ἀνθρωπίνης συγγενῆ φύσεως φύσιν). Somewhat later (*Tim.*90a), the Athenian says that man is "a plant not of an earthly but of a heavenly growth" (φυτὸν οὐκ ἔγγειον ἀλλὰ οὐράνιον).

<sup>2</sup> In the part of the paper on the philosopher from Clasmeneae paraphrased is also the manuscript *On plants* (815b16-17), in which the view of three post-Parmenidian philosophers (Anaxagoras, Democritus and Abr. ("Abr." is abbreviation of "Abrucalis" and refers to Empedocles) is stated that plants have both νοῦν and γνῶσιν.

<sup>3</sup> Ante Čović believes that most of the discussions about the responsibility of man for non-human living beings occur within the so-called ethics of animals, whose task is to determine the "moral status of animals", and in the framework of advocacy for "animal rights". He adds that in this context, the "absurd method of speciesistic levelling" has been established, which appears in two of its forms: "As the Aesopian approach of "levelling in ascending order", which consists in anthropomorphic adherence to non-human living beings specifically of human qualities and categories, such as dignity, moral status, rights, etc., and as a Singer's approach of "levelling in descending order", which consists in zoomorphic reduction of specifically human characteristics and categories. Both methods have the same goal - to level differences between man and other living beings with the ability to sense based on the wrong assumption that this is a good way to develop moral considerations and legal obligations towards non-human members of the sensitive community". Consult: [Čović 2009: 37]. About the concept of co-called "Animal ethics" see: [Callicott and Frodeman 2009: 42-53]. Consult also: [Jamieson 2008: 112-120].

of individual states<sup>1</sup> as well as of the transposition into the national legislation of a large number of relevant documents adopted under the auspices of the European Council and the various decisions of the bodies of European Union, and of the standardizing of the legislations of European countries.<sup>2</sup>

The majority of the adopted laws and regulations reflect the predominantly practical-ethical or bioethical understanding of animals, i.e. the evolution of attitudes of legislators towards the environment, animal life as its integral part, and even towards animals as individual beings or creatures by themselves, their overall integrity and well-being. The meaning of such animal protection was, and still is anthropocentric in nature, since in its center are not animals as such, but different interests of man and society as a whole, such as the protection of human health, economic development and development of various economic branches, animal husbandry, hunting, fishing, protection of public morality, order and good practice and feelings of man towards animals as well as the economic interests of animal owners.<sup>3</sup>

As long as modern societies remain largely associated with the consumption of meat, the basic "right" of animals to life may be only gradually implemented, and therefore anchored to the very fence of more specific legal regulations, of course with different programming of dietary and other habits of the new generations of man. It is highly unlikely that in the foreseeable future man will stop eating animals, i.e. that he will accept this fundamental "right" of animals,<sup>4</sup> however that does not mean that we should not continue to work on deepening the protection of non-human living beings.

In other words, in order for the sensibility of animals and plants to be adequately internalized it should become an integral part of the education and

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<sup>1</sup> Germany is the first country in the European Union, which based on an amendment to its Constitution from 2002 provided the highest standards of legal protection of animals at the federal level. On the basis of the 1992 plebiscite, in Switzerland, the Constitution guarantees the inherent value of animals, i.e. it already speaks of "dignity of creation" ("die Würde der Kreatur"). Serbia adopted its „Закон о добробити животиња“ ("Law on Animal Welfare of the Republic of Serbia") in 2009. However, the idea of a human relationship to animals and their protection was regulated in Serbia in 1850 i.e. 1860.

<sup>2</sup> During this period, at least seven conventions dedicated to the welfare of animals were adopted. For more detailed consultations on the perspectives and achievements of bioethical institutionalization in the European Union consult: [Rinčić 2011].

<sup>3</sup> Modern legislations most commonly establish the basic principles of the protection of animal welfare on the so-called patocentric concept, because they speak of the "universality of pain", and besides the pain, suffering, fear and stress, it is usually added that animals can feel panic as well.

<sup>4</sup> Ivan Cifrić writes in detail about the right of animal species to life, different theoretical approaches, as well as the results of the research of the respondents on this subject. Consult: [Cifrić 2007: 209-232]. Joan Dunayer claims that people deny the right to life, liberty, and other fundamental rights to non-human living beings for only one reason which is speciesism. See: [Dunayer 2009: 202].

upbringing of all from the earliest days. It is very important that the different authorities and the citizens themselves in their knowledge and insights do not go below achieved civilized standards of ethical-moral culture and to reflect on different topics concerning the relationship towards animals and plants with due caution and awareness about the dilemmas they may encounter in their professional work and life. Finally, a suitable interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary, transdisciplinary and pluriperspective approach, as well as awareness about responsibility, should result in a more delicate and responsible treatment of non-human living beings by all mentioned.

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### **Желько Калуджерович. Досократики та інші живі істоти**

Прихильники сумнівів у домінуючій антропоцентричній перспективі світу дедалі впевненіше висувують (біо)етичні вимоги щодо нового вирішення стосунків між людьми та іншими істотами, стверджуючи, що дотримання західних філософських та теологічних традицій спричинило нинішню екологічну, і не лише екологічну кризу. Вони здійснюють спроби встановити нові відносини шляхом релятивізації відмінностей між людиною та нелюдськими живими істотами, часто характеризуючи нелюдські живі істоти через особливі риси та категорії, властиві людям, такі як гідність, моральний статус та права. Автор досліджує попередні точки зору, що відхиляються від основної західної філософії, під кутом неантропоцентричного розширення етики,

і знаходить їх у фрагментах перших фізиків, які підкреслювали спорідненість усіх різновидів життя. У цьому контексті Піфагор, Емпедокл, Анаксагор і Демокріт розглядали певних тварин і рослини як священні, тобто вони вважали, що ці істоти, в певному сенсі, несуть відповідальність за те, що вони роблять, і що крім того, ними може керувати природне бажання, вони мають можливість дихати, відчувати, бути сумними і щасливими, а також мають душу, здатність розрізняти, притямність, здатність мислити, розуміти і навіть розум. Нарешті, автор вважає, що вирішення або пом'якшення згаданої кризи полягає не в простому езоповому вирівнюванні тварин і рослин «вгору», а в адекватному підході своєрідної пайдеї, який розвине у людей притаманну їм (біо)етичну модель прийняття нелюдських живих істот як істот, які заслуговують на моральне та гідне ставлення та повагу.

**Ключові слова:** досократики, спорідненість, люди, нелюди, живі істоти, захист, добробут.

### **Желько Калуджерович. Досократики и другие живые существа**

Сторонники оспаривания доминирующей антропоцентрической точки зрения на мир все более настойчиво выдвигают (био)этические требования для нового решения отношений между людьми и другими существами, утверждая, что приверженность западным философским и теологическим традициям вызвала текущий экологический, но и не только экологический кризис. Предпринимаются попытки установить новые отношения путем релятивизации различий между человеком и нечеловеческими живыми существами, часто приписывая нечеловеческим живым существам специфически человеческие черты и категории, такие как достоинство, моральный статус и права. Автор исследует предшественников тех точек зрения, которые отклоняются от господствующей в западной философии, с позиции неантропоцентрического расширения этики, и находит их во фрагментах первых физиков, которые подчеркивали родство всех разновидностей жизни. Пифагор, Эмпедокл, Анаксагор и Демокрит в этом контексте считали определенных животных и растения священными, то есть полагали, что эти существа, в определенном смысле, несут ответственность за то, что они делают, и что они, помимо того, что могут руководствоваться естественным желанием, способны дышать, чувствовать, быть грустными и счастливыми, а также иметь душу, способность различать, иметь осознанность, способность думать, понимать и даже быть носителями разума. Наконец, автор полагает, что решения или смягчение упомянутого кризиса заключаются не в простом эзоповом выравнивании животных и растений «вверх», а в адекватном подходе своеобразной пайдеи, который у людей разовьет врожденную (био)этическую модель принятия нечеловеческих живых существ как существ, заслуживающих морального и достойного обращения и уважения.

**Ключевые слова:** досократики, родство, люди, нечеловеческие существа, защита, благосостояние.

Željko Kaluđerović (1964, Vrbas, Serbia) is employed as Full Professor at the Department of Philosophy at the Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Novi Sad. Since 2009 i.e. 2010 he has been teaching the following subjects: Hellenic Philosophy, Hellenistic-Roman philosophy, Ethics, Bioethics, Journalistic Ethics and Philosophy of Morality. Since 2010, Kaluđerović has been teaching a course in Ancient Greek Philosophy and a course in Modern Philosophy and Political Philosophy at the Department of Philosophy and Sociology, at the Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Tuzla, Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Books: *Aristotle and Presocratics* (KriMeL, Novi Sad 2004), *Hellenic Concept of Justice* (Izdavačka knjižarnica Zorana Stojanovića, S. Karlovci - Novi Sad 2010), *Presocratic Understanding of Justice* (Izdavačka knjižarnica Zorana Stojanovića, S. Karlovci - Novi Sad 2013), *Philosophical Triptych* (Biblioteka ARHE, Filozofski fakultet, Novi Sad 2014), *Dike and Dikaioyne* (Magnasken, Skopje, North Macedonia, 2015), *Early Greek Philosophy* (Hijatus, Zenica, Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2017) and *Stagirites* (Izdavačka knjižarnica Zorana Stojanovića, S. Karlovci - Novi Sad 2018).

Željko Kaluđerović has published more than 120 papers and reviews in different science and philosophy journals in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Romania, Serbia, Turkey and USA. Kaluđerović took part in more than fifty five international symposiums and in one international congress (9<sup>th</sup> World Congress of Bioethics).

He has participated – and still is – in four scientific projects in Serbia, and in three scientific projects in Croatia.

He is a member of the Bioethics Society of Serbia, Croatian Bioethical Society, Centre for Integrative Bioethics (North Macedonia), Croatian Philosophical Society, Philosophical Society of North Macedonia and The International Association for Presocratic Studies.

Željko Kaluđerović is an editor in chief of the Journal of Philosophy *Arhe* from Novi Sad (Serbia), and a member of several editorial boards of journals and proceedings, organizational, scientific and program committees of various international conferences and symposiums.

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**Željko Kaluđerović**, Dr, Full Professor of Department of Philosophy at Faculty of Philosophy, University of Novi Sad, Serbia.

e-mail: [zeljko.kaludjerovic@ff.uns.ac.rs](mailto:zeljko.kaludjerovic@ff.uns.ac.rs)

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6572-4160>

**Желько Калуджерович**, доктор наук, професор кафедри філософії філософського факультету, Університет Нови-Сад, Сербія

e-mail: [zeljko.kaludjerovic@ff.uns.ac.rs](mailto:zeljko.kaludjerovic@ff.uns.ac.rs)

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6572-4160>