

**Catholic University in Ruzomberok**

**Faculty of Arts and Letters**

**Department of Philosophy**

is proud to invite you to the lecture

**Aristotle's Classification of Animals  
and Ambiguous Kinds**

to be delivered by

**Dr. Nicola Carraro**

**Junior Thyssen Fellow**

**Central European University, Budapest**

Date and Time: **March 13 (Tuesday), 2018, 14.30 - 16.00**

Lecture Venue: Room F 403

Faculty of Arts and Letters

Catholic University in Ruzomberok

**Nicola Carraro** has obtained his PhD from the University of Munich in Germany, and held teaching and research positions in Germany, the US, France, and Brazil. His main research interests are Aristotle's metaphysics, his conception of nature, and his philosophy of biology. Currently Nicola is a Junior Thyssen Fellow at the Central European University in Budapest with a research project on Aristotle's conception of biological kinds.



---

## **ABSTRACT**

Aristotle is arguably the first philosopher who explicitly claimed that things can be divided into natural kinds, i.e. groups that are genuinely unified by some objective common property and play an explanatory role in science. This view has been extremely influential not only in philosophy but also in biology, a discipline that was first developed by Aristotle. In particular, it inspired the early modern project of classifying animals into genera and species. Aristotle's classification of animals, however, has some surprising features that make it alien to readers accustomed with later classifications, such as Linnean taxonomy, and have even prompted some scholars to claim that he did not have a classification of animals. After introducing the main lines of the way in which he divides animals into kinds, I will concentrate on one of these surprising features: the claim that some animals are ambiguous between two groups characterized by opposite features (e.g. quadrupeds and bipeds, or terrestrial and aquatic), and that they belong to "neither and to both". I will explain how this surprising claim can be squared with Aristotle's conception of natural kinds.