Contemporary debates in philosophy of science

The lectures organized by Nathalie Gontier

1. Guest lecture by Dr. Tinneke Beeckman (Vrije Universiteit Brussel), 12 March, 15h-18h
   Historical origin of naturalism, mechanistic thinking and its continuing influence on modern science

2. General introduction to philosophy of biology, 19 March, 15h-18h
   The different philosophical theories that influenced Darwin’s thinking, the mechanism of natural selection on a meta-level, the formation of the Modern Synthesis, and Post-Neodarwinian thinking

3. Evolutionary Epistemology & the units and levels of selection debate, 26 March, 15h-18h
   Evolution from the point of view of the organism, the gene and the environment. Discussed authors are Donald Campbell, Michael Bradie, William Harms, Richard Dawkins, Richard Lewontin, Robert Brandon, …

4. Guest lecture by Prof. Carrapiço on Symbiogenesis, 2 April, 15h-18h
   The founding fathers of symbiogenesis, the difference with natural selection, its implementation in virology, botany and medicine. A case study of Azolla.

5. Punctuated equilibrium, 9 April, 15h-18h
   The history of the idea, the difference between gradualism and punctuation, the Cambrian explosion, the application of punctuated equilibrium to material culture (Gould and Lewontin)

6. Behavioural modernity and archaeology, 16 April, 15h-18h
   Anatomical modernity versus behavioural modernity, the archaeological record, the different hominin species

7. The origin and evolution of language, 23 April, 15h-18h
   Different theories on the origin of language