Greener through Grey?
Boosting Sustainable Development through a Philosophical Analysis of Ageing and Social Media

Abstract:
Sustainable development is challenged by the exponential growth of the older population that threatens available resources. In this talk, we go beyond current negative views in the aging debate by considering the ageing process from a philosophical perspective. By focusing on frailty, a feature that is usually associated with old age, we show that ageing can be the means to highlight the constitutive vulnerable condition of human beings that makes them exposed to others. We redefine the relationship between the human and the natural world, as one of co-constitution and reciprocal sustenance and promotion. As consequence, we move away from the functionalist approach to sustainable development and we suggest a new vision in which the concept of care becomes central. On the basis of a social media behavioral analysis, we claim that social media can play a role in making the elderly more involved in care practices of other human beings and especially of nature, contributing in a more active way to sustainable development. A positive side effect of this alternative vision is that it might become more easily accepted in those non-Western societies that stress the important role of social relationships, as in the Chinese one.

About the Speaker:
Paola Monachesi is assistant professor at Utrecht University (The Netherlands). In her work, she takes a communication and new media approach to urban planning by focusing on the relation between language and space (both physical and virtual) and the role that media play in regaining and reshaping public space in the city. Since 2014, she is principal investigator of the European Project "Grage" where she analyzes the elderly as target group of urban green development. She visits CUHK on a regular basis.

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Chen Kou Bun Building
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~All are Welcome~
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