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ETHICAL APPROACHES IN DETERMINING THE MORAL STATUS OF ANIMALS

Abstract:

In the last few decades we have witnessed a proliferation of works in the field widely defined as “studies of the relationship between man and animals”, “studies of animals”, or “anthrozoology”, and even “studies of animal ethics”. Among the avant-garde in this field there is a confrontation with this naturalized discourse. Over time, this has led to a growing need to reconsider, analyse and upgrade the validity of the argument of different ethical views and their theories that serve to determine and evaluate our behaviour towards animals as morally acceptable or not.

Hence, what the author is primarily concerned with, is critical reflection on a wide range of theories that seek to explain relevant positions on our relationship to animals and wildlife on Earth. Taking on this new responsibility in relation to our treatment of animals modifies not only our way of more direct treatment of animals, but also the way we should be constituted as entities in the world. It is an assumption that we share the world with other beings and that this implies a moral obligation that goes beyond the category of belonging to the same species. A new culture of human coexistence with other non-human beings needs to be inaugurated, in line with modern living conditions on this planet.

Keywords: *ethics, animals, wildlife, responsibility, moral obligation*

Introduction

In the last few decades, we have witnessed a large number of works in the field widely defined as “studies of the relationship between man and animals”, “studies of animals”, or “anthrozoology”¹, and even “studies of animal ethics”. Although, from the very beginning, a large amorphous and undifferentiated set of scientists was created around the same field, at the same time a quick death was strongly predicted for this “crazy” idea, movement, field and the effort to introduce such a “discipline” is doomed in advance soon to become

¹ Further see Rob Boddice, *A History of Attitudes and Behaviours toward Animals in Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century Britain: Anthropocentrism and the Emergence of Animals*, Melten, Lewiston, NY, 2009, especially Chapter 4 - “The Bentham Myth,” as well as Chapter 7 - “The Human as Animal”.

the subject of history! (Sax, 2009/10: 165-169) However, whatever the “fate and path” of this field of research, study, “discipline” ...is over the last few decades, it seems unlikely that its impact is and is going to be negligible! Confirmation of its existence and especially development is the growing attention of philosophers, historians, psychologists, sociologists, anthropologists, lawyers, cultural theorists and others to animals², our understandings of man, animals and the relationship between them, and also of the growing more serious susceptibility of their views to strictly critical examination³.

At the same time, among the avant-garde in this field, it is already common to talk or debate about “animal persons” (Francione, 2009), even “animal citizens” (DeGrazia, 2006: 40-53), something that is entirely contrary to the tendency and condemnation of those who disparage this effort by saying that, to some extent, narratives of subordination as well as the justification of human domination and its unique and exclusive interests concerning animals and nature, exist and can be easily found throughout the history of philosophy. Facing this naturalised discourse over time has led to a growing need to reconsider, analyse, and upgrade the argument of different ethical views and their theories that determine and evaluate our behaviour towards animals is morally acceptable or not. This has led to issues related to animal rights and our duties to them following their *moral status*, which has also become an integral part of almost all major ethical debates in the last few decades, representing one of the most current areas of ethics research.

Do animals have a moral status!?

This is because,

“the human beings” relation on the planet to living non-human beings, animals, is characterised by their apparent superiority.

² Although linguistically, the correct term would be “non-human animals”. The term “non-human animals” is used to shed light on the often overlooked fact that humans are also animals. For the rest of this text, we will generally stick to such uses, except when the sources we use relate to the more traditional human and animal dichotomy.

³ An in-depth insight into the subject matter of philosophy should be found in: Peter Singer, *Animal Liberation*. In history: Erica Fudge, *Brutal Reasoning*; Harriet Ritvo, *Noble Cows and Hybrid Zebras: Essays on Animals and History*; Rob Boddice, *Anthropocentrism: humans, animals, environments*. In psychology: Richard Ryder, *Victims of Science*; Bernard Rollin, *Animal Rights & Human Morality*; Nicholas Mitchell & Miles Thompson, *Anthropomorphism, Anecdotes, and Animals*. In sociology: Adrian Franklin, *Animals and modern cultures: A sociology of human-animal relations in modernity*; Josephine Donovan & Carol Adams, *The Feminist Care Tradition in Animal Ethics*. In anthropology: Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Totemism*; Eduardo Kohn, *How Forests Think: Toward an Anthropology Beyond the Human*. In law: Gary Francione, *Animals, Property, and the Law*; Steven Wise, *Rattling the Cage: Toward Legal Rights for Animals*. In theory: Dominick La Capra, *History and Its Limits: Human, Animal, Violence*; Donna Haraway, *When Species Meet*.

Thanks to their overall abilities and potentials, human beings have become masters of the planet. Their *dominant* planetary position raised the question of the value regulation of their behaviour towards non-human beings, animals as *lower and subordinate species*. (...) Throughout the history of civilization, people have often treated their superiority as an implicit or explicit authority for complete submission to non-human beings, animals in relation to human demands, interests and needs, with the behaviour towards them being determined as *morally indifferent*". (Jakovljević, 2013: 167-168)

Thus, in the 1960s, the global animal rights movement was created, and the role of philosophy in developing the theoretical framework and forcing intellectual debates about our treatment of animals was crucial in addressing this issue in its full significance - moral justification of current practices and regulation of normative issues regarding the attitude towards animals, in general (Sirilnik & Fontene & Singer, 2018: 15-17). Peter Singer, one of the most important representatives of this movement⁴, commented on the role of philosophy, which joined this movement as a science in the 70s of the last century, saying that: "philosophers were not the mother of the movement, but they did ease its passage into the world and – who knows – may have prevented it being still-born". (Singer, 2006: 2) Then, together with Tom Regan (Regan, 1983; Regan, 1982) and Klaus Michael Meyer-Abich (Meyer-Abich, 1997; Meyer-Abich, 1984), the primary thoughts that are representative of the current discussion on the new thinking and regulation of the relationship between humans and animals, they formulated in the following paragraphs:

1. Animals are beings that are capable of suffering⁵, with their interests and needs that are similar to the basic needs of people;

⁴ but also the founder of the Animal Liberation Movement, along with Jacques Cosnier and Hubert Montagner as early as the 1970's, shortly after the formation of the Oxford Group of Richard Ryder which defined the great principles of animalistic ethics in the collection entitled *Animals, Men and Morals* on Roslind and Stanley Godlovitch and John Harris.

⁵ In a well-known passage, which represents a departure from the mainstream of Western philosophy, Bentham says the following: „The day *may* come when the rest of the animal creation may acquire those rights which never could have been withholding from them but 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 caprice of a tormentor. It may one day come to be recognized that the number of the legs, the villosity of the skin, or the termination of the *os sacrum* are reasons equally insufficient for abandoning a sensitive being to the same fate. What else is it that should trace the insuperable line? Is it the faculty of reason, or perhaps the faculty of discourse? But a full-grown horse or dog is beyond comparison a more rational, as well as a more conversable animal, than an infant of a day, or a week or even a month, old. But suppose they were otherwise, what would it avail? The question is not, Can they *reason*? nor Can they *talk*? but, Can they *suffer*?". (Bentham, 1988: 311)

2. If there is such a similarity, the principle of equality requires that the interests of animals are respected as well as the similar interests of humans;

3. Animals have their value, which for some (Singer and Regan) stems from their consciousness, while others (Meyer-Abich) attribute additional importance to the affinity of animals and humans.

Animals should, furthermore, be guaranteed the fundamental “right to life” appropriate to their species, the view that is based on the parts of the fourth and fifth articles of the “Universal Declaration of Animal Rights”: “wild animals have the right to live and reproduce in freedom their own natural environment ... Any animal which is dependent on man has the right to proper sustenance and care”. (Universal Declaration of Animal Rights, 2021).

Nevertheless, the unresolved question remains about the relationship between humans and animals, which belong to distinctly and significantly different ontological stages. Can this ontological differentiation, which imposes certain insurmountable limits of argumentation in favour of a behaviour, guided by moral rules, in relation to animals and the very thought of their rights in general, be considered sufficient or in the modern ethical discussion should require an adaptive reorientation of the argument, if it refers to the normative regulation of our behaviour towards animals?⁶ Is it possible to create and apply animal bioethics?⁷

This is so because, historically, various views and considerations have been encouraged, i.e. various theories about the attitude towards animals have been created. Each of these theories tries through ethics and philosophy to clarify the person’s attitude behind that attitude by directly asking the question about the moral status of animals. This is because, in order to be able to attribute and/or recognise moral status to certain beings as a kind of opportunity for proper consideration of objects with direct moral significance, we need to take a particular moral view that they have “a kind of importance as beings, that they have their moral significance, importance”. (Audi, 1999: 590) Here, too, when we consider issues related to moral values, others are often involved because they are in some relationship, which says that to have a moral status means “to be an entity concerning which others (living beings) have, or they may have moral obligations”. (Warren, 1997: 3)

When an entity is given a moral status, it does oblige us not to behave as we wish, but it must be well considered whether the same entity has its inter-

⁶ Futher consult: Evangelos D. Protopapadakis, “Animal Rights, or Just Human Wrongs?”, pp. 279-291, in: *Animal Ethics Past and Present Perspectives*, Evangelos D. Protopapadakis (ed.), Logos Verlag Berlin GmbH, Berlin, 2012.

⁷ About the concept of “Animal ethics” see: *Encyclopedia of Environmental Ethics and Philosophy*, J. Baird Callicott & Robert Frodeman (eds.), Macmillan Reference USA, Farmington Hills, MI, 2009, pp. 42-53. Also: Dale Jamieson, *Ethics and Environment*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2008, pp. 112-120.

ests, desires, beliefs and the like. It should be borne in mind that the rules are not binding us on such an action, but the intrinsic value of the entity itself, "the meaning it has in itself, according to some "own right". (DeGrazia, 2004: 13)

Today's most important ethical theories about the moral status of animals

When we talk about animals, the question of moral status, i.e. the value in itself of the same as an entity, covers several different criteria, which first refer to various theories of moral status. According to several authors,

"rationality is the main criterion for moral action (Aristotle, Kant), while others will be based on the Christian tradition according to which moral status is under the principle of sanctity of life, and it belongs exclusively to the human species, third, most often utilitarians will focus on sensitivity as a criterion for moral status that morally binds not only people but also all other living beings who may experience pain, suffering or other mental states, fourth, ecofeminists, to the ability for compassion and care". (Warren, 2003: 439)

So, there are numerous different approaches, i.e. a wide range of theories that try to explain the relevant positions for our relationship with animals and the living world of the Earth (Vance, 1992: 1715-1719), of which, as the most serious and mature in their positions, we single out the following few⁸:

- **utilitarianism** or **ethical humanism**, which in the behaviour of people as a supreme value emphasises the rule of the principle of utility, where decisions are made solely depending on whether they have positive or negative consequences while striving to achieve the highest possible benefit for most people (but not necessarily just people).

This principle of utility is usually defined in terms of "the amount of suffering and/or enjoyment or happiness" (Singer, 1989: 150), meaning that individuals are interested in doing what increases their enjoyment or reduces their suffering. It follows that "all living beings, human and non-human, have interests". (Mylan & Jenni, 2010: 14) Because all interests, according to this theory, are viewed from a moral viewpoint and deserve equal value, the impact of one's actions on all sensory beings, including animals, is a matter of moral importance.

In other words, "if someone suffers, it cannot be morally justified to refuse to take that suffering into account". (Singer, 2011: 50) As Henry S. Salt, one of the first to advocate for certain animal rights, states: "pain is pain ... whether inflicted on man or beast. And the creature that suffers, whether man or beast,

⁸ Although others can be found in various representative works. So for example, M.A. Warren offers the following: The Moral Agency Theory, The Genetic Humanity Theory, The Sentience Theory, The Organic Life Theory and Two Relationship-based Theories. (Warren, 2003: 440-445).

feeling the pain as it lasts, suffers evil". (Salt, 1892: 24) Hence, regardless of the creature's nature, the principle of equality requires that one's suffering to be counted as much as the suffering of all other creatures.

For utilitarians, the interests of the highest weight should prevail no matter whose interests they are, and it is precisely this view that has "radical measures to assess the greater use of animals". (Sandøe & Christiansen, 2008: 15) Namely, a small step towards a more significant consideration of the interests of animals is better than none. Therefore, according to the utilitarian position, if there are different strategies to improve production, the one that is the best, the most effective will be accepted. In the debate between those who compromise on improving animal welfare and those who seek radical reform, utilitarians do not act on the principle of a discussion but consider which strategy will best affect animal welfare. In this context, Singer goes most radical in animal welfare by advocating a boycott of animal products and the settlement of farms by vegetarians. However, this is not because it is fundamentally wrong to kill an animal, but because our consumption of meat and other products from commercially bred animals leads to suffering:

"As long as the conscious being is conscious, it has an interest in as much enjoyment and less pain as possible. The feeling is enough for the creature to be brought into the realm of equal consideration of interest. Nevertheless, this does not mean that the creature has a personal interest in continuing to live. For the being who is not self-conscious, death is the cessation of experience, just as birth is the beginning of the experience. (...) Since the animal belongs to a species that is not capable of self-awareness, it follows that it is not wrong to breed and kill. The condition is to live a comfortable life, and, after the killing, another domestic animal that will lead a similar life and which would not exist if the first animal was not killed". (Singer, 1979: 145-156)

The essence of utilitarianism is not that it allows killing because it does not belong to the human species, but that it allows killing animals precisely because they lack the ability to want to prolong life⁹. This attitude also applies to members of our species who also do not have that ability.

- **the animal right view**, according to which animals deserve a specific approach that includes the question of what is of best interest to them, regardless of whether people consider them "cute", whether they are helpful to humans, whether they belong to an endangered species or whether at all, a person takes care of them.¹⁰

⁹ In this case, as Singer concludes, the vegetarianism is not obligatory for people who eat meat from animals raised in a utilitarian moral way.

¹⁰ just as a person has his rights even when he is not beautiful, helpful, and even if no one loves him.

Philosopher Tom Regan argues that

“(at least some) animals have negative rights such as the right not to interfere, the right not to be killed, injured or tortured, that animals have the right to be treated with respect, then the right to bodily integrity and the right to freedom of movement”. (Regan, 1983: 328)

Violation of these rights is not morally justified, regardless of the potential benefits people feel they have: we are never justified in harming animals for human purposes – however vital these purposes may be! Namely, this approach is based on attributing intrinsic value to all beings who can feel- those who experience life and whose lives can be good or bad over time. As such, they have “individual experiential well-being, logically independent of their usefulness in relation to the interests or well-being of others”. (Regan, 1989: 38) Then this is the foundation of their rights and morally obliges us to refrain from things that would significantly hinder the life of such creatures. According to them, the main characteristic that all people have in common is not rationality, but the fact that each of us has his own life that he cares about: what happens to us is vital to us, whether it is the same for anyone else. This is because we are all subjects of life with experience. Suppose this is the basis for attributing an inherent value to individuals to be consistent. In that case, we must ascribe an inherent value, and thus a moral right, to all subjects of life, whether human or not.

It follows that an animal rights-based approach is most focused on “ensuring animal welfare (experience of pleasure and pain), and attributing protected rights is the best way to achieve this common goal”. (Francione, 2009: 23) It means understanding that animals are not the property we can use for food, clothing, entertainment or experimentation. Consequently, it is considered wrong to look at animals as a commodity as a “means to an end”, just as it is wrong to treat them in the same way for the same reasons. The fundamental right of all who possess an inherent value is the right never to be treated simply as means to an end for others.¹¹

- **theory of contractarianism or common agreement**, according to which, analogous to the theory of a common agreement of Thomas Hobbes from the 17th century, which claimed that without political rule, everyone would live in a natural state in which our lives would be endangered, the same can be transferred to the use of animals. Proponents of this view claim that because man can establish an “agreement” with other rational beings, that is, with other human beings (because both parties have some benefit from it), and thus protect its rights and interests, with animals he cannot do the same because of their lack of ability to think and make decisions, so it makes no sense to protect their rights because humans get nothing in return.

¹¹ In this context, the movement for the protection of animal rights has the same weight as the movement for the protection of human rights.

This is the basis for an argument drawn by analogy that places specism side by side with racism and sexism because people as human beings, as a species, hold the view that they are the only ones who deserve moral status or that they at least deserve special moral status is related to other species. Nevertheless, this justification is not substantiated with anything “except that it belongs to the human species and that it is wrong!”. (Diamond, 1991: 319) Namely, in contractarianism, it is considered that humanity is the scope of morality. This implies that morality is about the obligation humans have towards other humans. Morality is based upon a real or hypothetical contract between persons. Obligations follow from a mutual agreement or an agreement that people could have made as a basis for cooperation.

So, the morality of the members of the concluded agreement is applied only to individuals who can agree with the moral community, so it is essential to define who those members are. That is, we have it for long-term personal interest, and the parties to the contract in morality include all those who have the following two characteristics:

1. “Be able to reap certain benefits, if they do not do what they have agreed upon;
2. To be able to enter into the contract”. (Narveson, 1987/88: 194)

Given these requirements, even more, and considering several other alternative attributes such as language abilities, language or speech, rationality, rationality and reasoning, the ability to accept social and moral rules, possession of the immortality of the soul, possession of life in the biographical sense of the word, moral autonomy, the ability for reciprocity, empathy and desire for self-esteem ..., as “alleged features that distinguish us from animals and justify our special moral status” (Mylan & Jenni, 2010: 19), it is apparent why animals have no right!

In other words, the core message of contractarianism regarding our attitude toward animals is that animals are important because some humans think they are important! The non-existence of animals in the moral community does not necessarily mean that the way they are treated is irrelevant from the position of a common agreement. Moreover, “the position of the common agreement is entirely anthropocentric because any animal’s right to their protection depends on the human factor” (Sandøe & Christiansen, 2008: 34): the norm of mutual respect not to hurt animals depends solely on whether it hurts our feelings! From a self-centered point of view, man must necessarily treat animals well enough to suit their needs. “Animal suffering is not an ethical problem in itself. Hence, any form of animal use is ethically acceptable and even ethically desirable because of the benefits that humans derive from animals”. (Sandøe & Christiansen, 2008: 34)

- **the relation view**, according to which, as Randall Lockwood assumes, pets are euthanized at the owner’s request when they grow up and/or when they are more challenging to manage. (Lockwood & Rindy, 1987: 2-8) According to him, there is a replacement purchase, a new pet. A similar view in prac-

tice occurs "when it is possible to rent a pet". (Perdue & Lockwood, 2014: 227-237; Sandøe & Christiansen, 2008: 19)

From an animal rights perspective, the Lockwood dog problem is an example where the dog is treated solely as a means. According to the same, what needs to be learned and kept in mind is that we must not kill animals to satisfy our own needs. However, the assumption is that many people who oppose the idea of euthanizing dogs do not oppose the idea of slaughtering lambs and calves. Hence, the theory of animal rights is impossible to explain with this asymmetry: if animals have rights, then killing a dog and a lamb is equally wrong, and the reason it is wrong is the same in both cases.

Can the asymmetry be explained in another way? According to the relational view, what is wrong with the supposed example of euthanizing a dog is that it is the opposite of the attitude that people typically have for dogs. This relationship is friendly, meaning, "unless something unpredictable happens to the owner, this relationship lasts the entire life of the dog". (Scruton, 1998: 61) Accordingly, the idea that a dog could be killed for the pure comfort of man fails to embrace and fully respect the uniqueness of the relationship that exists between the owner and his dog. In lambs, the vital connection between humans and animals is between the shepherd and the flock he cares for. This association is compatible with the periodic killing of lambs. Indeed, the slaughter of an animal in such a relationship is an integral part of the relationship.

Therefore, according to the relational view, the animal must not be viewed abstractly and uniformly, as the previous three theories have suggested, despite the differences between the animals. On the contrary, animals differ, morally, in the connection they make with humans, and that connection defines our duty to animals. (Sandøe & Christiansen, 2008: 15-33) The clash of the relational view with the other previously mentioned positions lies in the conflict of personal interests and duties that we owe to the animals entrusted to our care. However, proponents of the relational approach will argue that the conflict is less than it seems and argue that animal relations have become part of their own good. Namely, when we take care of the animals, we take care of ourselves, so all that is important is to take care of the animals for personal interest. Nevertheless, the definition of self-interest is broader than in the theory of contradictions.

In conclusion, there are more minor conflicts between one's own good and the good of other (animal) living beings than other theories assume. The relational view, i.e. theory, tries to keep the animals in different roles of helpers, friends, pets, pests, hobby animals and wild animals. Given the role, there are different responsibilities. However, the duty of humans will continue to be related to the individual animal. Such a conclusion marks the contrast and proposes consideration of the following theory, i.e. the theory of respect for nature.

- **Respect for nature view.** According to it, the most important thing is preserving the species. As the American philosopher, Holmes D. Rolston states,

“Singer argues that species as such are not conscious entities and therefore have no greater interests than the interests of individual animals that are members of certain species. Regan goes on to say that the legal framework is the moral rights of the individual. Species are not individuals and therefore, the legal framework does not recognise the morality of the species towards anything, including survival. (...) But the duties towards the species are not duties towards the class, category or aggregation of conscious interest, but towards the life line. Species ethics must recognise how species survival is greater than individual interests and feelings”. (Rolston, 1989: 252-255)

If we clarify that view, there is a stronghold that species must continue. If we think like that, the individual’s life is something transient, just like what he possesses intrinsically. The individual is subordinate to the species, not vice versa. The genetic code contained in *telos* is the “property” of the species to the same extent as the individual. Hence, the line of conservation of the species is thorough, and it is more important to protect its integrity than the integrity of the individual.

“The defence of the form of life, the opposition to death, the renewal that maintains a normative identity over time, all this is true for the species as well as for the individual. So what is it that prevents the obligation that arises at this level? An adequate survival unit is an appropriate level of moral care”. (Rolston, 1989: 252-255)

The preceding explains why this widely held view of the extinction of the species is something to be condemned, not only because of the consequence for human life or animal care but also as something inherently wrong. Moreover, it is justified to complain about the extinction of the species because the species itself are morally valuable. Hence, there is an obligation to the species, not just to the individual.

- **Hybrid view.** Based on the above theories, it can be concluded that they do not provide a complete answer to the question of what is the basis of our duties to animals and what are those responsibilities? This means that if we accept utilitarianism, we cannot accept the theory of mutual agreement or animal rights precisely because of this inconsistency.

However, some theories can be combined. In this sense, hybrid theory encompasses a view that differs from each theory but at least combines two elements. (Sandøe & Christiansen, 2008: 15-33) For example, those who advocate for nature and species conservation also think it is essential to think about human and animal rights. Hence, humans can develop a theory that decisions will be based on respect for nature and animal welfare.

The hybrid theory, which seems to be the most appealing to many people, combines the elements of utilitarianism with animal rights, i.e. there are

certain things that no one will do to animals, no matter how beneficial are the consequences for them: cause intentional pain and suffering to animals. As long as we refrain from doing so, it is thought that we can balance within the definition of welfare, as utilitarians do. Killing animals, causing discomfort or stress may be allowed, but only if there are significant consequences after that. Accordingly, animal experimentation for the prevention, treatment or alleviation of severe human diseases is acceptable if the animals involved do not experience pain or other forms of profound suffering.

Nevertheless, the ability to combine more than two different theories still does not formulate credible and logically consistent definitions of human duty to animals. It is therefore quite challenging to combine the following two theories, which have a large number of adherents:

1. The utilitarian view of killing animals,
2. A view that there is never a morally justified reason for deliberately killing innocent creatures.

The problem is that “the principle of utilitarianism that allows the killing of animals in some instances will certainly, at least hypothetically, allow the killing of people belonging to specific categories, for example, individuals with intellectual disabilities”. (Sandøe & Christiansen, 2008: 15)

Conclusion

As can be seen from the previous ones, different approaches fill the map of theories and authors who see, from different perspectives, to offer rationality that justifies the involvement of animals in morality. This debate encourages us to think about how we act in the world and how we often omit from our ethical concerns the elements that can and should be incorporated into our to-do list. This requires an experimentally combined presentation within which complements the natural-biocentric and utilitarian point of view, as well as the traditional view of Rousseau and Schopenhauer as the main point of view for the moral conduct, but also the view of the “awe of nature” of Albert Schweitzer and Paul Taylor, as additional motivational support. That is, the idea is to find an appropriate solution and apply the two major approaches, i.e. negative utilitarianism and natural biocentrism, a hybrid theory as a new (bio) animal ethics in which it is crucial to think about both human and animal rights, a theory according to which decisions will be based between respect for nature and animal welfare.

At the same time, taking responsibility for our treatment of animals modifies our way of treating animals more directly and the way we should be constituted as entities in the world. Hence, to think about animals means to reconsider the role and responsibility of human beings, from the identification of lines set on time and maintained daily. In the end, it is an assumption that we share the world with other beings and that this implies a moral obligation

that goes beyond the category of belonging to the same species. Therefore, we should inaugurate a new culture of human coexistence with other non-human beings under the current living conditions on this planet, i.e. the real threat to biodiversity and the environmental challenges here in this first half of the 21st century. The ecological crisis forces humanity to determine its attitude towards animals differently. Moreover, while this may seem utopian, time will tell if humans are ready for this step in evolution, i.e. the first has already been made with the eradication of cannibalism. The second is insight:

“Will man take the second step by stopping eating animals, i.e. will recognize the fundamental right to life of animals? While this is unlikely to happen in the foreseeable future, this does not mean that man should not work for the recognition of the dignity and protection of non-human living beings”. (Kaluderović, 2009: 320)

This is because although the modern man in the general humanisation of many spheres of life has significantly surpassed his ancestors, it is still “paradoxical that at the same time in our epoch, as in any epoch of mankind so far, the number of animals over which suffering has not been he was so big”. (Kaluderović, 2009: 311)

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