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OUR “LESSER BRETHREN”

ABSTRACTS

FROM THE EDITORS – Animal Ethics is a Human Concept (A.M.W.)

Animal ethics is a human concept. It is the human being that asks the questions about the scope of moral obligation: Does it concern exclusively our conduct towards persons or does it apply also to animals? Although the fact that humans cultivate ethical reflection is revealing of the nature of the human being as such, the question of the addressee of moral obligation remains unsettled.

Animal ethics is a relatively new ramification of ethical discourse. It received an enthusiastic welcome from ecological (environmentalist) milieus, whereas in those drawing on traditional humanism, it was often received with a shrug. One might risk an observation that we are witnessing a formation of the two sides of the controversy: their representatives apparently speak the same language, but, on a deeper scrutiny, it turns out that they are using two sharply distinct languages. Is it possible to find any common ground between «human rights» and «animal rights,» between the slogans of «animal liberation» and the ideals of «human emancipation,» between «wild justice» and «political justice»?

In the present volume of *Ethos*, which we have dedicated to our “lesser brethren”, the animals, we publish papers by authors representing various traditions of animal ethics. Despite their varying outlooks, different metaethical positions, and discrepancies in the understanding of the relationships between science, ontology and axiology, all of them share the conviction that the issue in question is important in itself. The awareness of the significance of the problem addressed by animal ethics seems, at the present stage of the debate, more feasible than a reconciliation of standpoints. A prematurely reached agreement on some common view might prove, from the vantage point of rationality, equally flawed as a polemical attitude amounting to nothing but defense of one’s own position. In order to appreciate the importance of the matters addressed by the proponents of animal ethics, we suggest a hermeneutic approach, that is an attempt to approach animal ethics in the light of personalism, and – conversely – to approach personalism in the light of animal ethics.

In our endeavor, we are not starting from scratch. The inspiration for our quest comes from St. Francis of Assisi, who called animals his “lesser brethren.” The Franciscan brotherhood of men and animals stems from the deep roots of the Christian theology of creation. The glory of God, the dignity of man, and the gift of nature are the three pillars of the Franciscan synthesis that unites theism, humanism and ecologism.

A widespread concept in the Christian Middle Ages was that of man as a microcosm, in which the world of spirit and the world of matter coexisted, the element of the Divine and the animal element being interconnected. Developed on the theoretical basis of Neoplatonism, which emphasizes the primacy of the spiritual element, the concept of man as a microcosm did not depart from the theology of creation expressed in the Book of Genesis. Both Biblical descriptions of creation (Genesis 1:1-2:3; 2:4-25), despite presenting the work of creation in different perspectives (the first description adopts a cosmological perspective, the second – an anthropological one), show God as the maker of nature and man. According to the ontology anchored in the Biblical theology of creation, Christian anthropology determined man's ontological status, and placed him between God and animals, which simultaneously served as a warning to him: he must not succumb to the temptation to identify himself either with God or with animal: *nec Deus, nec bestia*.

The originality of St. Francis seems to consist in transforming the traditional Christian doctrine, which expresses the truth on the creation of man and the world by God, into a lifestyle. St. Francis understood Jesus' call to proclaim the Gospel to every creature literally and thus chose birds and wolves as listeners to his sermons. In his vision, the role of animals as beings created by God is not limited to the fulfillment of human needs; being a mystic, St. Francis from Assisi recognized animals' own teleology designed by God in His plan of creation and sharing in the mystery of His glory. In the biography of St. Francis, the lived experience of brotherhood with animals assumed various forms which were both particular and deeply symbolic, as well as expressive of admiration, tenderness and compassion.

Ontological and axiological anthropocentrism emerges together with the development of the modern thought. The paradox of the anthropological turn characteristic of modernity consists in that, on the one hand, it emphasizes the idea of the dignity of the human being rooted in the Christian tradition, stressing the uniqueness and transcendence of the human person in the world, while on the other, it radically separates spirit and nature, man and animals. It is not without significance that the modern anthropological paradigm, which constituted the framework for the concept of the autonomy of the human being and the consequent human rights doctrine, was interpreted in the rationalist vein and accepted a priori the claim of the ontological self-sufficiency of man, devising the *etsi Deus non daretur* vision of morality. The ontological «emancipation» of man resulted also in his loneliness in the world and provided justification – reinforced by the modern rejection of a teleological interpretation of natural beings – for his ruthless dominion over nature. In the world without God, where the natural finality of living creatures was denied, animals were condemned to suffering the truly grim fate of mere objects of production and consumption. Had it not been for this lesson taught by modern humanism, the ideal of care for the welfare of animals might not have emerged in the history of morals. Thus the criticism of modernity must not be targeted at the humanism it promotes; rather, it needs to focus primarily on the rationalist interpretation of the humanist ideas, which, not infrequently, takes the arrogant form of speciesist exclusivism. Such a revision of humanism, in a poetic condensation, can be

found in the poems of Gary Snyder, an outstanding representative of the Beat Generation.

[...]
 Is man most precious of all things?
 – then let us love him, and his brothers, all those
 Fading living beings –

North America, Turtle Island, taken by invaders
 who wage war around the world.
 May ants, may abalone, otters, wolves and elk
 Rise! and pull away their giving
 from the robot nations.

S o l i d a r i t y. The People.
 Standing Tree People!
 Flying Bird People!
 Swimming Sea People!
 Four – legged, two – legged people!¹

Referring to animals as man's brothers, the contemporary poet resembles St. Francis, yet the dramatic tone of Snyder's poetry differs from the gentleness of the Assisi poet's verse. St. Francis did not have the experience of the world in which numerous animal species have become extinct, and breeding of useful animals has been industrialized, bringing suffering to billions of living creatures treated as products, while others have been subjected to cruel experiments devised to forward the progress of civilization. Snyder's rebellious appeal must resound and be heard because the ideal of St. Francis has been lost, and the modern world has turned into its negation.

Today, however, the rhetoric of rebellion and animal liberation is no longer a humanist one. In contradistinction to some animal ethicists who speak of man exclusively in terms of «animality,» dividing living creatures into «human» and «nonhuman» animals, Snyder speaks about living beings: plants, four-legged and two-legged animals, in terms of «humanity.» What he means in both cases is kinship, not identity. The poet seems to be saying that the question of human dignity – “Is man most precious of all things?” – calls, in the first place, for the recognition of the dignity of the realm of life, of which man partakes, his contribution being his ability to ask questions, as well as his solidarity with all creatures and his rebellion against injustice.

The tendency to anthropomorphize animals is present not only in poetry, and expresses the insight into the kinship between man and animals. The anthropomorphizing language, however, turns out a faulty and fallible instrument to grasp the truth about animals. No wonder that animal ethics often moves on a rather unstable ground provided by fuzzy concepts developed by ethology and

¹ Gary Snyder, *Mother Earth: Her Whales*, in: idem, *Turtle Island* (New York: New Directions, 1974), 48.

sociobiology. Thus any attempt at going beyond the anthropomorphizing categories in the study of animal behavior is particularly valuable. Yet the results obtained thanks to breaking off with anthropomorphism in the study of animals should not be projected back on the description of human affairs.

Developing animal ethics in opposition to humanism is an error leading to the elimination of ethics as such. For the sake of cognitive integrity and due to the gravity of ethical challenges posed by contemporary civilization, one must not proceed from stating the kinship between humans and animals to constructing holistic theories that ignore the difference between them. Hannah Arendt argues that a theoretical error in this area may lead to consequences harmful to both people and animals: “Why should we, after having ‘eliminated’ all anthropomorphisms from animal psychology (whether we actually succeed is another matter), now try to discover ‘how «theriomorph» man is’? Is it not obvious that anthropomorphism and theriomorphism in the behavioral sciences are but two sides of the same ‘error’? Moreover, if we define man as belonging to the animal kingdom, why should we ask him to take his standards of behavior from another animal species? The answer, I am afraid, is simple: It is easier to experiment with animals, and this not only for humanitarian reasons – that it is not nice to put us into cages; the trouble is men can cheat.”²

In the hinterland of animal ethics there is a controversy between ontological monism and ontological pluralism. The fundamental importance of this controversy is beyond dispute. An attempt to abandon humanistic categories in ontology is doomed to failure and error, which the case of ethics has clearly shown. As Robert Spaemann observes, “ontology and ethics – the one as much as the other – are constituted *uno actu* through the intuition of being as being a self.”³ Thus the paradigm for the cognition of being as such is the cognition of oneself as person acquired from within through a direct intuitive grasp of the object by the subject, the latter being identical with the former. This cognition of being, grasped in oneself and in others, is the source of benevolence.

The ethics of benevolence towards being proposed by Spaemann goes beyond the limitations imposed on moral philosophy by Immanuel Kant, who believed that moral duty concerns exclusively rational creatures, capable of constituting themselves as moral beings. Kant was actually right emphasizing the fact that morality is a human phenomenon, but erroneously introduced a sharp ontological distinction between persons and other beings, which prevented him from recognizing that also non-personal beings are addressees of moral duty. Spaemann shows that it is unnecessary to respond to Kant’s error by setting animal ethics against personalism; however, for cognitive and moral reasons Kant’s exclusivist standpoint should be amended. The ethics of affirmation, which Spaemann calls the ethics of benevolence, is a version of axiologism, personalism being its specific and particularly important variety.

² Hannah Arendt, *On Violence* (San Diego–New York–London: Harcourt Brace & Company, 1970), 60.

³ Robert Spaemann, *Happiness and Benevolence*, trans. J. Albergh (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, Edinburgh, 2005), ix.

In his discussion with Kant, Antonio Rosmini recognized the duty to acknowledge being according to its order and considered this recognition as the fundamental moral principle. Thus, he held, the order of love is determined by the order of being and the foundation of moral universalism is pluralistic ontology. The dignity of the human person is rooted in his or her ability to know all being and to encompass every entity with the love proportional to its axiological rank. Such an interpretation of personalism does not fall to the objection that it is a speciesist and self-centered philosophy, unless one might wish to consider all living creatures as one species. In an act of cognition, the knowing subject “disregards himself because his guide, the understanding, prescind[s] of its nature from the subject. The understanding is outside the subject; it is independent, impersonal, absolute; it is truth itself, impartiality itself. It loves all objects, all beings. And because intelligence is formed by the vision of universal being, morality is formed by universal love – the love of all beings, of every good – love which extends as far as knowledge, infinitely.”⁴

Separating animal ethics from personalist ethics and setting them against each other may be compared to taking a dangerous short cut, as both areas of ethics, as theories, owe their coherence to an insight into the value of being; this insight, however, must necessarily be complemented with an understanding of the value hierarchy. Animal ethics can awaken the desire for a better world – the world that only humans, and not animals, can create. This obvious advantage humans have over animals must not justify cruelty towards the «lesser brethren»: the cruelty that both religious and secularised thought that departed from ontological realism have found permissible.

Translated by *Patrycja Mikulska*

JOHN PAUL II – Peace with God the Creator. Peace with All of Creation

In our day, there is a growing awareness that world peace is threatened not only by the arms race, regional conflicts and continued injustices among peoples and nations, but also by a lack of due respect for nature, by the plundering of natural resources and by a progressive decline in the quality of life. The sense of precariousness and insecurity that such a situation engenders is a seedbed for collective selfishness, disregard for others and dishonesty.

Faced with the widespread destruction of the environment, people everywhere are coming to understand that we cannot continue to use the goods of the earth as we have in the past. The public in general as well as political leaders are concerned about this problem, and experts from a wide range of disciplines are studying its causes. Moreover, a new ecological awareness is beginning to emerge which, rather than being downplayed, ought to be encouraged to develop into concrete programmes and initiatives.

⁴ Antonio Rosmini, *Principles of Ethics*, trans. T. Watson, D. Cleary, Chapter 4, Article 5, Item 87 (Durham: Rosmini House, 1989), 53 (http://www.rosmini-in-english.org/Webpe/PE_Ch04A1_10.htm#Art_01).

Many ethical values, fundamental to the development of a peaceful society, are particularly relevant to the ecological question. The fact that many challenges facing the world today are interdependent confirms the need for carefully coordinated solutions based on a morally coherent world view.

For Christians, such a world view is grounded in religious convictions drawn from Revelation. That is why I should like to begin this Message with a reflection on the biblical account of creation. I would hope that even those who do not share these same beliefs will find in these pages a common ground for reflection and action.

In the Book of Genesis, where we find God's first self-revelation to humanity (Gen 1-3), there is a recurring refrain: "And God saw that it was good." After creating the heavens, the sea, the earth and all it contains, God created man and woman. At this point the refrain changes markedly: "And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good (Gen 1:31). God entrusted the whole of creation to the man and woman, and only then – as we read – could he rest "from all his work" (Gen 2:3).

Adam and Eve's call to share in the unfolding of God's plan of creation brought into play those abilities and gifts which distinguish the human being from all other creatures. At the same time, their call established a fixed relationship between mankind and the rest of creation. Made in the image and likeness of God, Adam and Eve were to have exercised their dominion over the earth (Gen 1:28) with wisdom and love. Instead, they destroyed the existing harmony by deliberately going against the Creator's plan, that is, by choosing to sin. This resulted not only in man's alienation from himself, in death and fratricide, but also in the earth's "rebellion" against him (cf. Gen 3:17-19; 4:12). All of creation became subject to futility, waiting in a mysterious way to be set free and to obtain a glorious liberty together with all the children of God (cf. Rom 8:20-21).

Christians believe that the Death and Resurrection of Christ accomplished the work of reconciling humanity to the Father, who "was pleased through (Christ) to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross" (Col 1:19-20). Creation was thus made new (cf. Rev 21:5). Once subjected to the bondage of sin and decay (cf. Rom 8:21), it has now received new life while "we wait for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells" (2 Pt 3:13). Thus, the Father "has made known to us in all wisdom and insight the mystery ... which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fulness of time, to unite all things in him, all things in heaven and things on earth" (Eph 1:9-10).

These biblical considerations help us to understand better the relationship between human activity and the whole of creation. When man turns his back on the Creator's plan, he provokes a disorder which has inevitable repercussions on the rest of the created order. If man is not at peace with God, then earth itself cannot be at peace: "Therefore the land mourns and all who dwell in it languish, and also the beasts of the field and the birds of the air and even the fish of the sea are taken away" (Hos 4:3).

The profound sense that the earth is "suffering" is also shared by those who do not profess our faith in God. Indeed, the increasing devastation of the world

of nature is apparent to all. It results from the behaviour of people who show a callous disregard for the hidden, yet perceivable requirements of the order and harmony which govern nature itself.

People are asking anxiously if it is still possible to remedy the damage which has been done. Clearly, an adequate solution cannot be found merely in a better management or a more rational use of the earth's resources, as important as these may be. Rather, we must go to the source of the problem and face in its entirety that profound moral crisis of which the destruction of the environment is only one troubling aspect.

Certain elements of today's ecological crisis reveal its moral character. First among these is the indiscriminate application of advances in science and technology. Many recent discoveries have brought undeniable benefits to humanity. Indeed, they demonstrate the nobility of the human vocation to participate responsibly in God's creative action in the world. Unfortunately, it is now clear that the application of these discoveries in the fields of industry and agriculture have produced harmful long-term effects. This has led to the painful realization that we cannot interfere in one area of the ecosystem without paying due attention both to the consequences of such interference in other areas and to the well-being of future generations

The most profound and serious indication of the moral implications underlying the ecological problem is the lack of respect for life evident in many of the patterns of environmental pollution. Often, the interests of production prevail over concern for the dignity of workers, while economic interests take priority over the good of individuals and even entire peoples. In these cases, pollution or environmental destruction is the result of an unnatural and reductionist vision which at times leads to a genuine contempt for man.

On another level, delicate ecological balances are upset by the uncontrolled destruction of animal and plant life or by a reckless exploitation of natural resources. It should be pointed out that all of this, even if carried out in the name of progress and well-being, is ultimately to mankind's disadvantage.

Finally, we can only look with deep concern at the enormous possibilities of biological research. We are not yet in a position to assess the biological disturbance that could result from indiscriminate genetic manipulation and from the unscrupulous development of new forms of plant and animal life, to say nothing of unacceptable experimentation regarding the origins of human life itself. It is evident to all that in any area as delicate as this, indifference to fundamental ethical norms, or their rejection, would lead mankind to the very threshold of self-destruction.

Respect for life, and above all for the dignity of the human person, is the ultimate guiding norm for any sound economic, industrial or scientific progress.

The complexity of the ecological question is evident to all. There are, however, certain underlying principles, which, while respecting the legitimate autonomy and the specific competence of those involved, can direct research towards adequate and lasting solutions. These principles are essential to the building of a peaceful society; no peaceful society can afford to neglect either respect for life or the fact that there is an integrity to creation.

Theology, philosophy and science all speak of a harmonious universe, of a "cosmos" endowed with its own integrity, its own internal, dynamic balance. This

order must be respected. The human race is called to explore this order, to examine it with due care and to make use of it while safeguarding its integrity. On the other hand, the earth is ultimately a common heritage, the fruits of which are for the benefit of all. In the words of the Second Vatican Council, "God destined the earth and all it contains for the use of every individual and all peoples" (*Gaudium et Spes*, Section 69). This has direct consequences for the problem at hand. It is manifestly unjust that a privileged few should continue to accumulate excess goods, squandering available resources, while masses of people are living in conditions of misery at the very lowest level of subsistence. Today, the dramatic threat of ecological breakdown is teaching us the extent to which greed and selfishness – both individual and collective – are contrary to the order of creation, an order which is characterized by mutual interdependence.

The concepts of an ordered universe and a common heritage both point to the necessity of a more internationally coordinated approach to the management of the earth's goods. In many cases the effects of ecological problems transcend the borders of individual States; hence their solution cannot be found solely on the national level. Recently there have been some promising steps towards such international action, yet the existing mechanisms and bodies are clearly not adequate for the development of a comprehensive plan of action. Political obstacles, forms of exaggerated nationalism and economic interests – to mention only a few factors – impede international cooperation and long-term effective action.

The need for joint action on the international level does not lessen the responsibility of each individual State. Not only should each State join with others in implementing internationally accepted standards, but it should also make or facilitate necessary socio-economic adjustments within its own borders, giving special attention to the most vulnerable sectors of society. The State should also actively endeavour within its own territory to prevent destruction of the atmosphere and biosphere, by carefully monitoring, among other things, the impact of new technological or scientific advances. The State also has the responsibility of ensuring that its citizens are not exposed to dangerous pollutants or toxic wastes. The right to a safe environment is ever more insistently presented today as a right that must be included in an updated Charter of Human Rights.

The ecological crisis reveals the urgent moral need for a new solidarity, especially in relations between the developing nations and those that are highly industrialized. States must increasingly share responsibility, in complimentary ways, for the promotion of a natural and social environment that is both peaceful and healthy. The newly industrialized States cannot, for example, be asked to apply restrictive environmental standards to their emerging industries unless the industrialized States first apply them within their own boundaries. At the same time, countries in the process of industrialization are not morally free to repeat the errors made in the past by others, and recklessly continue to damage the environment through industrial pollutants, radical deforestation or unlimited exploitation of non-renewable resources. In this context, there is urgent need to find a solution to the treatment and disposal of toxic wastes.

No plan or organization, however, will be able to effect the necessary changes unless world leaders are truly convinced of the absolute need for this new

solidarity, which is demanded of them by the ecological crisis and which is essential for peace. This need presents new opportunities for strengthening cooperative and peaceful relations among States

But there is another dangerous menace which threatens us, namely war. Unfortunately, modern science already has the capacity to change the environment for hostile purposes. Alterations of this kind over the long term could have unforeseeable and still more serious consequences. Despite the international agreements which prohibit chemical, bacteriological and biological warfare, the fact is that laboratory research continues to develop new offensive weapons capable of altering the balance of nature

Modern society will find no solution to the ecological problem unless it takes a serious look at its life style. In many parts of the world society is given to instant gratification and consumerism while remaining indifferent to the damage which these cause. As I have already stated, the seriousness of the ecological issue lays bare the depth of man's moral crisis. If an appreciation of the value of the human person and of human life is lacking, we will also lose interest in others and in the earth itself. Simplicity, moderation and discipline, as well as a spirit of sacrifice, must become a part of everyday life, lest all suffer the negative consequences of the careless habits of a few.

An education in ecological responsibility is urgent: responsibility for oneself, for others, and for the earth. This education cannot be rooted in mere sentiment or empty wishes. Its purpose cannot be ideological or political. It must not be based on a rejection of the modern world or a vague desire to return to some "paradise lost." Instead, a true education in responsibility entails a genuine conversion in ways of thought and behaviour. Churches and religious bodies, non-governmental and governmental organizations, indeed all members of society, have a precise role to play in such education. The first educator, however, is the family, where the child learns to respect his neighbour and to love nature.

Finally, the aesthetic value of creation cannot be overlooked. Our very contact with nature has a deep restorative power; contemplation of its magnificence imparts peace and serenity. The Bible speaks again and again of the goodness and beauty of creation, which is called to glorify God (cf. Gen 1:4ff; Ps 8:2; 104:1ff; Wis 13:3-5; Sir 39:16, 33; 43:1, 9). More difficult perhaps, but no less profound, is the contemplation of the works of human ingenuity. Even cities can have a beauty all their own, one that ought to motivate people to care for their surroundings. Good urban planning is an important part of environmental protection, and respect for the natural contours of the land is an indispensable prerequisite for ecologically sound development. The relationship between a good aesthetic education and the maintenance of a healthy environment cannot be overlooked.

Today the ecological crisis has assumed such proportions as to be the responsibility of everyone. As I have pointed out, its various aspects demonstrate the need for concerted efforts aimed at establishing the duties and obligations that belong to individuals, peoples, States and the international community. This not only goes hand in hand with efforts to build true peace, but also confirms and reinforces those efforts in a concrete way. When the ecological crisis is set within the broader context of the search for peace within society, we can

understand better the importance of giving attention to what the earth and its atmosphere are telling us: namely, that there is an order in the universe which must be respected, and that the human person, endowed with the capability of choosing freely, has a grave responsibility to preserve this order for the well-being of future generations. I wish to repeat that the ecological crisis is a moral issue.

Even men and women without any particular religious conviction, but with an acute sense of their responsibilities for the common good, recognize their obligation to contribute to the restoration of a healthy environment. All the more should men and women who believe in God the Creator, and who are thus convinced that there is a well-defined unity and order in the world, feel called to address the problem. Christians, in particular, realize that their responsibility within creation and their duty towards nature and the Creator are an essential part of their faith. As a result, they are conscious of a vast field of ecumenical and interreligious cooperation opening up before them.

At the conclusion of this Message, I should like to address directly my brothers and sisters in the Catholic Church, in order to remind them of their serious obligation to care for all of creation. The commitment of believers to a healthy environment for everyone stems directly from their belief in God the Creator, from their recognition of the effects of original and personal sin, and from the certainty of having been redeemed by Christ. Respect for life and for the dignity of the human person extends also to the rest of creation, which is called to join man in praising God (cf. Ps 148:96).

In 1979, I proclaimed Saint Francis of Assisi as the heavenly Patron of those who promote ecology (cf. Apostolic Letter *Inter Sanctos*). He offers Christians an example of genuine and deep respect for the integrity of creation. As a friend of the poor who was loved by God's creatures, Saint Francis invited all of creation – animals, plants, natural forces, even Brother Sun and Sister Moon – to give honour and praise to the Lord. The poor man of Assisi gives us striking witness that when we are at peace with God we are better able to devote ourselves to building up that peace with all creation which is inseparable from peace among all peoples.

It is my hope that the inspiration of Saint Francis will help us to keep ever alive a sense of "fraternity" with all those good and beautiful things which Almighty God has created. And may he remind us of our serious obligation to respect and watch over them with care, in light of that greater and higher fraternity that exists within the human family.

Keywords: peace, creation, ecology, ecological balance, environment, nature

Extracts from the Message of his Holiness John Paul II for the celebration of the World Day of Peace, 1 January 1990. Reprinted from: *L'Osservatore Romano*, the Polish edition, 10:1989, No. 12bis, p. 21f.

For the English text, see http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/messages/peace/documents/hf_jp-ii_mes_19891208_xxiii-world-day-for-peace_en.html

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Roger D. SORRELL – Francis’ Transcendence of Tradition and Its Major Impact on His Attitude Toward Creation: The Sermon to the Birds (trans. D. Chabrajska)

The present text comprises an analysis of the background as well as the implications of Francis of Assisi’s Sermon to the Birds. The author argues that Francis’ ideas expressed in the Sermon can only be understood in their 13th-century context and shows that many of Francis’ beliefs concerning the proper relation of humanity to the natural world have their antecedents in scripture and in the medieval monastic orders, while other ideas and practices – his nature mysticism, his concept of familial relationships with created things, and his extension of chivalric conceptions to interactions with creatures – are entirely his own. The Sermon to the Birds is described as an effect of the fusion of wandering evangelism with eremitic ideals, and explained in the context of the emerging Franciscan ideal. The author insists, however, that only by seeing Francis in terms of the Western traditions from which he arose can we appreciate the true originality of this extraordinary figure and the relevance of his thought to modern religious and environmental concerns.

Summarized by *Dorota Chabrajska*

(based on the information provided by Oxford University Press)

Keywords: Francis of Assisi, the Sermon to the Birds, nature, natural world, mysticism, environmentalism, scripture, monastic orders, the Franciscan ideal

The present article is a Polish translation of Chapter 3 of Roger D. Sorrell’s book *St. Francis of Assisi and Nature: Tradition and Innovation in Western Christian Attitudes toward the Environment*, New York–Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988, pp. 55-68.

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Małgorzata KOWALEWSKA – Hildegard of Bingen on Man and His “Lesser Brethren”

Although ecology began to develop as an independent discipline only in the 19th century, having experienced its most spectacular rise a century later, the study of nature and of the relations obtaining between nature and the human world was undertaken much earlier in history. A notable figure in this respect was St. Francis of Assisi, whom Pope John Paul II, in his Apostolic Letter *Inter Sanctos* of 1974, proclaimed the heavenly Patron of the promoters of ecology. However, the rise of Franciscan ideas did not come unexpectedly; rather, it might be considered as crowning the long process of human interest in nature, which enhanced attitudes of admiration for the natural world and anticipated the ideas of the brotherhood of all creation.

The 12th century seems particularly interesting as far as the study of the «Book of Nature» it concerned, since the thinkers of that time put forward the idea of the analogy between the microcosm and the macrocosm, and clearly articulated

the ideas of friendship between human beings and animals, making use of the concepts of the «golden chain» of beings and of the «ladder of nature.» In numerous allegorical poems written at that time and undertaking cosmological themes, the key figure of «Lady Nature» appears. The «ladder of nature» became a widely shared concept in the Middle Ages, contributing to the vision of the world as the unity of various layers of life which are interconnected and mutually inclusive. The concept in question inspired also Renaissance thinkers, as it provided the basis for their universal vision of the world.

Four basic “perfections” were distinguished in the world: being as such (deprived of life, sentience or rationality), being which manifests life (although deprived of sentience and rationality), being which manifests life and sentience (although deprived of rationality) and being which manifests life, sentience and rationality.

Among the most interesting authors of the period who addressed the themes of the animal world was Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179), a Benedictine nun, whose views of plants and animals, manifesting a holistic vision of the reality, demonstrate her medical knowledge and keen observation of the surrounding world. Hildegard’s views also express her fascination with nature: in her writings, she develops motifs concerning animals and refers to their symbolic meanings, their usefulness to human beings, in particular in medicine, and describes their «attitudes» which she considers as worthy (or unworthy) of being imitated by humans. Hildegard also tells numerous tales of the customs of animals which are partly true to facts and partly imagined. Side by side with actually existing animals, she describes imaginary ones as well as hybrids. Thus, Hildegard’s works, which provide a «companion» to the medieval knowledge of man and nature, may be of interest to contemporary researchers studying the history of medicine, as well as to the historians of philosophy.

Translated by *Dorota Chabrajska*

Keywords: St. Francis of Assisi, Hildegard of Bingen, nature, animals, hybrids, microcosm, the chain of being

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Jacek LEJMAN – Philosophical Origins of our Attitudes Towards Animals: On the Axiological Status of Animals and Humans

The author poses the question about the origins of our attitudes to animals. On the basis of numerous source texts and studies, he shows how the axiological status of animals and humans has been perceived in philosophy throughout its history. The author attempts a reconstruction of the contemporary transformation of the manner in which the relation between the human species and the animal world is perceived. Thus he explores the views of both philosophers and modern biologists (oriented ethologically and sociobiologically) regarding the questions of the relation of the *Homo sapiens* to other animal species, as well as the position of humans in the natural world together with their duties towards animals.

The article also discusses the essence of philosophical humanism conceived of as the principle of moral life and points to its impact on the animal world.

In the conclusion, the author points that, despite their apparent originality, most of the currents of thought as well as individual ideas recurring in works by ecologists and environmental ethicists draw on some earlier spiritual sources, which precisely for this reason deserve being recalled.

Keywords: axiology, animal, human, philosophy, ecology, ethology, sociobiology

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Przemysław GUT, Arkadiusz GUT – Descartes' Arguments against Animal Thought and Reason

The objective of the present article is a discussion of Descartes' arguments against animal thought and reason. The framework of the text is that of a historical analysis primarily intended to describe the main arguments used by Descartes. However, the scrutiny goes beyond purely historical analysis in significant aspects.

The article comprises four sections. In the first one, the contemporary theoretical background of the problems pertaining to animal thought has been outlined. The focus of the second section is the context of Descartes' arguments and the assumptions inherent in them. The third section includes a presentation of the main arguments developed by Descartes, who denies the possibility to attribute the capacity of thought and reason to animals. In the fourth section, the response to the Cartesian standpoint both in modern and in contemporary thought has been described.

Translated by *Dorota Chabrajka*

Keywords: 17th century philosophy, René Descartes, language, thinking, animals

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Zbigniew WRÓBLEWSKI – Subjectivity and Goodness: Ontological Premises of Kindness to Animals

The aim of the article is the presentation of a general outline of the teleological argument (TA) in favor of moral protection of animals. The main premise of this argument is the thesis about the teleological structure of animate beings, which is used for the purpose of justification of their value. Justification of the ontological premise of TA takes into consideration an analysis of phenomena taken from the organic world (such as subjectivity or internal sphere of animal entities). In the analysis of the axiological premises of TA, the connection between the purposefulness of a natural being and the values with regard to the goal, internal values and the fundamental moral relation with regard to natural being has been presented.

The article comprises an attempt to interpret and develop the philosophical positions of, respectively, Hans Jonas and Robert Spaemann.

Keywords: subjectivity, animal ethics, natural teleology, Hans Jonas, Robert Spaemann

The article is part of the research project entitled “The Evolutionary Peculiarity of the Human Nature: Comparative Anthropological and Ethological Studies in Language, Communication, Mind and Action in Humans and Animals” funded with the support of the National Science Centre, Poland (Contract No: UMO – 2011/01/B/HS1/04462).

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Ralph R. ACAMPORA – Of Corporal Compassion

The author addresses the question of how we can sensibly describe, explain, and interpret transhuman morality without, however, attempting to justify it. Instead of asking what justifies inclusion of other animals in the ethical sphere or what gives them moral standing or considerability he proposes an existential, phenomenological approach and the philosophic starting point in the experience of being a live body thoroughly involved in a plethora of ecological and social interrelationships with other living bodies and people. He holds that the ethical upshot or such a gestalt-shift in the ontological background effectively transfers the burden of proof from ethical “extensionism” or “expansion” to ethical isolationism or contraction (i.e., homo-exclusive anthropocentrism). From this perspective, the problem of traction for moral consideration of nonhuman animals dissolves. The author’s goal is then to describe, explain, and interpret the constitution and interspecific implications of the primordial experience of somatic sociability. Drawing on the fact that humans are animate bodies, bodies that are experienced and come to be known through interaction with other animate bodies, he investigates the ontology of animate modes of body as applicable to humans and at least some other nonhuman animals alike. In the author’s opinion, certain historical and methodological orientations lend themselves quite readily to this inquiry, among them some late-modern approaches, in particular those of 19th and 20th century classical continental philosophy, such as phenomenology, existential philosophy and hermeneutics.

Summarized by *Dorota Chabrajka*

Keywords: body, being, value, symphysis, somatic sympathy, interspecies ethos, transhuman morality, animal ethics

The present article comprises two texts: The first one comes from Ralph R. Acampora’s book *Corporal Compassion: Animal Ethics and Philosophy of Body* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2006, 1-5, © 2006 by University of Pittsburgh Press). The second is the author’s essay “Toward a Properly Post-Humanist Ethos of Somatic Sympathy,” included in *Strangers to Nature: Animal Lives and Human Ethics*, ed. G.R. Smulewicz-Zucker (Lanham–Boulder–New York–Toronto–Plymouth, UK: Lexington Books, 2012, 235-247, © 2012 by Lexington Books).

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Joel MARKS – Amoral Animal Rights

The study of nonhuman animals has proved to be in my own life not only an important topic in its own right but also the undoing of all of my normative commitments and indeed of normativity (of the moralist stripe) itself. This evolution has taken two interesting turns. The first was my sense that animal ethics should be understood not only as a branch of applied ethics but also as integral to ethics as such. Animal ethics speaks to the very nature of ethics; ethics might even itself be better understood as *synonymous* with animal ethics, since human beings are themselves animals and may be ethical beings in virtue of that fact. The second turn was the realization that ethics may be better understood as about desire than about obligation (or morality or right and wrong or inherent value or justification, etc.). This turn did not come about by purely meta-ethical thought but, in equal measure, was midwifed by my growing awareness that the human moral response to the plight of other animals at human hands was a sham. Thus, I ended up facing the philosophical (and personal) challenge of my career and life: How to reconcile two apparently diametrically opposed facts, namely, the amoral basis of ethics and my personal commitment to animal liberation. This essay presents my response to that challenge.

Keywords: animal ethics, amorality, moral nihilism, moral skepticism, meta-ethics, applied ethics, Kant, animal rights

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Maciej TROJAN, Agnieszka KACZMARCZYK, Justyna SZYMAŃSKA – How To Read an Animal Mind? Selected Problems of Comparative Psychology as an Example of Research on the Functions of the Mind and Intentionality of Animal Behavior

Recent studies on the minds of other species are associated with a variety of issues, including: social communication, language and numerical skills, production and use of tools, theory of mind, mental time travel, and consciousness.

This text presents the current trends in research in the last three aspects of the functions of the mind – each of which is acquired by a human being in the early ontogeny, while there is a definite relationship between them.

«Theory of mind» is a term for a specific cognitive ability. An individual has a theory of mind when it attributes mental states to itself and to others. Certainly, the lapse in time travel in animals is significantly narrower compared to man. However, it seems that animals have and use some form of personal memory of the past, namely, episodic-like memory.

They also have abilities of anticipation and a planned behavior limited in time based on prospective memory. Finally, consciousness – a condition or ability to be conscious or aware of something but in its most complex form – is recognized by the person through their own actions and feelings, thus being aware of their own thoughts, insights, and other events taking place in their mind.

Based on this kind of definition we can assume the existence of at least two kinds of consciousness. We can talk about perceptual awareness wherever there is a conscious perception, although the content of consciousness may be processing information to anticipate or recall past events. Animals with the ability of perceptual awareness not only react to stimuli, but intentionally select the appropriate response, based on the active processing of information.

The second type is the awareness of self-centered consciousness that allows one to think about thinking, emotions, and perception, referred to as introspective consciousness. It is this kind of awareness that allows you to have a mental representation of yourself and others that has a direct relationship, and for some is even an essential component of mental time travel and theory of mind. Currently, it is believed that many species of animals, including all mammals, birds and other creatures – among them octopuses – use this form of consciousness.

Keywords: comparative psychology, theory of mind, mental time travel, consciousness

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Jessica PIERCE, Marc BEKOFF – Wild Justice Redux: What We Know About Social Justice in Animals and Why It Matters (trans. D. Chabrajska)

Social justice in animals is beginning to attract interest in a broad range of academic disciplines. Justice is an important area of study because it may help explain social dynamics among individuals living in tightly-knit groups, as well as social interactions among individuals who only occasionally meet. In this paper, we provide an overview of what is currently known about social justice in animals and offer an agenda for further research. We provide working definitions of key terms, outline some central research questions, and explore some of the challenges of studying social justice in animals, as well as the promise of the work we are proposing. Finally, we suggest why continued research into animal cognition and social behavior has significant ethical implications for our treatment of nonhuman animals.

Keywords: social justice, animals, wild justice, play, prosocial, captive, fairness, inequity aversion, ethics, empathy, cooperation, morality, primates, canids, cognitive ethology

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James A. SERPELL – Anthropomorphism and Anthropomorphic Selection – Beyond the "Cute Response"

This article explores the origin and evolutionary implications of anthropomorphism in the context of our relationships with animal companions. On the human side, anthropomorphic thinking enables animal companions' social behavior to be construed in human terms, thereby allowing these nonhuman animals to function for their human owners or guardians as providers of nonhuman social support. Absence of social support is known to be detrimental to human health and well being. Therefore, anthropomorphism and its corollary, pet keeping, have obvious biological fitness implications. On the animal side, anthropomorphism constitutes a unique evolutionary selection pressure, analogous to sexual selection, which has molded the appearance, anatomy, and behavior of companion animal species so as to adapt them to their unusual ecological niche as social support providers. Although such species undoubtedly have benefited numerically from the effects of this process, the consequences of anthropomorphism are less benign when viewed from the perspective of individual animals. Indeed, anthropomorphic selection probably is responsible for some of the more severe welfare problems currently found in companion animals.

Keywords: anthropomorphism, evolution, pets, animal welfare

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Zbigniew CHOJNOWSKI – Roman Brandstaetter’s Bestiary: Animals in the Imagination of the Poet

Animals appear in the texts by Brandstaetter as part of descriptions and narratives. While the human being generates chaos in the poet’s universe, animals increase its harmony. Brandstaetter introduces mostly images of flying creatures, in particular of birds. This animal world helps him read the «book of nature» and recognize the presence of God in it. The poet refers to various traditions, such as Judaism or Christianity, as well as to mythology. Animal images are also evoked by his memories and biography. Their meaning may be reconstructed by reference to the art of counterpoint. Not infrequently is the symbolism of animals inspired by the poet’s stay in a real geographic place. In the works of Brandstaetter, the living beings stimulate new dimensions of imagination and spirituality.

Keywords: bestiary, 20th century poetry, birds, Franciscanism, counterpoint

The opening theses of the article were presented at the conference “Roman Brandstaetter’s Cultural Universe: On the 25th Anniversary of the Writer’s Death” held by the Institute of Cultural Studies at the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin on 27 November 2012.

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Wiesław BATOR – The Sacred – the Cursed – the Soulless: On the Treatment of Animals in the Doctrines and Practices of World Religions

The present article discusses the attitude to animals as exemplified by the religions of the world, both extinct and modern, in their doctrines, cults and morals. The author observes that since ancient times religious doctrines have been marked by the confrontation of anthropocentric views with eco-friendly approaches. According to anthropocentrism, the human being, unlike other creatures, is a special creation of God, endowed with a reflective and immortal soul. The intention of the Creator is that animals should serve human beings as objects of utility or mindless slaves. The opposite current of thought stresses in turn that all living beings are endowed with a soul similar to that of the human

being, and all of them cooperate in maintaining the balance given to the world by its Creator. Both types of views may be traced back already to the Upper Paleolithic and their continued parallel development has marked the history of humanity and religion, not infrequently manifesting extreme attitudes, such as, on the one hand, absolute lack of compassion for animals, conceived of as living “machines” (or even utmost cruelty towards them), and, on the other, zoolatry, or worship of animals.

In the course of the article, some examples of the treatment of animals in extinct as well as contemporary religions are discussed with the objective to show the interdependence between the attitudes towards animals exhibited by a given culture and religion and the impact of particular beliefs on the treatment of animals (for instance, in the prehistoric society, in Mesopotamia, Syria, and Greece, in the Abrahamic religions: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, in the beliefs of ancient Egypt, India, and the Far East, as well as in contemporary tribal beliefs and in new religious movements).

The author then describes the problem of ritual slaughter, pointing to its origin in the ideas of taboo, sacrifice, ritual purity, and the soul, and proceeds to discuss contemporary attitudes to animals in the Western world, which has traditionally belonged to the realm of anthropocentrism.

The focus of the concluding part of the article is today’s significance of environmental beliefs and the strength of the movements advocating them in the face of the ongoing processes of globalization and environmental devastation. The author points to the imminent conflict between environmentalism promoting animal rights and the teachings of the religions of the universalist tradition.

Keywords: world religions, zoolatry, zoomorphism, anthropocentrism, taboo, sacrifice, soul, ritual purification, ritual uncleanness, ritual slaughter (*shechita*), animal burial

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Bohdan KRÓLIKOWSKI – The Service of the Polish Lancers

An essay on General Stanisław Skotnicki (1894-1939), a paragon of courage and integrity, who served in Polish Legions in World War I, remained in the Polish army after Poland became an independent state in 1918, and was killed in a battle in the Kampinos Forest (*Puszcza Kampinoska*) on 18 September 1939 soon after the World War II had broken out.

summarized by *Dorota Chabrajska*

Keywords: General Stanisław Skotnicki, the Polish Legions, early 20th history of Poland, World War II, cavalry

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Patrycja MIKULSKA – Not a Proof, but a Dream...

Review of Ralph R. Acampora's *Corporal Compassion: Animal Ethics and Philosophy of Body* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2006).

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Dorota CHABRAJSKA – Are We Strangers to Nature?

Review of *Strangers to Nature: Animal Lives and Human Ethics*, ed. G.R. Smulewicz-Zucker (Lanham–Boulder–New York–Toronto–Plymouth, UK: Lexington Books, 2012).

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Grzegorz JÓZEFCZUK – On Loneliness, in a Minimalist Way

Review of *Lustro* ["Mirror"], script by Leszek Mądzik, staged and directed by Leszek Mądzik, music by Piotr Klimek, Polkowice, 7 March 2013.

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Books recommended by *Ethos*

Maciej Trojan, *Na tropie zwierzęcego umysłu* ["Tracing the Animal Mind"] (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Scholar, 2013).
Joel Marks, *Ethics without Morals: In Defense of Amoralism* (New York: Routledge, 2013).

Roger Scruton, *Green Philosophy: How to Think Seriously about the Planet* (London: Atlantic Books, 2013).

Fr. Tadeusz Kuczyński, *Od poznania świata do poznania Boga* ["From Knowing the World to Knowing God"] (Kraków: Petrus, 2013).

Mateusz KULCZYCKI – "Two wings on which the human spirit rises"

Report on the 55th Philosophical Week "Science and Faith: A New Approach to the Old Problem," KUL, Lublin, 11-14 March 2013.

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Filip CIEPLY – On the Limits of Artistic Expression

Report on a conference "Art or Blasphemy? Freedom in Art and Abuse of Religious Feelings," KUL, Lublin, 12 April 2013.

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Fr. Alfred M. WIERZBICKI – The Controversy over Ritual Slaughter: A Clash of Absolute Principles

Feuilleton on the ethical presuppositions behind the controversy over ritual slaughter of animals.

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