



AND HOW DID SOLOMON UNDERSTAND ANIMALS?

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It shows that one is not solidarized, if one criticizes people who take a position that claims to be a morally crucial position. Such people seem to seek clarification on this or that important moral question, and ethical foundations always have to be clarified and reviewed. But with moral standpoints there is always one question open that can be asked: the question if somebody really fulfills her or his own ethical statements.

Despite the fact that I am an AR person myself, I want unsolidarize myself with, or away from, the current majority of the Animal Rights movement. The majority of that lose movement inhabits - as the visible part of the movement - a decisive position, since there exists that vast ethical vacuum at the intersection between humans (or human societies) and nonhuman animals.

The Animal Rights movement tries to fill that vacuum in peoples attitudes towards nonhuman animals, and the message which is the most visible for the general public and which is also considered to be the most representative as what regards the human-animal ethical relation, is of course the message which the majority of the AR movement sends across. The Animal Rights movement as a whole, asks the questions about the ethical responsibility of humans towards the fellow animal beings.

One shouldn't easily criticize even parts of that movement. But I wonder if the AR movement really fulfills the claim they make on being ethically educational about core issues pertaining to the human-animal relation:

The most AR people share the same standpoints as Animal Protectionists, with the only difference that the AR movement stresses the aspect of ethical foundations (i.e. the philosophy of Animal Rights). But for the AR people this own special claim becomes invalid, since the AR perspective purports an astonishingly simple clearness about the question of the **identity** of nonhuman animals. Also the dominant ethical claim invalidates itself, since here the problem found in the human-animal relation is being reduced to an **oversimplified explicability**.

It is too clear for the AR movement that it wants to go along with the predominant bio-scientific standpoints: animals thus are being regarded as if only defensible on the basis of the criteria of biological proof. That means, it is being suggested that the key for the liberation of animals would lie in the collocation of the knowledge derived from animal-biology, animal-psychology and their link to the human understanding of the own human ethical cognition. The bridge between the biologically understood '**being-an-animal**' and the homocentrically molded moral conceptions is sought to have a **bio-ethical answerability**, since it is believed that otherwise there wouldn't be a claim for a philosophical or ideological Animal Liberation at all.

The identity of animals is, from the standpoint of the AR movement, not answered as seen from the point of a uniqueness of animals. The animal identity is limited to a lesser and secondary meaningfulness; alone, the generalization is considered to be enough to get a respectful grip at the fascination which the uniqueness of the animals generates. The single animals melt together to parts of a species, that one seeks to defend.

As long as the human defender does not openly admit that single beings really are of a unique meaning each, and that single beings also are of a complete meaning overall, as long as this “hide and seek idea of liberation”, is going on, one will always have to settle on the compromise of protectionism.

Right, and not solely protectionism, will only be relevant at the instance where the question of dignity appears and the question of dignity is directly tied to the uniqueness of a being. A practical acknowledgement of the inviolability of this dignity of the **uniqueness** of an individual life, can't be simply left out. But, the idea of the inviolability of the single life is not what anyone would be able to discuss with the Animal Liberation or Animal Rights movement. What many AR people want, is not the acknowledgement of the uniqueness, but instead animals are in a bio-ethical scheme, subordinated or rather sorted into the human perspective on the meaning of life (or lifes).

If the animal beings, as a group, over the duration of their evolution have evolved by themselves – for all that implies – also in each their individual uniqueness, then the explanation of their meaning, cannot just be reduced to a form of biological causality chain.

If one does not subordinate animals to a human understanding of the world, one would be able to come to terms with the fact that Animal- and Human Rights are, though the participants would be different, not too distant from each other; exactly for the reason that the single being must never be a subject to an applied **restrictive** definition, since the being creates its meaningfulness by itself.

No human has to tell a human what she or he is or supposedly has to be. A human is free, that is her or his fundamental right, and that is regarded as her or his fundamental feature or characteristic (the capacity to freedom) *sui generis*. In the same manner, I believe a human must never force a type of definition on an animal that would factually subordinate the animal under the manmade explanation. An animal should be fully acknowledged as free per definition (and as free ... also from any restrictive definition), and we just have to expand the dimension of our narrow horizons to understand that the acknowledgement of the other, means to acknowledge the other exactly for that which it, she or he is herself (...) and that we should value her (...) the way she (...) is. [Those round brackets stand for the repetition of the “he” or “it” gender cases.]

The majority of the AR movement works too much with the outer definition and thus unhinges even the phantom of a self proclaimed goal to give dignity to animals. To let animals have their dignity, would mean to appreciatively recognize that animals have their own message, and that an AR person acknowledges that message, i.e. foremost the otherness and also the self-authority of animals. Finally, an AR person should support messages that

animals convey by their very own ways: A commitment to speak the languages of the animals or at least try to speak them – perhaps like for example Solomon did... .

The difficulty in the relation of humans towards animals is heavier than what the tactics of many parts of the AR movement suggest. Animals and humans live in two completely different positions: the view on the world of humans can be read from their various cultures' developments, and the view on the world as seen from manifold animal standpoints can be seen in their persistent self-pursued integrity and includedness into (that what we can conceive or term as) "the natural" as their cultural scope – in its furthest sense!

Many AR people try to draw the situation so, as if animals would simply be weaker and as if weakness was a pitiable deficit (1) that has to be evened or weighed out by human might and power to be safe against human ignorance and evilness. I believe that because of their tendency to persistingly complying to any general ways of thinking, humans are situated themselves in a dilemma, that leads them to wrongful assessments of values and non values and of reasons and consequences. Because in reality it is the old deficits of the human societies that pose the problem in the human-animal context. It is not the assumed "weakness" of animals to have become victims.

(1) Simone Weil's thoughts about the phenomenon of haplessness, and how many people find the hapless "worse than the devil", are a good type of a generalized critique about the vilification of the victims status.

The drawing on the very top left is by www.Farangis.de. It's a minimized image of a drawing that is part of a works series by Farangis Yegane entitled PHILOZOE.

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