

## CHAPTER-2

### MORAL STATUS OF ANIMALS: TRADITIONAL AND RECENT DEBATES

Sympathy beyond the confines of man, that is, humanity to the lower animals, seems to be one of the latest moral acquisitions. It is apparently unfelt by savages, except towards their pets... - Charles Darwin, *The Descent of Man*

The term 'animal' includes all independent lives members of vertebrates. The term "animal" also means those beings that lack the distinguishing features in the moral agents such as rationality, self-consciousness, personality and so on. Mary Midgley once stressed that the concept of an animal has both an inclusive meaning and an exclusive meaning. She is one of many to cite Donald Griffin and the arguments for giving a place to animal thinking. She mocks what she calls 'species solipsism' - attributing consciousness only to humans - citing as if as evidence the belief by elephant trainers that their charges show extraordinarily human intelligence. Yet counter arguments can be put, including the belief by trainers of dolphins, those favorite 'intelligent' creatures that their charges learn only by conditioning. Thus the definition of animal suggests us to claim that: an animal is a centre of immanent, self-generating or creative power, organized in terms of a relational order that results in a periodic pattern of transformation (a life-cycle) involving historical and actual components (genes and environment) and biological universals (the order of the living state).

Human ethical practices and attitudes with respect to the other animals exhibit a curious instability. On the one hand, most people believe that it is wrong to inflict torment or death on a non-human animal for a trivial reason. Skinning a cat or setting it on fire by way of entertainment is one of the standard examples of obvious wrongdoing in the philosophical literature. Like torturing infants, it is the kind of example that philosophers use when they are looking for something ethically uncontroversial, so that

disputes about the example won't get in the way of the point we are trying to make.

On the other hand, human beings have traditionally counted nearly any reason we might have for hurting or killing animals, short of malicious enjoyment, as non-trivial and sufficient. We kill non-human animals, and sometimes inflict pain on them, because we want to eat them, because we can make useful products out of them, because we can learn from experimenting on them, and because they interfere with agriculture or gardening or in other ways are pests. We also kill them, and sometimes inflict pain on them, for sport – in hunting, fishing, cockfighting, dog fighting, bullfighting, and so on. We even kill them because, having done some sort of useful work for us, they have outlived their usefulness and are now costing us money. Uneasily balanced between these two apparent extremes of attitude is the conviction, common to so many people, that when we use animals for our own purposes, we should treat them as humanely “as possible.” The eating needs to go on, but the animals should be kept in pleasant conditions and killed humanely; the experiments should go on, but the pain should be palliated as much as conditions allow; the hunting should go on, but the scrupulous hunter should aim for the swift kill that involves no extended terror or suffering. The shape of our moral concern for the other animals, if put it that way, is rather like that of our moral concern for prisoners of war. Just as we strike an uneasy balance between treating prisoners of war as enemies and treating them in a way that acknowledges our common humanity, so we strike an uneasy balance between treating the other animals as a usable resource – as Kant puts it, as mere means - and treating them in a way that acknowledges our common nature as conscious and sensate beings.

If we go through the term “moral status”, we find that entities have moral status if and only if their interest is morally matter to some degree for the entity’s own sake. For example- human beings are moral beings because they are able to respect the rights of others, not because they are reason guided in this direction, but because they are social creature. We basically believe that non-human beings lack the above qualities, but what is the reason for the belief that only human beings are morally valuable? It is not possible for us to give the answer to this question in a sentence. A number of people believe that the ability to use tools, possession of mind, having a sense of humor and cognitive skills are the characteristic of a normal adult human being, and they believe that the absence of these abilities of non-human species make them far more behind to come under the purview of morality .Human beings are the kind of beings can develop family ties, solving social problems, expressing emotions, having sex for pleasure, using language or thinking abstractly. But many of popular recent works on animal behavior proved that animals can also develop these types of activities. For example,- many non-human species such as baboons, wolves, and elephants maintain family units, built complex individual relationship for long period of time. All animals living in socially complex groups must solve various problems that inevitably arise in such groups. Thus the view that animals moral claim is equivalent to a moral right, and any action that fails to treat animals as beings with inherent worth would violate animal rights and thus, morally objectionable. We use the term moral status or moral importance to refer to the circumstances that a being is a member of moral community. Members of a moral community include moral agents and moral subjects. It is assumed that there are certain features which qualify them as moral subjects. These are sentience, higher cognitive capacities, the capacity to flourish, sociability, and the possession of a life. Let us briefly discuss these features which make animals to be treated as moral subjects.

## 2.1 Sentience:

The term “sentience” is most commonly associated with the utilitarian philosopher Jeremy Bentham. Utilitarian’s such as Jeremy Bentham and Peter Singer focus on sentience, the ability to feel and suffer, as the morally relevant criterion by which moral standing ought to be established. Other creatures react to pain in ways similar to human beings, they share neurological and mental faculties associated with pain in human beings. Singer concludes “there is no good reason, scientific or philosophical, for denying that animals feel pain”. If we do not doubt that other humans feel pain, we should not doubt that other animals do so too.”<sup>1</sup> It is uncontested that many animals are capable of feeling pain. However, some argue that the human experience of pain is in some relevant sense different from that of animals. That is why it might be more justifiable to use animals rather than non-consenting humans in harmful research. Another argument may suggest that humans are far more able to cope with pain and suffering, especially when they understand the underlying reasons or purpose. This could suggest that beings with less-developed rational capacities are not necessarily suffering less, but more, since they are not in a position to conceptualize pain or suffering as means to ends.

### 2.1.1 Higher Cognitive Capacities:

Beside the ability to feel pain, many animals are also capable of higher cognitive capacities, like, knowledge of good and evil (Plato), possession of self-consciousness (Rene Descartes), possession of freedom,(Jean Jacques Rousseau), and possession of rational will, in the sense of being able to act according to self-set rules to achieve certain ends, including acting in a moral manner(Kant).Some higher cognitive capacities such as the use of language or the ability to act according to plans, can be

---

<sup>1</sup> Singer, Peter. “All Animals Are Equal.” *Animal Rights and Human Obligations*. edit., Tom Regan and Peter Singer. Englewood Cliffs ; Prentice –Hall, 1976. P.148-62

understood as signs of intelligence. But the question about whether or not animals possess such characteristics is controversial. However, research combining philosophical and biological expertise has significantly increased knowledge about the cognitive capacities of the great apes, and other animals including dogs, rodent, birds and fish. Some animals are able to learn complicated tasks, such as making and using tools. There are also evidences that they engage in non-trivial forms of communications and are able to coordinate social behavior<sup>2</sup>. Animals like monkeys, chimpanzees, and bats, the rules of social interactions have been explored on them in more detail and have been described as primitive moral systems.<sup>3</sup> Thus, some kinds of animal research have undermined claims of the uniqueness of humans and have instead demonstrated that humans and animals share certain morally relevant properties and capacities.

### **2.1.2 Capacity to flourish:**

Another basis of moral concern, associated with Aristotle, is the idea of animal having a “telos”, a purpose, a good or alternatively having interests of species-specific needs. If animals are able to satisfy these needs, they have the ability to flourish. This concept enables us to say that things may go well or badly for an animal depending on how specific environmental conditions relate to its usual species-specific development.<sup>4</sup>

### **2.1.3 Sociability:**

Another philosophical thinking influenced by Karl Marx, Ludwig Wittgenstein and Martin Heidegger sees sociability as creating a level of moral concern. According to this tradition, being a member of some form of

---

<sup>2</sup> Riede T, Bronson E, Hatzikirou H and Klaus Zuberbuhler (2005) Vocal Production Mechanisms in a Non-Human Primate: Morphological Data and a Model( J Hum E)vol 48:85-96.

<sup>3</sup> Patterson F and Gordon W (1993) The case for the personhood of gorillas, in *The Great Ape Project: Equality beyond humanity*, Cavalieri P and Singer P (Editors)(London:Fourth Estate) pp58-9. However there is also some scepticism about such claims , see for example Wynne CDL (2004) *Do Animals Think?*(Princeton and Oxford; Princeton University Press)

<sup>4</sup> By species –specific development we mean behaviours and dispositions that the animal has developed during evolution in order to be able to respond to the range of situations typically encountered in its natural habitat.

complex community creates moral relations of rights and duties. The basis of such a community might be language or a substantial dependence on others for extensive social, economic, or other reasons. But if, this tradition is not to be considered equivalent to the view of higher cognitive capacities as discussed above, simply with the additional observation that these capacities develop through complex social interaction such as language use, then it must be sociability itself, rather than socially developed attributes, that generates moral concern.

#### **2.1.4 Possession of a life:**

Apart from this, a more difficult morally relevant criterion is possession of a life. It may seem that if we think that killing is wrong, then we must be committed to the view that life itself is valuable. Most humans and perhaps some other animals, exhibit self-consciousness and an ability to anticipate, reflect upon and fear about their own death. Hence, the prospect of death usually has a significant secondary effect on the quality of lived experience. Beside this, humans and perhaps some other animals care about each other in the sense that the death of others is often considered a tragedy. Thus, death has special significance for highly social beings. Moreover, it can be said that the higher cognitive capacity generates a right to life; most humans and those animals that closely share similar features in this respect have such a right.

So there is no definite set of morally relevant criteria, yet this concept remains critical to determining moral standing and the concurrent duties of moral agents. “It is this notion of morally relevant differences between humans and animals that serves as the most powerful tool in the investigation of the moral status of animals. If we can find no morally relevant differences between humans and animals, and if we accept the idea that moral notions apply to human, it follows that we must rationally extend

the scope of moral concern to animals”.<sup>5</sup> Beside this, another sign of moral agency or under moral consideration is the possession of personhood. John Locke once wrote that;

“The word *person* is a forensic term, appropriating actions and their merit; and so belongs only to intelligent agents, capable of a law, and happiness and misery. This personality extends itself beyond present existence to what is past, only by consciousness, -whereby it becomes concerned and accountable.....<sup>6</sup>

Therefore, it can be said that if the possession of personhood is a sign of moral agency, then animals are not far behind from moral consideration. But there are still many who rejected the moral considerability of non-humans and the significance of their interests. Classical philosophers notably, Plato and Aristotle described human beings as rational animals and identified reason as a distinguishing mark and implied that our mental life exists at an altogether higher level in comparison to other animals. Moral beings respect the rights of others not because they are guided by reason but because they are social creatures.

## **2.2: Arguments Against Animals moral Status:**

Two thousand years ago, Greek philosophers were of the view that kindness and benevolence ought to be extended to the creatures of every species.<sup>7</sup> Plutarch a Greek historian and biographer as well as a philosopher and spiritual guide, was one of the first Greek scholar to write about the moral interests of animals independent from any belief in transmigration of souls (Self-interest). It was the unnecessary suffering and death that caught Plutarch moral attention in “On the Eating Flesh”. Porphyry slightly later than Plutarch may have been the first to build an argument based on pain and terror in his argument that animals ought to be handled “differently from

<sup>5</sup> Rollin, Bernard E. *Animal Rights and Human Morality*. Amherst : Prometheus, 1981, p.7

<sup>6</sup> In addition to the normative component , there is also a descriptive component of the concept of person. A person, as Locke says, is a thinking intelligent being, that has reason and reflection and can consider itself. As itself, the same thinking thing, in different times and places.....” Besides self-awareness and intelligence (including the capacity to reason), autonomy to some extent can be considered as another essential part of personhood. (John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* edit. A.C. Fraser, New York : Dover Publication, 1959, p.467)

<sup>7</sup> Marshall, Peter. *Nature's Web: Rethinking our Place on Earth*. London : Cassell, 1992. P.78

plants”.<sup>8</sup> He recognized that reason powers between human beings and animals were a matter of degree, a difference “not in essence, but in the more and the less”.<sup>9</sup> Thus Diogenes and Plutarch insisted that animals were superior to humans. In a work titled “Beasts are Rational” Plutarch gives voice to a pig who argues that it is better to be a swine than a human being. The pig is ultimately unwilling to exchange places with man, “the most unfortunate of all creatures”.<sup>10</sup> According to Plutarch if pigs were asked to return to human form, they may reply: “we animal are much happier and better than you men and you are a fool..... to ask us to sail away with you, instead of becoming a pig like us”.<sup>11</sup> But the tendency to credit only human beings with various qualities that humans value such as reason began centuries ago. Both the Hebrew and Greek traditions made human beings the creature of moral universe- not merely the centre, but entirely the morally significant features of this world. There are some Greek philosophers who think that only human beings have reason (*logos*), reasoning (*logismos*), thought (*dianoia*), intellect (*nous*) and belief (*doxa*).<sup>12</sup> The stoics denied justice to animals on the ground that they stand outside human community, and because rationality was considered a prerequisite for joining the community. Animals were not credit with rationality, and justice could only be exacted within the community.<sup>13</sup> To be a member of moral community intelligence rationality to make a decision between good and bad are required, and animals lack of these fundamental qualities. Let us discuss the

---

<sup>8</sup> Sorabji, Richard. *Animal Minds and Human Morals: The Origins of the Western Debate*. London : Duckworth, 1993, p.184

<sup>9</sup> Porphyry “On Abstinence from Killing Animals.” Trans Thomas Tylor. *Selected Works of Porphyry*. London: Thomas Rodd, 1823, p.101

<sup>10</sup> Plutarch. “Beast are Rational” *Plutarchs Moralia*. Edt. Harold Cherniss and William C. Helmbold. Cambridge; Harvard, 1968,. 493-533

<sup>11</sup> Sorabji, Richard. *Animal Minds and Human Morals; The Origins of the Western Debate*. London; Duckworth, 1993, P.161

<sup>12</sup> Sorabji, Richard . *Animal Minds and Human Morals: The Origins of the Western Debate*. London Duckworth, 1993, p.14

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid* .P.124

basic philosophical arguments denying the moral status of animals from Western perspective.

For the Greeks, there is a faith that animals do not speak as humans do, and this fact was later taken as justification by many philosophers that non-human species have no capacity for language or rational thought. The Greeks are generally believed that the capacity for using language is the nature of human, which makes them human. This linguistic differentiation is literal in case of animals that they cannot talk and we do. Control of speech is central to all Greeks thought. Also the primacy of reason is a distinguishing criterion for coming under the purview of morality.

Aristotle believes that non-human species are only subject of our exploitation. For him, tame animals have a better nature than wild and all tame animals are better off when they are ruled by man. From the above, it is clear that for Aristotle human beings have a right to rule over the non-human species. For him, the less perfect exists for the more perfect and reason makes one more perfect.<sup>14</sup> Nature is a hierarchy where creatures with less reasoning ability exist for the sake of those with more reason.<sup>15</sup> As a result he believed that those incapable of moral deliberation had less responsibility and fewer privileges.<sup>16</sup>

For Aristotle the male by nature is superior, and the female is inferior, and the one rules, and the other is ruled, this principle of necessity extends to all mankind. Where there is such a difference as that between soul and body, or between men and animals, the lower sorts are by nature slaves, and it is better for them as for all inferiors that they should be under the rule of a master. For him who can be, and therefore is another's and he who participates in rational principle enough to apprehend, but not to have, such

---

<sup>14</sup> Kemmerer Lisa *In Search of Consistency Ethics and Animals* Leiden Boston 2006, p.222

<sup>15</sup> Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* Trans. R. W. Browne. London: George Bell, 1889.1:7,8:12

<sup>16</sup> Clark, Stephen R.L. "The Rights of Wild Things" *Inquiry* 22(1979):171-88

a principle, is a slave by nature. Whereas the lower animals cannot even apprehend a principle, they obey their instincts. And indeed the use made of slaves and of tame animals is not very different, for both, with their bodies' minister to the needs of life. He thought that different beings should not be treated equally, as their innate nature is not the same. Humans, animals, plants all are capable of nutrition and growth. However, plants as lower beings, should serve humans and animals, and the latter should serve humans, as they cannot use reason to direct their behavior and are driven by instinct. By denying animals the capacity for rational thinking, Aristotle radically separated them from humans. As for him, the most important faculty is the power of reasoning and only humans can reason. He said that:

Plant exists for the sake of animals, and some animals exist for the benefit of others. Those which are domesticated, serve human beings for use as well as for food, wild animals, too, in most cases if not in all, serve to furnish us not only with food, but also with other kinds of assistance, such as the provision of clothing and similar aids to life. Accordingly, if nature makes nothing purposeless or in vain, all animals must have been made by nature for the sake of men.<sup>17</sup>

### **Thomas Aquinas:**

Greek thinking has been very important to Christianity through early Christian scholars are critical to the formation of contemporary Christianity. Augustine once wrote that animals are irrational and it is by just ordinance of God that the lives and deaths of animals are subordinated to human use. When we say, "Thou shalt not kill", he notes "we do not understand this of the irrational animals that fly, swim, walk or creep, since they are dissociated from us by their want of reason, and are therefore by the just appointment of the Creator subjected to us to kill or keep alive for our own uses."<sup>18</sup> Like Augustine Aquinas has maintained tremendous influence over Christianity up to the present and, most contemporary church doctrines contain his teachings. In thirteenth century, Thomas Aquinas revisited

<sup>17</sup> Aristotle . *Politics*. Trans Ernest Barker. Oxford; Oxford, 1995 1.8, 1256b 15.

<sup>18</sup> Augustine. *City of God*. Trans. Marcus Dods. New York: Random House, 1993 p.20

Augustine's point concerning animals, inserting ancient Greek philosophy into Christian theology. In their opinion animals are creatures deprived of a rational soul and therefore cannot belong to the sphere of morality.<sup>19</sup>

Aquinas thought that animals have no moral status except human interest- as human property.<sup>20</sup> According to him, that "Hereby is refuted the error of those who said it is sinful for a man to kill dumb animals, for by divine providence they are intended for man's use in the natural order. Hence it is no wrong for man to make use of them, either by killing or in any other whatever."<sup>21</sup> Aquinas also wrote that "He that kills another ox, sins not through killing the ox, but through injuring another man in his property. Wherefore this is not a species of the sin of murder but of the sin of theft or robbery."<sup>22</sup> Aquinas revisited Augustine's point concerning animals. It is said in the *Genesis* that –

“ let us make man in our own image in the likeness of ourselves and let them be the master of the fish, of the sea, the birds of the heaven, the cattle, all the wild beasts and the earth.” God created man in the image of himself, in the image of God He created them. God blessed them saying to them “Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth and conquer it. Be master of the sea, the birds of the heaven and all living animals of the earth.”<sup>23</sup>

Aquinas also thought that animals are “naturally enslaved and accommodated to the uses of others”. For him, the souls of animals are not immortal; human beings alone possess immortal souls. In favoring the arguments of Aristotle, Aquinas asserted that non-human species are mere object property of other rational creatures. Aquinas cites Aristotle and views that humans have both a spiritual and corporeal element.<sup>24</sup> He concluded that the souls of animals are not immortal, and only human beings have

<sup>19</sup> Saint Thomas Aquinas, 1970 *Summa theologiae*, London 265-174

<sup>20</sup> Linzey Andrew “*Animals Theology*”. Chicago : U of IL P, 1995, p.13

<sup>21</sup> Regan Tom, and Singer P. *Animal Rights and Human Obligations Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall-1976*

<sup>22</sup> Aquinas, Thomas *Summa Theologica* . Trans. Fathers of the English Dominican Province. 5 vols. Westminster : Christian Classics, 1948. Part-11 Question 64, Article 1.

<sup>23</sup> *Genesis* 1-3 26, 27-28

<sup>24</sup> Aquinas, Thomas *Summa Theologica* . Trans. Fathers of the English Dominican Province. 5 vols. Westminster : Christian Classics, 1948. Part-1. Question 75, Article-3

immortal souls. Aquinas asserted that God is the last end of this universe whom the rational creature alone obtain in themselves, and other creatures are ruled as being directed to rational creature. Divine providence provides for the intellectual nature for its own sake, and for all others for its sake.

Lynn White in “The Historical Roots of our Ecological Crisis”, blamed Christianity for the growing environmental crisis. White opines “Christianity is the most anthropocentric religion the world has seen.” As we know that most of the Christians in the West assume that they have been given “dominion” by God, over the rest of creation and that we are therefore free to continue breeding dogs and eating flesh. Andrew Linzey rejects the traditional Christian view, which holds that God granted people the right to use nature and animals for their own ends. Linzey’s generosity paradigm requires Christians to exhibit self-sacrificing service towards all of creation and asserts that exploitation of animals violates God’s will, as expressed in the *Bible*. Although there has always been a small and quite minority protectionist voice among Christians, but theologians such as Andrew Linzey, and some Christian protectionists perhaps are stronger and more visible than ever. Some notable Christians demonstrate “a reversal of the relationship of fear and enmity between humans and animals that appertains after the fall and the Flood”.<sup>25</sup> They demonstrate a firm belief that Descartes was wrong in “*cogito ergo sum*: “I think therefore I am” Rather *Amo ergo sum*: “I love, therefore I am.”<sup>26</sup> Thus, a brief history of Western philosophy and theology provides a context for contemporary Christian attitudes towards animals, and for Linzey’s work.

Linzey asserts that all creatures are of God, that the deity’s covenant includes all creatures, all beings share in the suffering of life on earth, all

---

<sup>25</sup> Linzey, Andrew, and Dan Cohn-Sherbok. *After Noah: Animals and the Liberation of Theology*. London: Mowbray, 1997. p.101

<sup>26</sup> Coffin Sloane. “The Politics of Compassion: The Heart is a Little to the Left.” *Harvard Divinity Bulletin*. 28.2-3 (1999):11-12.

entities share unity in Christ, and redemption is shared by all creatures. He examines Biblical challenges to his thesis, including the practices of animal sacrifice and eating flesh, and the Biblical concept of dominion. Finally, he examines the *New Testament*, focusing on the life of Christ as a model of exemplary Christian behavior, the fall and salvation, and the support of hierarchy.

The first chapter of *Genesis* reports that the element of creation was made first, then plants and finally animals including man and woman. Linzey encourages Christians to see the “creator’s interest in the rest of creation, the intrinsic value of each creatures in God’s sight,” and acknowledge “the justice and mercy of God which extends to all work of creation.”<sup>27</sup> Therefore, Christians ought to remember that creation is not ours, but God’s,” we must not destroy without serious justification and without acknowledging that all life belongs not to us but to God.<sup>28</sup>

**Rene Descartes:**

In the history of Western philosophy, we find that Descartes treats non- human species as machines. Descartes extremely supports the Aristotelian position and denied morality, reason, thought, and consciousness to animals. Animals for Descartes are nothing more than sophisticated biological machines. It may be said that the chief problem in Descartes’ position has always been to explain animal behaviour without attributing mentality. He concluded that animal feels no pain because they are not conscious; they have no immortal soul, as evidenced by their lack of language. Descartes perspectives towards non-human species are that animals are irrational, lack of souls, mere automata, machines of God that could feel nothing. He denied speech to animals, pointing to the fact that they never “use words or put together for signs, as we do in order to declare

---

<sup>27</sup> Linzey, Andrew and Dan Cohn-Sherbok. *After Noah: Animals and the Liberation of Theology*. London: Mowbray, 1997. P.120

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid* ,P.105.

our thoughts to others". The absence of speech, Descartes reasoned could only be explained in terms of animals lacking what speech expressed thought. From the above view he concluded that animals lacked all forms of consciousness.

If we go through this view of Descartes we can find that he has clearly shown the differences that exist between men and brutes, as we can see that exists between men and brutes. We can find that magpies and parrots are able to utter words just like us, and yet they cannot speak as we do. On the other hand, men who being born as deaf and dumb, are in the same degree, or even more than the brutes, lack of organs which serve others of talking are in the habit of themselves inventing certain signs by which they make themselves understood by those who , being usually in their company, have leisure to learn their language. This does not merely to show that the brutes have less reason than humans, but that they have none at all. Since it is clear that very little is required in order to be able to talk. For him, the fact is that animals do better than we do, does not prove that they are endowed with mind, although in this case they would have more reason than any of us, and would surpass us in all other things. It rather shows that they have no reason at all, and that it is nature which acts in them according to the disposition of their organs, just as a clock which is only composed of wheels and weights is able to tell the hours and measure the time more correctly than we can do with all our wisdom. In fact, Descartes observed that animals are capable of surpassing us in those of our actions which are not guided by thoughts. He also added that when we say words or using signs, these must be relevant to exclude the speech of parrots. Because these words or signs do not express any passion, to rule out not only cries of joy or sadness and the like, but whatever can be taught by training to animals. Similarly, animals like dogs, horses, and monkeys are taught to perform, only express their fear, hope, joy and consequently they perform

without any thought. For Descartes, although animals do many things better than we do, it can even be used to prove that they act naturally and mechanically just like a clock which tells the time better than our judgment does.

From a critical point of view Descartes dualism is quite unsatisfactory because, rationality is generally not considered a morally relevant reason with regard to the respect for life.

While analyzing Descartes view Locke claims the belief that animals have a mental life and allows that they can reason, without the ability to abstract. After affirming perception indubitably in all animals, and thus they have ideas, he asserts that if any ideas at all, and are not bare machines, we cannot deny them to have some reason.<sup>29</sup> As for him:

It seems as evident to me, that they do some of them in certain instances reason, as that they have sense; but it is only in particular ideas, just as they received them from their senses. They are the best of them tied up within those narrow bounds, and have not (as I think) the faculty to enlarge them by any kind of abstraction.<sup>30</sup>

In another passage, he criticized those who would assert “that dogs or elephants do not think when they give all the demonstration of it imaginable, except only telling us that they do so”.<sup>31</sup>

When we assess Descartes philosophy we find that his view is based on the judgment “I think therefore I am”, but it does not find the entrance to the ethical realm, and remains held fast in a dead view of the world and of life. True philosophy must commence with the most immediate and comprehensive facts of consciousness.

### **Wittgenstein:**

The most anti-cartesian philosopher Wittgenstein shares the Cartesian bias against animal mentation, by virtue of the absence of language in animals. For him, thought is constituted by the social

---

<sup>29</sup> John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* New York: Dutton, 1871, p.117

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid*, p.127

<sup>31</sup> John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* New York: Dutton, 1871. P.87

conventional signs, one is brought up in, without such a system neither thought nor concepts, there can be no “private language” for there are no publicly checkable criteria and rules for correct and incorrect application of concepts in a private language, and if there is no way to be incorrect, there is also no way to be correct.<sup>32</sup> Also for Wittgenstein language is a “form of life” which express and shapes one’s own nature. In his famous passage,

Wittgenstein tells us that if a lion could speak we couldn’t understand him, in another he thought that it is conceptually impossible for animal to smile, and also for him a dog cannot stimulate pain or feel remorse, that an animal cannot hope or consciously imitate, and that a dog cannot mean something by wagging its tail and a crocodile cannot think.<sup>33</sup>

Wittgenstein’s thought about the lion suggests us that since animals have such a radically different forms of life, we could not become privy to it and even if they did have a rule- governed language.<sup>34</sup> All these above argument represent the fact that non-human species are virtually unchallenged attests to the power of ideology in philosophy as well as in science.

While assessing the view of Wittgenstein we may say that according to Wittgenstein animals can’t hope or stimulate pain, these are truly perplexing. For example, when the master is eating and his pet dog is sitting in front, with the hope that his master will give him a bite. Wittgenstein shows us an example in which he mentions that an animal can’t believe. As for him, a dog believes his master is at the door. But does the dog believe that his master will come on the day after tomorrow? Wittgenstein believed that dogs and some other animals have some intentional status and some conscious ones, but he claims that animals can have present or short term cognitive states, whereas long term intentional states require language.<sup>35</sup>

---

<sup>32</sup> Regan Tom, Singer P, *Animal rights and Human Obligations* Prentice Hall, New Jersey 1889,1976, p.44.

<sup>33</sup> Wittgenstein, L. *Philosophical Investigations* Oxford: Blackwell, 1958,p.90,153 166,174,224..

<sup>34</sup> Rollin, Bernard E. *Thought Without Language :The Unheeded Cry*, OUP: 1989.

<sup>35</sup> Clark, Stephen R.L *The Moral Sstatus of Animals* “ Oxford University Press. 1984.

According to him, since animals lack a system of conventional signs, they lack fundamental tools for a mental life. So, the concept about the lion in the above suggests that since animals have such a radically different form of life, we could not become privy to it even if they did have a rule-governed language.

A critical assessment of the view given by Wittgenstein be made here. Any argument which equates thought and language and which denies any sort of significant thought in the absence of language, be the argument Cartesian or Wittgenstein, must be hard pressed to explain how humans ever acquire language in the first place.<sup>36</sup> The acquisition of language entails that experiences and thoughts be processed at some stage without language. Even if one believes with Chomsky that the essential skeleton of language is innate, so that linguistic competence is native rather than acquired, it must still be triggered and fleshed out by non-linguistic experiences, which determine the particular version of universal language that the child learns. Furthermore, Thomas Reid thought that understanding of reference and meaning requires some non-linguistic comprehension of the linkage between sign and what is signified prior to the acquisition of language; otherwise the entire process would never get off the ground.<sup>37</sup> Wittgenstein's point that mental images cannot serve as markers for concepts, since there is no public check for correction of application. There must be ways in which one can conceivably misapply the concept and be detected and corrected. This is possible only when the vehicles of the concept are public and accessible to others, who can see how one is using a concept and who can correct deviations from proper use.<sup>38</sup> Question may be raised that whether there is any difference between the two situations? According to the private-

---

<sup>36</sup> B. Rollin, *Natural and Conventional Meaning : An Examination of the Distinction* (The Hague: Mouton 1976).

<sup>37</sup> T. Reid , *Inquiry into the Human Mind on the Principles of Common Sense*, Chapter 5. Many editions

<sup>38</sup> H.H Price, *Thinking and Experience* (Cambridge Mass ; Harvard University Press, 1953)

language argument the animal must rely on memory and thus has no way of being shown to be wrong. An animal may see shimmering on asphalt and believe it to mean water, but he is “publicly” corrected when he reaches the road and finds no water there. In other words we may say that the animal is an active agent that can serve as a basis for correction. This example has shown that memory without language is possible, and animal can remember without language.

Wittgenstein points out that since language separates human from animals and since language is a “form of life” which both shapes and is shaped by ones *umwelt*, we could not understand a lion if it speaks, seems implausible. We may say that our forms of life are not all that dissimilar; both the lion and we have interests in eating, sleeping, sex, avoiding encroachment on our environments and so forth, about which we could doubtless make small talk.

Wittgenstein’s claim that an animal can not hope or stimulate pain, these are truly perplexing. What else can one say of a dog when it sits at attention while we are eating but that it is hoping we will give it a scrap? And the case about stimulating pain, any pet-owner and any veterinarian can relate cases in which animals stimulated pain in order to get attention, avoid punishment, and so on. We can say that the most powerful reason for believing in animal mental states is that they constitute the best way of explaining what animals do, how they behave, and how they survive, both philosophically and scientifically. The fact is that we cannot experience these states directly is of little consequence, of as little consequence as the fact that we cannot directly experience the particles of microphysics or the past is to the explanatory value of postulating particles and a past.

**Hume:**

According to Hume, animals can un-doubtedly feel, think, love, hate, will and even reason as we do, but as for Hume there are two important

differences between humans and animals. The first is our superiority in knowledge and understanding and then our superiority in reasoning. In contrast to the Cartesian views humans possess a unique ability to reason that animals lack. Hume suggests that there are some differences of reasoning abilities between humans and non-human species. One such difference is that animals but not humans possess particular cognitive instinct, which helps them to survive and reproduce, and another is that animals do not engage in demonstrative reason, and finally we may say that only humans are capable of improving their reasoning ability, which animals do not. Hume suggest that animals cannot be regarded as moral agents, and the way in which the moral sense operates- that is virtue which is a certain quality of human character. As for him, good reasoning is a virtue in humans. But at first we need to have a clear idea of what Hume wanted to mean by the term “reasoning”. By this term, he means the ability to imagine ability to link and relates idea in various ways that produce either belief or knowledge. In *Treatise of Human Nature* Hume opines that reason is nothing but a wonderful and unintelligible instinct in our souls, which carries us along a certain train of ideas and endows them with particular qualities, according to their particular situation and relations. In the first “*Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*” Hume divides reasoning into two “demonstrative reasoning” and “moral reasoning” .Reasoning on the basis of the second group of relations, contiguity, distance, identity and causation - Hume calls moral reasoning. Our judgment of beauty or ugliness also reflects the ability of our moral sense.

According to Hume, humans are distinct from animals by virtue of their status as moral agents. In this point, Hume shares a similar view with Locke. The action of persons is associated with the notion of responsibility. Although animals shares many of our mental capacities, but they lack those features which we associated with the possesses of moral character.

According to him, the meaning of character is that which possess the mental capacity-like virtue and vices which in turn is bound up with the capacity for moral distinctions. The reason why animals fails to possess the kind of passions, and hence the moral sentiment, is precisely that they lack a kind of understanding of knowledge required for the distinctive point of view associated with morality.<sup>39</sup>

**R.G. Frey:**

According to Roger Frey, we all know that human beings have some want, belief, and desire, but the question is that whether these qualities are present in the non-human species or not? Having an interest on something means to have a consciousness to that thing and to desire it. Question may be raised that can animals have desire or want? To answer Frey cites an example by saying that as a tractor needs oil in order to function normally, similarly a dog needs water in order to function normally. For him, water is just a need for both of them and need does not require the presence of either consciousness or knowledge. He raises another question that do non-human species possess some belief? According to Frey, when I have a desire to owe something then my desire proofs that I have a belief about the absence of that particular thing. If animals or living creatures have a concept of belief a creature must be possessed with the difference between true and false belief and if creature have this concept then they must be aware of their true sentence, but it is not the case. We could not see cats or living creatures with such awareness. Moreover, cats, or living creatures are not possessed with language and also he thought that animals cannot assert anything and a lack of assertion suggests that they could not possess linguistic ability.<sup>40</sup>

Historically, it is rooted in Descartes ‘claim that only language, a “universal instrument” as he called it, can evidence mind and go beyond

---

<sup>39</sup> Boyle Deborah. *Hume on Animal Reason*, Hume Studies, Vol-xxvi ,no.1 (April 2003)p. 3-28. [www.humesociety.org/.../boyle...v2](http://www.humesociety.org/.../boyle...v2)

<sup>40</sup> R.G. Frey, Rights, Interests, Desires, and Beliefs., American Philosophical Quarterly, Vol.16., July 1979, pp.233-39

immediate particularity. The equation of thought with the ability to universalize and generalize and go beyond the particulars given in sensation was made explicit by Kant, who made thought propositional and rooted thinking in the organization of sensory data by concepts.<sup>41</sup> This tradition has assumed that since animals lack language, they must lack concepts, and are therefore trapped forever in the momentary. Only a linguistic being has concept and only concepts enable a being to universalize, generalize, refer to what is absent, counterfactual, non-existent, past, future and so forth. Since animals lack language, they must lack concepts and since they lack concepts, they can live at best only in a world of isolated, fragmented, momentary, particulars. The philosopher physiologist Buytendijk shows that an octopus could distinguish between actively touching something and being passively touched and concluded from this that even octopus have a mental image, betokening a concept, of self and other.<sup>42</sup>

**Kant:**

If we go through Kant, morally permissible actions are those that could be willed by all rational individuals. For Kant, the meaning of rationality is not the same as the meaning of intelligence. To define rational beings he uses to mean a being that is able to choose the way of good life. The nature of rational beings which he called person's end-in-ourselves. For him rationality or autonomy is a property that made a kind of intrinsic value of dignity on the beings who have it, and therefore, they are to be respected in a different way and lacking this property in other animals lack the dignity or value. We may say that Kant's have a special concern for rational autonomous being humans are the member of the kingdom of ends, end-in-themselves. It is a presupposition of rational choice. To wrote Kant our maxim must conform to the categorical imperative where we must be able to

---

<sup>41</sup> I.Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Norman Kemp Smith, McMillan, St, Martin's Press, 1929.

<sup>42</sup> F.J.j.Buytendijk, "Toucher et être touché". *Arch. Neerl.Zool.*, 10, suppl.2 (1953)

will it as a universal law. Also for Kant, only human beings have the capacity for moral choice that treating a person as a mere means violates the dignity of every human being. From the above discussion we may say that Kant's perspective is totally anthropocentric.<sup>43</sup> We may find Kant's attitude in his categorical imperative where he formulates the dignity of human being. In his theory of "kingdom of ends" the autonomy of every person is respected. But what about non-rational being? Are they mere object or machines for us? How should we treat them? On Kant's conception the intelligence animals are those that is characterized by its ability to learn from its experiences. He also thought that we are the only moral animal, in the sense that we are the only moral animal, in the sense that we are the only animals whose conduct is subject to moral guidance and moral evaluation. We are not traced this type of moral qualities on non-human species because they are not conscious of their principles. He believed that human beings can have duties only to human beings; actually he means to someone who is in a position to act morally and obligates us because they do not possess legislative wills. In fact, Kant tried to show us that we have no moral obligation towards non-human species. As for him, the world of non-human being is different from us because our world is a world of self-conscious in which duties, moral obligations and many other qualities belong, in which event are divided into free and un-free, those which have reason and those who are merely caused. Like Kant, Hegel also says that animals "have no right to their life, because they do not will it"<sup>44</sup>. He too denies that animals are ends in themselves, and calls them things. As for him-

The thing, as externally, has no end in itself; it is not infinite self-relation but something external to itself. A living thing too

---

<sup>43</sup> Edited by Margot Michel, Daniela Kuhne, Julia Hanni, *Animal Law- Tier and Recht, Developments and Perspectives in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, Entwicklungen and Perspektiven im 21. Jahrhundert st. Gallen 2012 p.no-7-15

<sup>44</sup> Hegel, G.W.F, *Philosophy of Right* (Oxford; Oxford University Press, 1952) p.237

(an animal) is external to itself in this way and in so far itself a thing.<sup>45</sup>

So an animal lacks rationality, self-consciousness, infinite self-relation, it “lacks subjectivity” and so “is external not merely to the subject but to itself” as well. To say an animal as a thing is to say that it lacks some sort of mental complexity, some sort of reflexivity that persons have. Let us critically analyze Kant’s view.

Kant’s own attitude about the moral status of non-human animals seems puzzling. Kant does think we have the right to kill the other animals, but it must be quickly and without pain, and cannot be for the sake of mere sport. He tells us that, “Any action whereby we may torment animals, or let them suffer distress, or otherwise treat them without love, is demeaning to ourselves.”<sup>46</sup> In his lectures Kant said our duties towards animals are merely indirect duties towards humanity. “Animal nature has analogous to human nature, and by doing our duties to animals in respect of manifestations of human nature, we indirectly do our duty to humanity.....We can judge the heart of a man by his treatment of animals.”<sup>47</sup> In his lectures, Kant told a story about Leibniz. Leibniz once carefully returning a worm he had been studying to its leaf when he has done.<sup>48</sup> And both on his lectures and in the *Metaphysics of Morals*, Kant has hard words for people who shoot their horses or dogs when they are no longer useful.<sup>49</sup> But the question may be raised here that why don’t we owe these duties directly to the other animals? In the *Metaphysics of Morals*, Kant argues that human beings can have duties only to human beings. He thinks that we can have duties only to someone who is in a position to morally constrain or obligate by his will,

---

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid*, p.236

<sup>46</sup> Kant *Lectures on Ethics*, L. Infield (trans). New York; Harper Torchbooks, 1963. 27; 710, P.434.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid*, p.239-240

<sup>48</sup> Kant, *Lectures on Ethics*, 27;459, pp.212-213

<sup>49</sup> Kant, *The Metaphysics of Morals*, Trans. Gregor Mary, in; Gregor Mary edit, Cambridge Texts in the History of Philosophy Series, Cambridge 1996

and that someone with a legislative will can do that. The non-human animals cannot obligate us because they do not have legislative wills. Kant did not mean to say that a human being as an end-in-itself is precious commodity, while a non-human animal is an expendable commodity like a grocery-store wine glass. In a sense it is not an argument from the value of rational beings, or of the lives of rational beings, to our obligations to rational beings at all instead it is an argument from the capacity to obligate, or the lack of that capacity, to the assignment of a certain kind of value. More precisely we may say that it is an argument that identifies a certain kind of value, being an end-in-oneself-with the capacity to obligate. So Kant isn't arguing that we have no obligation to non-human animals because they or their lives lack a certain kind of value. Rather he is arguing that they lack this value because they cannot place us under obligations. So the question is that whether Kant is right?

We do not take our interests and concerns to matter only because they are the interests and concerns of an autonomous rational being.<sup>50</sup> If the citizens of a state can vote certain protections for all human beings, why couldn't citizens of the human moral community, the Kingdom of Ends, vote certain protection for all animal beings.<sup>51</sup> For instance, one might suggest, we demand that we not be tortured, injured, hunted, or eaten, not just because of the assault on our autonomous nature, but because of the assault on our animal nature, therefore we should not treat our fellow animals in those ways. According to Kant human beings are not distinguished from the other animals by being in connection with some sort of transcendental, rational order beyond nature with which the other animals have nothing to do. Instead we are distinguished by our ability to construct a

---

<sup>50</sup> *The Source of Normativity* (Cambridge; Cambridge University Press,1996) especially 3.3.1-3.10,pp, 113-125

<sup>51</sup> Kant seems at first to be granting this point. In the *Metaphysics of Morals* we find a Section devoted to "A human beings duty to himself as an animal being" (MM 6 ;421-428)

transcendental, rational order out of the essential love of life and the goods of life that we share with the other animals. So in taking ourselves to be ends-in-ourselves we legislate that the natural good of a creature that matters to itself is the source of normative claims. Animal nature is an end-in-itself, because our own legislation makes it so. And that is why we have duties to the other animals.

From the above discussion, we may claim that non-human species are far more behind to come under the purview of morality. Thus dominant western ethics with regard to the moral standing of animals are not only unacceptable because they are inconsistent, but also because they disregard our biological affiliation with animals. It exemplifies a lack of appreciation for the majesty, complexity, and wonder of life and reveal a lack of understanding for the fleeting nature of our personal physical existence. . But our attitude towards animals has changed today. Human's capacity to speak makes them distinct from animals; we can see that animals have comprehended language. Question may be raised here that is only alphabetical language called actual language? One may say that sign language is also a kind of language which is used by many non-human species and human beings too. As for example- we can see in our daily life that a traffic police also uses sign languages and we can understand that what he means to indicate. In this way different types of questions arise here against those who directly deny the moral status of animals. Now we may discuss those philosophers opinion who agree that non-human species are not only automata, they have also rationality, self-consciousness and moreover dignity like normal human being. At first we may discuss Darwin's View on animals.

### **2.3 Arguments for Animals Moral Status:**

#### **Charles Darwin:**

In *The Decent of Man*, Darwin shows us that "there is no fundamental difference between man and higher mammals in their mental

faculties”, and that “the lower animals, like man manifestly feel pleasure and pain, happiness, and misery”<sup>52</sup>. In the “*Decent of Man*” Darwin claims that a moral sense, a conscience is present to some degree in many other animals.<sup>53</sup> Darwin argues “natural selection cannot possibly produce any modification in a species exclusively for the good of another species. Darwin mentioned that;

Man is a part of nature and one of the products of the evolutionary process. That man is an ecological species but this species has evolved with such unique and unprecedented properties on the animal level that in man the biological evolution has transcended itself.<sup>54</sup>

Moreover, Darwin in “*The Decent of Man*” cited various examples which prove that non-human species are also social creatures or social being like human being. Everyone noticed that how miserable horses, dogs, are when they separated from their companion, and how much strong love and affection they show when they meet together. All these examples tell us that non-human species also lead their social life like us. Moreover, we can see that social animals perform many little services for each other, they also show pampers to his companion or children. In our everyday life we can see that by licking each other cows expresses their love and affection. Even many animals certainly sympathize each one’s distress or danger. Captain Stanberry saw on a lake, an old and completely blind pelican which was very fat, must have been well feed for a long time by his companion. . Blyth also informed to Charles Darwin that he saw an Indian cows feeding two or three of their companions which were blind. On the other hand we can see in our home, that our pet dog possesses some power of self-command. We can

---

<sup>52</sup> Charles Darwin , *The Descent of Man and Selection in Relation to Sex* New York; Modern Library, 1971,p.448

<sup>53</sup> Darwin, *The Descent of Man, and Selection in Relation to Sex* , London: D.Appleton, 1897, Chapter4

<sup>54</sup> Dobzhanksy, T. Human Nature as a product of Evolution; *The Range of Ethics* Harold H. Titus, Morris T. Keeton, East-West Press Pvt Ltd. New Delhi, 1972,p.123

find in one incident in Darwin who mentioned that a dog refrains from stealing food in the absence of their master.<sup>55</sup>

**Tom Regan:**

Perhaps, Gandhi's voice compelled Regan to ask, "Why would only human beings have rights?"<sup>56</sup> Regan not only developed a moral grounding in human rights, but soon introduced the first comprehensive philosophical theory of animal rights. In *The Case for Animal Rights*, Regan explained the "right view" "in which certain animals have basic rights and ought to be taken to consideration. Animals, human or otherwise that qualify as subject of a life have equal inherent value in Regan's theory. In one sentence we may say that Regan formulated his theory on the basis of inherent value of specified individuals. For him, there can be no entity that is more or less inherently valuable than another. So what we call inherent value?? To say we have such value is to say that we are something more than, something different from, mere receptacles. That means the value which is independent of our usefulness to others. We never treat other in ways that fail to show respect for the other's independent value is to act immorally, to violate the individual's rights. So, inherent value belongs equally to those who are the experiencing subjects of a life. Regan believed that animals with a welfare (which includes humans) have a "psychophysical identity". By this he means that normal, mammals aged one year or older have desires, beliefs, and the ability to act, they have preference autonomy. Preference autonomy entails want, desire, and preferences that an individual strives to fulfill. For example, a dog will choose between various activities, and also selecting the option that can be best satisfies her wants or desires. In Regan's right view the prima facie right not to be harmed, carries a concurrent duty for human moral agents. Regan's right view, we believe, is

---

<sup>55</sup> Darwin "The Decent of Man" chap-4 " Comparison of the Mental Power of Man"

<sup>56</sup> Regan, Tom. *Animal Rights, Human Wrongs :An Introduction to Moral Philosophy*. New York : Rowman & Littlefield, 2004. P.3-5.

rationally the most satisfactory moral theory. His “harm principle” demands that a subject of a life never be treated merely as a means to an end, they are to be treated in ways that shows respect for their inherent value. Moral agents have a duty to assist subjects-of-a-life if others fail to respect their inherent value.<sup>57</sup>

**Jeremy Bentham:**

Most of the utilitarian philosophers hold the view that the basic nature of a creature is to seek pleasure and to avoid pain.. For example, Bentham points to the capacity to suffer as the vital characteristic that entitles a being for equal consideration. Bentham wrote, “The question is not can they reason? Nor can they talk? But can they suffer?”<sup>58</sup> The capacity for suffering or enjoyment or happiness- is not just not another characteristic like the capacity for language or for higher mathematics. He argued that animals have capacity to feel pain and for this reason they ought to be morally considerable. According to him, “Each to count for one and none for more than one”. In other words, the interests of every being affected by an action are to be account and given the same weight as the like interests of any other being. Bentham is not saying that those who try to make “the-insuperable line” that determines whether the interests of a being should be considered happen to have selected the wrong characteristic. The capacity for suffering and enjoying things is a pre-requisite for having interest at all, a condition that must be satisfied before we can speak of interests in any meaningful way. If a being suffers there can be no moral justification for refusing to take that suffering into consideration. A stone does not have interests because it cannot suffer, but a mouse on the other hand, does have an interest in not being tormented, because it will suffer if it is. Also for him, other creatures react to pain in ways similar to human beings, they share

---

<sup>57</sup> Regan, Tom. *The Case for Animal Rights*. New York ; Routledge, 1984 P.249

<sup>58</sup> Jeremy Bentham, *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation*, New York ;Hafner Press, 1948, p.310-311 and Singer, P. *Animal Liberation* 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, New York ;Avon Books, 1990,p.7-9

neurological and mental faculties associated with pain in human beings.<sup>59</sup> If a being is not capable of suffering, or of experiencing enjoyment or happiness, there is nothing to be taken into account. That is why the limit of sentience is the only defensible boundary of concern for the interests of others. It is worth mentioned that J.S. Mill distinguished between two kinds of pleasures, higher and lower and human beings enjoy higher kind of pleasure and lower kind of pleasure is enjoyed by animals. But for Bentham there is no distinction between higher and lower kind of pleasures.

**Peter singer:**

In *Animal Liberation*, Peter Singer remarks that Wittgenstein have mentioned that we cannot meaningfully attribute conscious states to the creatures without language. Wittgenstein believed that animals are utterly mindless. In his famous book *Logical Investigation* he denies that we could not understand a lion even if it could speak. This means that our life is different in kind from lion and other animals. The reason is that we could not understand what a lion speaks is that we and only we are capable of using language. In *Private Language*, Wittgenstein wanted to show that the ability to apply concepts meaningfully requires public criteria, and the most impressive public criteria can be provided only by language. From the above we may say that animals according to Wittgenstein mind require concepts and that require public evidence of language.

For Singer, a liberation movement demands an expansion of our moral horizons and an extension or reinterpretation of the basic moral principle of equality. Practices that were previously regarded as natural and inevitable come to be seen as the result of an unjustifiable prejudice. No one can say that all his or her attitudes and practices are beyond criticism, and this way we may come to see that there is a case for a new liberation movement. If we look into the past then we can see that the idea of “The

---

<sup>59</sup> Regan Tom, Singer p, *Animal Rights and Human Obligation* Prentice Hall New Jersey 1889,1976, p.no-25

Rights of Animals” really has been used in time with the case for “Women’s Rights”. We may say that the case for equality between men and women cannot validly be extended to nonhuman animals. Women have a right to vote for instance because they are just as capable of making rational decisions as men are, animals on the other hand, are incapable of understanding the significance of voting, they cannot have the right to vote. So it might be said that men and women are similar beings and should have equal rights, while humans and non humans are different and should not have equal rights.

The utilitarian position on animals, most commonly is associated with Peter Singer. Singer’s philosophy lies on the belief that there is no room to disregard interests on the grounds of race, sex, species, or intellect. Singer realized the implications of utilitarian theory for animals- philosophical consistency required him to include animals in his utilitarian theory. Singer’s theory does not demand equal treatment for all sentient creatures, but it does require equal consideration of interests. Equal consideration of interests requires us to move beyond personal or sectional point of view to take into account the interests of all those who will be affected. He insists that each individual carry no more weight than any other, each individual counts for one and nobody counts for more than one. Basically we may say that singer’s theory does not demand equal treatment for all sentient creatures, but it does require equal consideration of interests. He thought that the interests of any one individual are no more or less important than the interests of any other. Singer suggested that each individual and each species is different, but they all have interests and equal interests ought to be treated equally.

If we look into the utilitarian’s then we can see that an utilitarian accepts two moral principles. The first is that of equality, everyone’s interest counts, and similar interests must be counted as having similar weight or

importance. Whether it may be white or black, human or animal- everyone's pain or frustration matters, and matters just as much as the equivalent pain or frustration of anyone else. And the second principle is that of utility, do the act that will bring about the best balance between satisfaction and frustration for everyone affected by the outcome.

But the utilitarian argument for the moral significance of animal suffering in meat production is not argument for vegetarianism. If an animal lived a happy life and was painlessly killed and then eaten by people who would otherwise suffer hunger or malnutrition by not eating the animal, then painlessly killing and eating the animal would be the morally justified thing to do. Moreover, in many parts of the world where economic, cultural, or climate conditions make it virtually impossible for people to sustain themselves on plant based diets, killing and eating animals who are painlessly killed would not be morally objectionable. So, if violating the rights of an animal can be morally tolerated, especially a right to life, then similar rights violations can be morally tolerated. In failing to recognize the inviolability of the moral claims of all morally considerable beings, utilitarianism cannot accommodate one of our most basic prima facie principles namely that killing a morally considerable being is wrong.

**Paul Taylor:**

In *Respect for Nature* Taylor represents a moral theory which is intended to protect the interests of wildness, including plants and animals that dwell there in. As an environmental ethicist Taylor wants to protect every species from being exploited by human beings. Taylor writes about wild animals and claims that “to harm several such being is not merely to bring about a certain amount of intrinsic disvalue in the world....it is to commit a number of violations of duty, corresponding to the number of creatures harmed.” For him, if an entity has inherent worth, then that being is worthy of moral consideration by moral agents. He thought that “inherent

worth indicates that moral agents have a prima facie duty to promote or preserve that entity's good as an end-in-itself for the sake of that entity. He asserts that because an organism grows, responds to stimulus, reproduces, resists, dying assimilates and use materials from their environment in order to survive, we ought to respect their efforts and their lives. Moreover, Taylor introduces and discusses various types of rights in his theory of Respect for Nature. Taylor's definition of a moral agent includes the ability to engage in moral deliberation, that is to consider and weigh moral reasons for and against various courses of conduct open to choice, the ability to make decision on the basis of those reasons, the ability to exercise will power, to carry out those decisions and the capacity to hold oneself answerable to others for failing to carry out them.<sup>60</sup> Taylor's moral theory actually protects "any wild creature just in virtue of its being a member of a biotic community of a natural ecosystem".

**Albert Schweitzer:**

Descartes philosophy is based on the judgment, "I think therefore I am". However, it does not find the entrance to the ethical realm, and remains a dead view of the world and of life. True philosophy must commence with the most immediate and comprehensive fact of consciousness. And this may be formulated as "I am life which wills to live and I exist in the midst of life which wills to live"<sup>61</sup>. Albert Schweitzer was a renowned philosopher who thought that mere sympathy is too narrow a concept to serve as the intellectual experience of an ethical element. It denotes, only a sharing of the suffering of the will-to-live. But to be ethical is to share the whole experience of all the circumstances and aspirations of the will-to-live, to live with it in its pleasures, in its struggle towards perfection. For him, "it is good to maintain and cherish life, and it is evil to destroy life. According to

---

<sup>60</sup> Taylor, Paul W *Respect for Nature: A Theory of Environment Ethics* .Princeton ;Princeton U, 1986.p.14

<sup>61</sup> Albert Schweitzer, *Civilization and Ethics (part 2 of the philosophy of Civilization)* trans John Naish, Reprinted by permission of A & C Black Ltd and Macmillan publishing Co, Inc.

Schweitzer, the fundamental principle of morality which we seek as a necessity for thought is not, however, a matter only of arguing and deepening current views of good and bad, but also of expanding and extending these. He thought that a man is really ethical only when he obeys the constraint laid upon him to help all lives which he is able to succour, and when he goes out of his way to avoid injuring anything living. He does not ask how far this or that life deserves sympathy as valuable in itself, or how far it is capable of feeling.

So what does Reverence for Life teaches us regarding the relation between man and the non-human animals?? According to Schweitzer, whenever he injures life of any kind he must be quite clear as to whether this is necessary or not. Also for him, those who test operations or drugs on animals, or who inoculate them with disease so that they must be able to help human beings by means of the result thus obtained, ought never to rest satisfied with the general idea that their dreadful doings are preformed in pursuit of a worthy aim. That is why Schweitzer thought that whenever any animal is forced into the service of man, the suffering which it has to bear on that account are the concern of every one of us.<sup>62</sup> In fact, he tried to suggest that when there is so much maltreatment of animals, when the cries of thirsting creatures go up unnoticed from the railway tracks, when there is so much roughness in our slaughter house, when in our kitchens so many animals suffer horrible deaths from unskillful hands, when animals endure unheard of agonies from heartless men, or are delivered to the dreadful play of children, then we are all guilty and must bear the blame.<sup>63</sup>

Schweitzer's views are criticized for including insentient and inanimate matter, such as snowflakes, under his protective ethical umbrella. But it seems that he was correct that if we are to protect the musk ox, then

---

<sup>62</sup> Albert Schweitzer *Affirmations of Reverence for life* by prof- Marvin Meyer , Chapman university press, p.2, 13

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid*, P.13

we must protect the muskeg, and if we are to protect the muskeg, then we must protect air and water, even the snowflake. Our earth's system of water is interconnected. Never has this interconnection been clearer than it is at present, under the threat of global warming and flooding from the earth's melting glaciers and ice fields. Thus his ethics is based on a radical view of interconnections. Water reserves, waterways, snow and ice are part of a connected system of moisture on which all earthlings depend.

### **2.3.1 Concluding Remarks:**

In this chapter, we have discussed different philosopher's arguments (both in favor and against) in relation to animals deserving or worthy of mental status. We have also critically discussed some philosophers, what they have argued, against animal's moral status. If we go through James Rachel, we can find that some environmentalists have argued that trees should have moral standing. This is not quite as silly as it sounds. It just means that the welfare of trees (and other elements of the ecosystem) should be taken into account when we decide what to do and what policies to adopt. And this should be done independently of whether it helps or hurts human beings - we should be concerned to protect the trees for their own sakes. If we say that animals have moral standing, it would mean that their interests would count, from a moral point of view. And their interests would count for their own sakes. This is contrary to the dominant tradition, which says that we should avoid cruelty to animals only because, if we do not, there may be bad consequences for people e.g. Aquinas and Kant. So, the question remains: do animals have moral standing? Let us critically discuss the criteria's for moral standing as we have discussed earlier.

To respond the above question, that is do animals have moral standing we can find there are two most commonly defended views. One is only given by Kant who says that only rational, autonomous agents have moral standing. This view holds that animals do not have full moral standing,

although they might concede that animals have some sort of lesser moral status. The real motivation for this view is that it picks out an especially noble human characteristics - a characteristic that makes us sort of wonderful, not just “mere animals” - and says that is the basis of our moral standing. That’s why we human beings matter and only sentient beings (capable of feeling pain) have moral standing.

Philosophers who say this as we have discussed earlier believe that animals have full moral status. And the argument between these two views are is at least in part, an argument about whether animals have rights. What is suggested here is that there is something wrong with the way the issues are being framed? We are interested in understanding how people may be treated. But there is no one characteristic - whether it is rationality, sentience, or anything else - that is relevant to the whole range of ways in which people may be treated. Let us explain why this is important, as there is a relationship between rationality and autonomy.

### **2.3.2 Rationality and Autonomy**

Humans, as it is said earlier in this chapter, have moral standing because they are rational, autonomous agents. Humans can guide their own conduct according to their own conceptions of what ought to be done. Does the fact that someone is a rational autonomous agent make a difference in how he/she should be treated? One may say that it may. For such a being, the self-direction of his/her own life is a great good, valued not only for its instrumental worth but for its own sake. Thus paternalistic interference may be seen as an evil so far as Rachel is concerned.

Rachel cited a simple example, which goes like this suppose a woman might have a certain conception of how she wants to live her life. This conception might involve taking risks that we think are foolish. We might therefore try to change her mind; we might call attention to the risks and argue that they are not worthy of it. But suppose she will not heed our

warnings: are we then justified in forcibly preventing her from living her life as she chooses? It may be argued that we are not justified, for she is, after all, a rational, autonomous agent. It is different for someone who is not a fully a rational being - a small child, for example. Then we feel justified in interfering with his conduct, to prevent him from harming himself. The fact that the child is not anyway fully a rational agent justifies us in treating him differently than we would treat someone who is a fully a rational agent.

But once we understand why being a rational agent makes a difference in how one may be treated, in those cases in which it does make a difference, it becomes clear that possession of this quality is not always relevant. Whether a difference is relevant depends on the kind of treatment that is in question. When the issue is paternalistic interference, it is relevant to note whether the individual whose behaviour might be coerced is a rational agent. Suppose, however, that what is in question is not paternalistic interference, but something else. Suppose, for example, the question is whether to admit someone to a University. Jones is not admitted because he can't read. Now, the fact that Jones is or is not an autonomous agent has nothing to do with his decision. What is important is the fact that he can't read. Or suppose the question is whether to prescribe penicillin. Now, what is important is whether the person has an infection or not. Suppose we say "only those who can read have moral standing" or "only those susceptible to infection have moral standing." That would make just as much sense. The fact is that different capacities figure into explanations of how people may be treated, depending on what sort of treatment is at issue. What does all this imply about nonhuman animals? The following point may be relevant here.

- It's all right to coerce an animal, for its own good, because it is not an autonomous being.

- It's all right to exclude chimps from university classes, because they can't read.
- Appropriate veterinary medical treatment may be given to animals, because they are vulnerable to diseases (and they are not being autonomous, and not being able to read, has nothing to do with it).

### 2.3.3 Pain

Animals may not be autonomous, and they may not be able to read, but they may seek pleasure and suffer pain. And that, of course, is what worries us about many uses of animals in research. Does the fact that doing something would cause pain to an animal constitute a reason against doing it? The answer may be given yes. This brings animals well within the boundaries of “the moral community.” Does it make any difference to this if an animal isn't an “autonomous being”? Philosophical discussions on animals have frequently made this point, and in order to circumscribe the boundaries of the “moral community,” they have expressed a variety of opinions about how far sensitivity to pain extends.

- Some says: down to the level of shrimps
- Some says: probably insects can't feel pain

What we need, however, is more empirical information. Before Darwin, animals were regarded as mere “animated machines,” on philosophico-religious grounds. Now the pendulum has swung the other way, often on ideological grounds. We need to answer the question that is the experience of pain something that is well-nigh universal among complex species, or is it something that occurs in only some species.

It seems that a snake does not have a central representation of a mouse but relies solely on transduced information. The snake exploits three different sensory systems in relation to prey, like a mouse. To strike the mouse, the snake uses its visual system. When struck, the mouse normally does not die immediately, but runs away for some distance. To locate the

mouse, once the prey has been struck, the snake uses its sense of *smell*. The search behavior is exclusively wired to this modality. Even if the mouse happens to die right in front of the eyes of the snake, it will still follow the smell trace of the mouse in order to find it. This unimodality is particularly evident in snakes like pythons, where the prey often is held fast in the coils of the snake's body, when it hangs from a branch. Despite the fact that the snake must have ample proprioceptive information about the location of the prey it holds, it searches stochastically for it, all around, only with the help of the olfactory sense organs.

Finally, after the mouse has been located, the snake must find its head in order to swallow it. This could obviously be done with the aid of smell or sight, but in snakes this process uses only *tactile* information. Thus the snake uses three separate modalities to catch and eat a mouse. So snakes can't think of mice. Can they feel pain? Is there an organized snakey "self" there that feels pain and minds it? Anyway, snakes are not our close kin. The closer a species is to us, the more confidence we can feel. Mammals can feel pain.

Darwin was anxious to oppose the idea that animals are mere "animated machines," and in making the point was willing to attribute a broad range of psychological capacities to animals. They experience not only pleasure and pain, but terror, suspicion, and fear. They sulk. They love their children. They can be kind, jealous, self-complacent, and proud. They are curious. "There is no fundamental difference," he said, "between man and the higher mammals in their mental faculties." That is why the thought of vivisection bothered him so much. He realized that, to the extent that nonhumans are similar to humans, they should be treated similarly.

The views that have sketched are, Darwinian. It does not elevate some human characteristic to a place of supreme importance in determining moral status. Instead, it sees a complex pattern of similarities and differences

between species and treatments appropriate to those similarities and differences. Our treatment of humans and other animals should be sensitive to the pattern of similarities and differences that exist between them. When there is a difference that justifies treating them differently, we may; but when there is no such difference, we may not.

On this view, moral rules are not indexed to species - there is not one set of rules for humans, one for nonhumans. The rule against causing pain is not a rule against causing pain to humans. Three questions are raised in this regard which are as follows ;

- Does this mean we must treat animals in the same way we treat humans? No, not even all people should be treated alike.
- Do animals have moral standing? Yes, but this simply means that it is objectionable to treat them in certain ways, and that the explanation of why it is objectionable has to do with their own welfare.
- Finally, there is the perennial question, “But where do you draw the line? Must we avoid killing cockroaches?” There is no one line to be drawn, unless we wish to be arbitrary.

Emotions used to be an uncontroversial part of any description of animal behavior, as uncontroversial as the instincts with which they were compared and equated. William James - whose famous title “What is an Emotion?” inspired the one above - rightly regarded the emotions as an unlearned response system, which is precisely why the next century saw the study of emotions go out of fashion. American behaviorism tried to explain all behavior based on operant conditioning and hence had no room for unlearned predispositions. Skinner dismissed the emotions as “excellent examples of the fictional causes to which we commonly attribute behavior.”

Until late into the last century, American researchers could scarcely obtain funding for work on the emotions unless they rephrased their questions in terms of learning and memory. The second major behavioral

school - European Ethology - similarly abandoned anything considered as sentimental and imprecise as the emotions in a reaction against the subjective “animal psychology” of the time. Even to this day, the *Oxford Companion to Animal Behaviour* urges ethologists to avoid references to the emotions, because “It does nothing to promote our understanding of behavior to attribute it to an emotion if our only evidence of the emotion is the very behavior the emotion is supposed to explain.” Since the 1970s, ethology and its offshoots developed a strictly functionalist approach in which behavioral motivations barely counted, thus adding to the irrelevancy of the emotions. This functionalism went so far that Darwin’s own pioneering comparisons between the emotional expressions of humans and other animals came to be regarded as un-Darwinian.

Despite the frequent assertion that animal emotions hardly matter, outright denial of their existence is rare. This leaves us with the curious situation that a widely recognized aspect of animal behavior is deliberately ignored or minimized. Emotions are often presented as too simple for attention. The *Oxford Companion to Animal Behaviour* asserts that “animals are restricted to just a few basic emotions,” and the main difference between human and animal emotions has been proclaimed to be that “animals don’t have mixed emotions.” Whether animal emotions are pure and simple, however, cannot be ascertained without a scientific program to study them. One only need to see an aroused chimpanzee, with all its hair on end, pick up a stick to safely poke at a snake that it has approached with great hesitation, to understand that mixed inclinations, such as between fear and curiosity, are entirely possible. In fact, when Menzel tested chimpanzees with toy snakes, he found that once one chimpanzee knew about the location of a snake, others who had never seen it would adopt the same cautious, ambivalent posture just from watching the first chimpanzee that had, thus

showing the effectiveness and potential survival value of emotional communication.

Survival value is obvious to anyone who watches primate behavior, yet we seem unable to talk about emotions without putting them between skeptical quotation marks. We describe animals not as angry but as “angry” or aggressive, and not as loving, but as “loving” or affiliated and bonded. Greetings between animals may be called loud, elaborate, or intense, but rarely emotional. Apart from descriptive labels, functional labels are preferred provided they are devoid of intentionality. Thus, animals may be called “altruistic,” but only in the functional sense in that they benefit others at a cost to themselves.

The term is never used in its motivational sense to the perplexity of scholars outside behavioral biology, where altruism invariably implies benign feelings and intent. I experienced similar taboos when first describing how chimpanzees kiss and embrace their adversaries during reconciliations after a fight. I was urged to speak instead of “post conflict reunions with mouth-to-mouth contact.” That the term *reconciliation* is now widely accepted in primatology is the product of three decades of systematically countering “simpler” explanations, so that the only one left standing is that primates monitor the state of their social relationships and undertake reparatory actions following conflict.

In *Can Animal be Moral?* Mark Rowland’s, suggests us that social mammals such as rats, dogs and chimpanzees can choose to be good or bad, and because they have morality we have moral obligation to them. That is why Locke once wrote that, if an entity has self-consciousness, then it is a person whether it is in the form of a man, parrot cat or whatever.<sup>64</sup> There have been many examples which show us animals’ empathetic behavior

---

<sup>64</sup>John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, Ch.-xxvii, vol-1 (New York, Dover, 1959), P.448-49

towards other animals including humans. As for example- one hungry rhesus monkey refused to electrically shock their fellow monkey, even when it meant getting food for them. Actually whenever any animal is faced into service of man, the suffering which it has to bear on that account is the concern of every one of us. Beside this sociability is also one of the important criteria of morality. In our everyday life we can noticed that when any non-human species lose his loved ones, they appear to feel grief.

Darwin's theory says that we are all related, not that we are all identical but every species has its unique adaptations. His theory also says that no divine intervention separates us humans from all the other creatures. As for him we all are machines, sea anemones, fish, dolphins, horses, golden retrievers, and bank managers. We are all machines designed by natural selection to solve the problems we confront in our daily lives to such degree that we find the time to raise healthy, viable offspring who are likely to have healthy children of their own. Human can also build meaningful relationship not only with humans but also with animals. That is why if it is unexpected for human beings to dying in painful way or killing for human purposes, then it is not justifiable for humans creating such an unnecessary death on animals.

In this chapter we begin by discussing how the moral status of animals has been understood by the thinkers who deny that animals do not have moral status. We have made some arguments in favour and against of the views given by different philosophers regarding the moral status of animals. As Kant suggests that we have no direct duties towards animals that we owe nothing to them. But we must recognize that we have some direct duties towards the animals, just as we have some duties directly to each human. Although we do not believe that we have a duty to save wild animals from predators, but we can think that we have some duties to the animals, both wild and domesticated. For example, if it is within our control to save

animals from drowning or other natural accidents, without great risk to ourselves, then we ought to do so. Similarly, we ought to try to save animals from human-caused accidents, such as when animals are under our cars. We also have a duty to protect animals from intentional killing or harm by human beings.

It can be said that if animals have right to life, then we have a duty to save animals from being killed by predators in the wild. However, it is absurd to think that we have a duty to stop predator from killing their prey, and therefore, it is absurd to think that animals have a right to life. In response, it can be argued that though we have no duty to save wild animals from their predators but it does not follow that animals do not have a right to life that is a right for not to be killed. This is because whether we have a duty to save another beings life in a given situation depends on a number of factors other than whether that being has a right to life. In fact there may be some cases in which we have to allow some humans to die, even when it is within our purview to save them, but this does not mean that those humans do not still have a right for not to be killed. Similarly, it can be said that in the case of predators we must allow wild animals to be killed because saving them on any large scale would have disastrous ecological consequences, but this does not mean that animals do not still have a right for not to be killed. We do have a number of duties to preserve both domesticated and wild animals lives, just not when doing so would result in ecological catastrophe.<sup>65</sup>

Even if we think that animals do not have rights and therefore, there may be nothing wrong in treating animals in which it would be wrong to treat humans, the fact remains that animals are mistreated and this mistreatment of animals raises questions that as individuals, what we should

---

<sup>65</sup> Simons, A. 'Animals, Predators, the Right to Life, and the Duty to Save Lives Ethics & the Environment, 14(1), 2009, p.26.

do. So to understand the relation between species and morality here we may show one example. The old science-fiction story “The Teacher from Mars” by Eando Binder.<sup>66</sup> The main character is a Martian who has come to earth to teach in a school for boys. Because, he is “different”- seven feet tall, thin, with tentacles and leathery skin- he is taunted and abused by the students until he is almost driven out. After that however, an act of heroism makes the boys realize they have been doing wrong, and the story ends happily with the ring leader of the bullies vowing to mend his ways. The teacher from Mars is portrayed as being, psychologically exactly like a human, he is equally as intelligent and equally as sensitive, with just the same cares and interests as anyone else. The only difference is that he has a different kind of body. And obviously, that does not justify treating him with less respect. This example expected to draw the conclusion that although there are physical differences but that should make no moral difference either.

It has been suggested by some philosophers that species alone can make a difference in our moral duties towards a being. While reviewing Tom Regan’s *The Case for Animal Rights*<sup>67</sup>, Robert Nozick opines that perhaps it will turn out that the bare species characteristic of simply being human...will command special respect only from other humans - this is an instance of the general principle that the members of any species may legitimately give their fellows more weight than members of other species. Lions, too, if they were moral agents, could not then be criticized for putting other lions first.<sup>68</sup>

Regan, Singer, and Taylor soundly demonstrate that species is not a morally relevant criterion; any moral theory that draws distinctions based

---

<sup>66</sup> The story is included in *My Best Science Fiction Story*, edited by Leo Marguiles and Oscar J. Friend (New York ; Pocket Books, 1954)

<sup>67</sup> Tom Regan, *The Case for Animal Rights* Berkeley; University of California Press, 1983.

<sup>68</sup> Robert Nozick, “About Mammals and People,” *The New York Times Book Review*, November 27, 1983, p.29. For a fuller discussion of Nozick’s arguments, please see *The End of Life; Euthanasia and Morality* (Oxford; Oxford University Press, 1986). Ch.4,

purely on species is untenable. We have already progressed beyond the days of Descartes, those who are “rational and honest” are obliged to consider the effects of actions on other species, just as we are obliged to consider the effects we have towards one another.<sup>69</sup> “Moral rules are species-neutral; the same rules that govern our treatment of humans should also govern our treatment of non-humans”.<sup>70</sup>

As a society we hold the moral ideal that all human beings are equally and morally considerable, regardless of wealth, age, employment, and appearance. So there is no generally accepted hierarchy for protecting and preserving human life in contemporary Western ethics. Due to the absence of any morally relevant distinction between humans and animals, the rejection of a hierarchy of moral standing among humans ought to be extended to other species. If infants and the brain dead are morally considerable, if their lives are to be protected and preserved, then consistency and impartiality require that the lives of each living entity that is not different in morally relevant ways also be protected all life forms. Pain and suffering are morally relevant. Causing pain and suffering to others is morally reprehensible when such suffering is not in their interest and when such suffering is avoidable.

---

<sup>69</sup> Sprigge, T. L. S. “Metaphysics, Physicalism, and Animal Rights.” *Inquiry* 22 (1979); 101-43.

<sup>70</sup> Rachels, James. *Created from Animals; The Moral Implications of Darwinism*. Oxford ; Oxford University, 1990. P.208