

## Three Main Stages of the Development of Animal Ethics

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### Abstract

The reflections on the relationship between animals and humans can date back to ancient times. Many philosophers and thinkers ponder on animals and human-animal relationship, and present their perceptions of animal ethics, which exert great impact on their followers and influence people's attitude towards animals. According to the extent of the recognition and realization of animals as well as interspecies relationship, the paper divides the development of animal ethics into three main stages. The first stage is full of anthropocentric prejudices against animals, according to which animals are deemed as inferior to human beings while their consciousness, minds, and emotion are denied. The second stage witnesses an awakening to animals' sentience, consciousness, and feelings, a call for animals' liberation, and a defense for animals' rights. There's increasing attention to animals' living condition, pains, needs and wants, together with their value, esteem, moral agency, and ethical rights. The third stage attaches importance to interspecies interconnection and interaction. There're more and more record of, researches into, and calls for human-animal interactions, in which humans' attention to and care for animals are underscored. A dialogical interspecies ethics is advocated for cross-species interactions, which subverts the former anthropocentric and dualistic concept of human-animal relationship.

**Key words:** Animal ethics; Dialogical interspecies ethics; Interspecies interaction; Anthropocentrism

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

Animals are an indispensable part of human history as well as a recurrent topic in human philosophy. A good many important philosophers and thinkers ponder over animals and their relationship with human beings, and put forward their own thoughts on animal ethics. Their views exert influence on the later philosophers, and some of them still have an impact on people's thinking of animals as well as human-animal relationship.

As to the previous study on animal ethics, there hasn't enough research done in analyzing and summarizing the development of animal ethics, especially in interspecies ethics. According to the extent of the recognition and realization of animals as well as the interspecies relationship between humans and animals, the paper divides the development of animal ethics into three main stages<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Regarding the division, the authors are enlightened by some books and articles, esp. the following ones: Peter Singer's *Animal Liberation*, containing a discussion of Aristotle's, Kant's and Descartes' ideas on animals; Stephen Walker's *Animal Thought*, a very important book with its first chapter dedicated to a summary of some key philosophers' perceptions of animals and animal thought from the 17th to the 19th century; Val Plumwood's *Environmental Culture: The Ecological Crisis of Reason*, containing comments on some philosophers' ideas on animals, such as Aristotle, Descartes, Kant, Tom Regan, Peter Singer, etc.; Cynthia Willett's *Interspecies Ethics*, containing some discussion of philosophers' and scholars' perceptions of animals, like Aristotle, Kant, Descartes, Derrida, Marc Bekoff, etc.; Elisa Aaltola's *Animal Suffering: Philosophy and Culture*, covering some discussion of some philosophers' ideas on animals, such as Aristotle, Kant, Descartes, etc.; Donna J. Haraway's *When Species Meet*, containing comments on such philosophers' ideas on animals, such as Derrida and Kant; and so on and so forth.

The first stage concerning animal ethics contains anthropocentric prejudices against animals. It lasts for a long time when animals are regarded as inferior to humans, and their consciousness, minds, feelings, etc. are often denied and ignored. Animals are deemed only as existence for humans to eat and use in different fields. This kind of speciesism gets worsened especially under René Descartes' mechanistic view of animals as mere machines.

In the second stage, great attention is drawn to animals' sentience, feelings, individuality, etc., and there's a call for animals' liberation and a defense of their rights. The Cartesian mechanistic view of animals and the unlimited instrumentalization of animals are under sharp criticism.

The third stage focuses on interspecies interactions. The interactions between humans and animals are studied, emphasized and called for, in which humans' attention to and care for animals are of great significance. The human-animal relationship is no more a relationship between superior and inferior, subjects and objects, or moral-right-giver and receiver, but between individual subjects who are expected to communicate with one another. This communicative or dialogical interspecies ethics overthrows the former anthropocentric and dualistic views on animals and human-animal relationship, and will hopefully lead a healthy and harmonious development of interspecies relationship.

The following sections will cover some representative philosophers and scholars in these three stages to show some key perspectives of animal ethics in each stage.

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## 2. THE FIRST STAGE OF RESEARCH CONCERNING ANIMAL ETHICS

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The first stage lasts for quite a long time, during which too many philosophers and scholars express their ideas on animals. This section covers three representative philosophers in the first stage— Aristotle, René Descartes, and Kant.

### 2.1 Aristotle

As far back as over 2300 years ago, Aristotle did abundant empirical investigation into animals and had critical thinking about human-animal relationship. He distinguished around 500 species of birds, mammals and fishes, and made a classification of them. His book *History of Animals* is generally regarded as a pioneering work of zoology.

On top of this book, his thoughts on animals can also be traced in his other works, such as *Generation of Animals*, *Parts of Animals*, *On the Soul*, and *Politics*, etc. According to Aristotle, plants, animals, and humans all have souls with partial different attributes, and among the different parts of the soul, the nutritive soul is possessed by everything that is alive from its birth to its death.

However, concerning the relationship among creatures, he adopts a ruling principle based on the perfection of body and soul, especially the rational soul possessed only by humans. For Aristotle, different from humans, animals are unable to understand even a principle and they only follow their instincts. Accordingly, animals are deemed as inferior to men, and are better off when being ruled by men.

In addition, animals are considered as existence for humans' sake— "In like manner we may infer that, after the birth of animals, plants exist for their sake, and that the other animals exist for the sake of man, the tame for use and food, the wild, if not all at least the greater part of them, for food, and for the provision of clothing and various instruments" (Aristotle, 2015, Book One, Chapter VIII). Such perception of animals as the ruled inferior as well as existence to serve mankind's various needs is not only reflected in Aristotle's books, but omnipresent in the long history of human society. Even today, many people think the same. They regard animals as inferior existence only for humans to eat and use, reflecting the bias against animals and the instrumentalization of animals.

### 2.2 René Descartes

Compared with Aristotle, René Descartes worsens humans' disrespect and cruelty to animals by his mechanism conception of animals as automata. In René Descartes's works, the anthropocentric understanding of human-animal relationship gets intensified. Descartes doesn't think that animals have any soul. He holds a dualistic view of mind and body, and insists a dichotomy between animals and mankind. Based on the laws of mechanics and motion, Descartes makes an analogous study of animals and human beings with machines, and claims that humans are not animals or machines because of their rational soul. Descartes doesn't believe that animals have any mind, reason or intelligence even though they show more dexterity than mankind in some of their actions— "It rather shows that they have no reason at all, and that it is nature that 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" (Descartes, 2003, p.39).

Descartes denies that animals have soul, human reason, thought, and awareness, which might account for his animal vivisection experiments. For Descartes, animals are mere automata. Although Descartes does attribute certain emotion as fear to animals in his analysis of passions in *The Passions of the Soul*, his purpose is in no way to speak for animals. Instead, according to Descartes, the fact that animals cannot control passion due to a lack of rationality and cognitive judgements exactly proves the essential difference between man and animals. The Cartesian mechanistic views of animals help to justify man's longtime immoderate and indifferent use of animals as food, source of fur, laboratory object, farm

labor, exhibit, circus member, pet, etc., and to a certain extent exonerate people from any blame for their cruelty to animals.

### 2.3 Immanuel Kant

The Cartesian vision of animals is refuted by Immanuel Kant. Kant expresses his disagreement as this—“we may quite correctly infer, on the strength of the analogy, that the lower animals, like man, act according to representations, and are not machines, as Descartes contends, and that, despite their specific difference, they are living beings and as such generally kindred to man” (Kant, 2007, p.293). As for man’s relationship with animals, Kant emphasizes man’s duties to animals for the sake of a cultivation of man’s duties to humanity rather than for animals’ sake. For Kant, any cruelty to animals will harm the kindly and humane qualities in man themselves—“a person who already displays such cruelty to animals is also no less hardened towards men. We can already know the human heart, even in regard to animals” (Kant, 1997, p.212). It implies that those who are cruel to animals also easily conduct violence to humans, and the cruelty to animals does harm to humans themselves.

Moreover, Kant suggests that the more we devote ourselves to observing animals and their behavior, and the more we love them, the less likely we will contemplate cruelty to them. It is of great significance to propose man’s observation on and love for animals, which is still constructive and helpful for today’s improvement of human-animal relationship. This suggestion of more observation on animals and more love for them is also supported by lots of later scholars in different fields. However, Kant doesn’t believe that animals have any self-consciousness. In his opinion, animals exist simply as means while humans are the end. Humans’ duties to animals are in fact indirect duties to humanity.

## 3. THE SECOND STAGE OF RESEARCH CONCERNING ANIMAL ETHICS

The traditional anthropocentrism has marked many philosophers’ viewpoints on animals in the first stage, though it has been gradually receiving doubts. In the later process of humans’ contemplation of nonhuman animals, some scholars stand out as great contributors to arousing people’s awareness of animals’ pains, esteem, value, rights, moral agency, and individuality. They defend animals against speciesism and animal cruelty. The representative ones are Albert Schweitzer, Peter Singer, Tom Regan, and Jacques Derrida.

### 3.1 Albert Schweitzer

Albert Schweitzer receives the 1952 Nobel Peace Prize for his philosophy of “Reverence for Life”, which is the basic tenet for Schweitzer’s ethical philosophy. He proclaims that every living thing has a will to live, and

this will should be respected, and this reverence for life fits all the things alive, e.g. plants and animals included. The lives in different forms contain values to be awed, though their ethical significance can hardly be the same. Although opposing any gradation of values among living organisms, Schweitzer admits priorities should be set in practical contexts. A second thought is of necessity for people before their use of and possible harm on animals in such fields as laboratory. Undoubtedly, any unnecessary waste is a disrespect for life. All living beings that share the feeling of pains are a community and need the same compassion. Schweitzer puts:

Whenever an animal is in any way forced into the service of man, every one of us must be concerned with the sufferings that, for that reason, it has to undergo. ... While so much ill treatment of animals goes on, while the moans of thirsty animals in railway trucks sound unheard, while so much brutality prevails in our slaughterhouses, while animals have to suffer in our kitchens painful death from unskilled hands... (Schweitzer, 2009, p.145)

Though his ethical philosophy revolves around the “Reverence for Life”, Schweitzer emphasizes the importance of compassion, and as a matter of fact, the ideal and virtue of compassion is central to reverence for life.

### 3.2 Peter Singer

Different from Schweitzer, Peter Singer puts forward his forceful argument that all animals are equal. Both humans and animals should be given equal moral considerations. Peter Singer is best known for his monumental work *Animal Liberation* (1975), which is considered as a formative influence on leaders of the modern animal liberation movement. The key argument of *Animal Liberation* is an expansion of the utilitarian idea of maximizing utility as the only measure of good or ethical behavior. Singer suggests that this principle be applied to other animals, since the dichotomy between humans and animals is completely arbitrary. He maintains that as long as a being suffers and feels pain, irrespective of the race, sex, or species of the being, the principal of equality takes effect, and the suffering should be counted the same as the like suffering of any other being. The book contains a detailed discussion about animals in factory farms and in laboratories, disclosing their real living condition versus their true needs and wants, and arousing an ethical pondering on man’s treatment of animals. Singer then provides one solution, which is becoming a vegetarian—“Becoming a vegetarian is a highly practical and effective step one can take toward ending both the killing of nonhuman animals and the infliction of suffering upon them” (Peter, 2002, p.161).

Speciesism is another main topic in the book. “Speciesism involves the assignment of different values, rights, or special consideration to individuals solely on the basis of their species membership” (“Speciesism”). Through an analysis of the Bible and Aristotle’s ideas

about animals, Singer attributes speciesism to Christianity and ancient Greece as the original influence. He gives a picture of speciesism, points out the difficulty in animal liberation, and calls for greater altruism to end ruthless exploitation of the species.

In the book *In Defense of Animals* (2006) edited by Singer, together with Henry Spira, one of the most effective animal activists, he provides ten points for activists to follow. For Singer, we need not only speak for nonhuman species, but more importantly, take actions accordingly for them.

The criticism on Singer is mainly around his utilitarianism perspective of equal consideration. The two moral principles for a utilitarian are as follows: firstly, the principle of equality. Everyone's interests are equally important; secondly, the principle of utility. Do the act that will bring about the best balance between satisfaction and frustration for everyone affected by the outcome. Therefore, such case as the use of, and even killing of a certain number of animals for drug test is morally permissible if the drug could save the lives of a great number of people. Nevertheless, this utilitarianism view of equal consideration is opposed by some other scholars, like Tom Regan.

### 3.3 Tom Regan

Tom Regan writes many books on the philosophy of animal rights, including *The Case for Animal Rights* (1983), which exert great impact on the modern animal rights movement. In *The Case for Animal Rights*, Regan expounds on animal consciousness first. Descartes' views on animals are under discussion. The complexity of animal consciousness is exhibited later. For Regan, every creature is a subject-of-a-life with inherent value, because of which an individual could not be sacrificed for the benefits of another one.

In another book of his—*Animal Rights, Human Wrongs: An Introduction to Moral Philosophy*, Regan reinstates his ideas on subjects-of-a-life:

As such, subjects-of-a-life are something more than animate matter, something different from plants that live and die; subjects-of-a-life are the experiencing center of their lives, individuals who have lives that fare experientially better or worse for themselves, logically independently of whether they are valued by others. At least in the case of mammals and birds, then, the conclusion we reach is simple: as a matter of fact, these animals, as is true in our case, are subjects-of-a-life. (Regan, 2003, p.93)

However, Regan's moral concern is based on some species' similarity to humans. Those similar to humans should be granted moral status. This standard is later criticized by some women animal theorists as anthropocentrism.

### 3.4 Jacques Derrida

Man's gaze at animals is reversed by Jacques Derrida, who is known as a key contributor to post-structuralism

and postmodern philosophy. In Derrida's work *The Animal That Therefore I Am* that was written up as a long lecture in 1997, human beings are put under animals' gaze.

Derrida starts his work from his cat's accidental catching sight of his nude body, which consequently arouses a series of questions: "Before the cat that looks at me naked, would I be ashamed like a beast that no longer has the sense of its nudity? Or, on the contrary, like a man who retains the sense of his nudity? Who am I, therefore? ..." (Derrida, 2008, p.5). Part of the answers to these rhetorical questions are:

The animal is there before me, there next to me, there in front of me—I who am (following) after it....It has its point of view regarding me. The point of view of the absolute other, and nothing will have ever given me more food for thinking through this absolute alterity of the neighbor or of the next (-door) than these moments when I see myself seen naked under the gaze of a cat. (Ibid, p.11)

According to Derrida, taking a stance of mastery, the philosophical tradition of "logocentrism" is handed down from Aristotle to Heidegger, from Descartes to Kant, Levinas and Lacan. The animals are constantly denied the logos and the can-have-the-logos. Derrida questions the human-animal dualism with an aim to decenter the longstanding anthropocentric ideology as well as human-centeredness.

With regard to whether animals can suffer, Derrida confirms that certain animals can experience such sufferings as fear, panic, terror, and fright. Derrida stresses the multiplicity and heterogeneity of animals to warn a traditional oversimplification of animality as opposed to humanity. As we can see, Derrida's philosophy of animals plays a crucial role in deconstructing the former philosophy with an anthropocentric perception of human-animal relationship.

In summary, animal ethics reflected in the first and second stages tend to focus on whether animals have souls, whether animals have sentient feelings, whether animals have minds, whether animals have moral status, whether animals should be at man's service, what we shouldn't do to animals, and so on and so forth. Most of the philosophers above prefer presenting their arguments in a rational way. However, it seems insufficient in the above debate in terms of the study on the interactions between humans and animals, and the ways of getting along well with each other. Some philosophers and scholars, especially some women scholars have done and are doing big contribution to this field.

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## 4. THE THIRD STAGE OF RESEARCH CONCERNING ANIMAL ETHICS AND INTERSPECIES ETHICS

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"Interspecies" is a word derived from "interspecific", referring to something existing or occurring between



species. Owing to the development of ethology, the modern animal rights movement, as well as the influence of postmodernism, feminism, environmentalism, ecofeminism, material ecocriticism, and posthumanism, the anthropocentric interpretation of human-animal relationship has been called into question, and repudiated by more and more people. Human-centered ethics is decentered to a large extent. In the third stage, there is a turn in animal ethics from one side to mutual sides, with increasing attention paid to the interconnection and interaction between species. Interspecies ethics is just a fruit of this trend.

As a matter of fact, interspecies ethics is still animal ethics at a later stage of development, with different angles and emphases. More specifically, animal ethics in the second stage is basically concerned with whether, or under what condition animals are moral agents, what kind of ethical rights animals are granted with, and how we humans treat some animals ethically right, while animal ethics in the third stage—interspecies ethics, is more about the ethical rules during cross-species interaction and communication. Just as the main concern of animal ethics at an earlier stage, interspecies ethics, in the first place, admits nonhuman animals' ethical rights, but goes further to emphasize animal subjectivity and call attention to animals' own voices by presenting interspecies interaction details. And here are some important philosophers and scholars who have made and are still making contributions to developing animal ethics and interspecies ethics.

#### 4.1 Val Plumwood's Dialogical Interspecies Ethics

Interspecies ethics occupies a vital position in the book *Environmental Culture: The Ecological Crisis of Reason* (2005) by Val Plumwood. Plumwood points out that the longstanding rationalism and dualism in philosophy and culture are a hotbed of ecological crisis. In another book of hers *Feminism and the Mastery of Nature*, she criticizes that

The dominant traditions of western culture have viewed relationship to plants, rivers, animals, places and ecosystems as entirely instrumental, and defined human relations to others in nature in the same terms as the egoist defines his relation to others—humans stand apart from a nature conceived only as a means to satisfy essentially self-contained human interests. (Plumwood, 2003, p.147)

Dualism and anthropocentrism prevent people from holding a respectful and dialogical attitude towards nature, nonhuman species included. It's hard for them to detect the danger hidden in a culture of rationalism and even harder to retrieve the situation. In respect of human-animal relationship, Plumwood suggests to make efforts for a dialogical interspecies ethics. One effort is to decenter human-centered ethics. Another effort is to adopt the intentional recognition stance as a basis for a dialogue between species instead of a human monologue. From the

intentional recognition stance, nonhumans are narrative subjects and potential communicative partners and agents. Plumwood explains that “Being able to see earth others as intentional beings is important for breaking down human-centred forms of subject/object dualism and for recognising them as potentially communicative beings” (Plumwood, 2005, pp.182-183).

A third effort is a policy of non-ranking as an ideal way towards interspecies egalitarianism as what she puts:

Non-ranking is a much more plausible way to interpret the concept of interspecies egalitarianism than ranking as equal in a scale of moral worth. Non-ranking extends the recognition of the morally problematic character of value-rankings between highly general categories of humans to similar rankings between broad species types, and holds that we should generally aim, in our philosophies, individual interactions and through our social arrangements, to avoid ranking and to minimise contexts in which we have to adopt highly generalised value-rankings of ourselves as members of particular species. Non-ranking is a counter-hegemonic virtue, similar to and connected with the other counter-hegemonic virtues of openness, active invitation, attentiveness, and intentional recognition, which I discuss below, and is like them important in encouraging the potential for communication and avoiding the arrogance and inevitable closure involved in making pervasive judgements of species value. (Ibid, p.174)

For Plumwood, the former heavy and exclusive academic philosophy on animals is in need of a wider and richer range of specific ethical approaches. As for the relationship between nonhuman species and humans, Plumwood proposes a communicative interspecies ethics.

In short, the human-animal relationship is in urgent need of a dialogical interspecies ethics. Plumwood makes a tremendous contribution to the study of interspecies ethics, and most important of all, to awaking people from their old anthropocentric and monological view of interspecies relations.

#### 4.2 Josephine Donovan's Animal Care Ethics

In addition to Val Plumwood, there are some other influential scholars, such as American feminist and animal rights advocates Josephine Donovan and Carol J. Adams. They apply the care ethics to the treatment of animals. The symposium *The Feminism Care Tradition in Animal Ethics* (2007) edited by Donovan and Adams clarifies the feminist animal care theory and relates it to other issues as animal rights, animal ethics, animal abuse, and so on. Both Donovan and Adams contribute several articles to this book. Among those articles, the third one named “Caring to Dialogue: Feminism and the Treatment of Animals” from Donovan draws great attention. A much longer and slightly different version of this article was published earlier in the journal *Signs*.

In this important article, Donovan refines and strengthens the feminist animal care theory. Similar to Plumwood, Donovan underlines a communicative relationship between humans and animals. For her,

both Tom Regan's rights theory and Peter Singer's utilitarianism dispense with sympathy, empathy, and compassion as relevant ethical and epistemological sources for human treatment of nonhuman animals. On the contrary, feminist care theory "restore these emotional responses to philosophical debate and validate them as authentic modes of knowledge" (Donovan, 2006, p.306).

Donovan suggests to heed the individual particularities and heterogeneity of life-forms. Feminist animal care theory is a dialogical mode of ethical reasoning, wherein "humans pay attention to—listen to—animal communications and construct a human ethic in conversation with the animals rather than imposing on them a rationalistic, calculative grid of humans' own monological construction" (Ibid).

As for who should be included in the caring circle, Donovan contends that the caring circle covers all the living creatures with whom one can communicate cognitively and emotionally as to their needs and wishes.

In essence, the feminist animal care ethic opens a new perspective to understand human-animal relationship, and most important of all, provides the detailed principles to follow in their communication.

#### **4.3 Julie Livingston and Jasbir K. Puar's Interspecies Ethics**

Julie Livingston is an American medical historian, and Jasbir K. Puar is a U.S.-based queer theorist. They expound on interspecies in an essay entitled "Interspecies" as this:

We use the term *interspecies* to refer to relationships between different forms of biosocial life and their political effects. ... "Interspecies" is thus a partial, initial effort to go beyond species by emphasizing relationships over types and by joining a politics that queries the origins, products, and uses of classificatory hierarchies. ... "Interspecies" thus seeks to upturn normative modes of thinking, of methods, of scholarly production, reflecting the excitement of this crucial intellectual and historical moment. Interspecies is a capacious analytic paradigm. (Livingston and Puar, 2011, pp. 3-14)

Via "interspecies", Livingston and Puar emphasize the relationships between species and question the former normative modes of classificatory hierarchies. Besides an explanation of the scope, purpose, function of interspecies, the article sorts out some influential works from different fields contributing to the development of interspecies entity, including Donna Haraway's works shown in the following section.

#### **4.4 Donna Haraway's Concept of Companion Species**

Donna Haraway's well-known book *When Species Meet* (2007) is a best example where posthumanism and animal studies are converged. In the book, combining her personal friendship with the dog Cayenne, Haraway probes into the interactions between humans and nonhuman species, stresses the nonhumans' role in

renewing the former notions about subjectivity, gender, kinship, etc., and explores philosophical, cultural, and biological aspects of human-animal encounters.

Haraway puts forward the concept of "companion species" as a bond across species. Concerning Derrida, though Haraway admits his contribution to changing the anthropocentric angle by thinking about the nonhumans' gaze, it is still not sufficient for her. She comments in her book like this: "But with his cat, Derrida failed a simple obligation of companion species; he did not become curious about what the cat might actually be doing, feeling, thinking, or perhaps making available to him in looking back at him that morning. ... Incurious, he missed a possible invitation, a possible introduction to other-worlding" (Haraway, 2008, p.20). Haraway lays emphasis on the interactions between human and nonhuman species.

#### **4.5 Elisa Aaltola's "Other Animal Ethics"**

Elisa Aaltola is the author of the book *Animal Suffering: Philosophy and Culture* (2012), which gives an in-depth analysis of animal suffering from philosophical and cultural aspects. Her essay "'Other Animal Ethics' and the Demand for Difference" analyzes the 'other animal ethics' through a critical examination of its basis and consequences. Aaltola argues that 'other animal ethics' overemphasizes a respect for animals' difference from man in an extreme way that it could lead animals into the position of "the other" again. She points out that the emphasis of interconnectedness between humans and different animals is not enough, for 'other animal ethics' still remain vague. Aaltola makes a defense for seeking for similarities between humans and animals by saying that "Looking for sameness (demanding animals like us) is anthropocentric, but so is disregarding shared similarities. Paradoxically, the fear of anthropomorphism turns into anthropocentrism, and as such gives little hope for an animal ethics" (Aaltola, 2012, p.204).

For Aaltola, there's no need to avoid some facts that animals and humans share many similarities, neither is there a need to require total similarities between animals and humans. The respect for animals' difference from man doesn't necessarily deny some similarities between them.

#### **4.6 Michelle Gilbert's Ideas on Interspecies Trust**

Michelle Gilbert is a PhD graduate on sociology in McMaster University, Canada. Her essay "Trust in Interspecies Sport" sets a good example for an application of interspecies ethics to equestrian sport. The paper makes an exploration of how young girls develop trust in their equine partners for the purposes of competitive equestrian sport. She argues that interspecies trust is shown in the trust of two levels: interactional trust and system trust. It is meaningful for her to point out the mutual roles both from humans and from horses in interactional trust.

Gilbert analyzes the process of building up interspecies trust in equestrian sport—establishing a connection and developing a partnership. Besides theoretical reasoning, the paper also resorts to an empirical investigation of equestrians' personal experience and thoughts about horses and human-horse relations, like "Equestrians in this study demonstrate that they believe that their horses are reflective and have cognitive abilities" (Gilbert, 2014, p.483). Her research has done a contribution to bettering humans' understanding of horses and interspecies trust as well.

#### **4.7 Traci Warkentin's Views on Nonverbal and Intercorporeal Interactions Between Species**

On top of the exploration of the possible scope of "Interspecies" as a paradigm, some other academics concentrate on specific praxes. The essay "Interspecies Etiquette: An Ethics of Paying Attention to Animals" written by Traci Warkentin is a case in point.

Her article studies a philosophical praxis of paying attention, and the significance of bodily comportment, in human-animal interactions. During the discussion, Warkentin gives a critical analysis of Josephine Donovan's application of attentiveness, and emphasizes the importance of attending to "the actions and nonverbal communication of animals" (Warkentin, 2010, p.107), which can help mutual understanding to a certain, limited degree.

By contrast, Warkentin highly recommends Val Plumwood's views about intentional stance and dialogical interspecies ethics. Warkentin's essay, in general, is enlightening for its innovative emphasis on nonverbal and intercorporeal interactions across species as a way of paying attention to nonhumans.

#### **4.8 Cynthia Willett's Interspecies Ethics**

The steady flow of previous animal studies forms an environment for the birth of a book named *Interspecies Ethics* (2014) written by Cynthia Willett. It is the first book directly using the term "interspecies ethics" as its name. Willett is a Professor of Philosophy at Emory University, who specializes in ethics, social and political philosophy, critical theory, and American social thought of the 19th and 20th centuries.

In the book Willett develops her philosophy of interspecies ethics based on a large amount of fieldwork and experimental observation. Under the help of ethology and animal psychology, the book probes into the ethical interactions between species, esp. the species living in a community. One big difference from the other research above is that the focus is more on the communication among nonhuman species, covering chimpanzees, baboons, elephants, dogs, mice, wolves, and so on, though humans, as a kind of mammals, are also included in the discussion. In some sense, this is a great contribution to increasing humans' understanding of nonhuman world in interspecies communication.

Willett summarizes interspecies ethics into four layers: subjectless sociality; face-to-face play and other modes of intersubjective attunement; the biosocial network as a livable place or home; animal spirituality and compassion (Willett, 2014, p.135).

The last chapter of the book contains an interspecies ethical study of J. M. Coetzee's novel *Disgrace*. All in all, the book, to a large extent, achieves its aim of, according to Willett, strengthening those social movements motivated by an older ethics of solidarity and mutual aid through foregrounding layers of social attunement and ethical agency within and across species.

#### **4.9 Marc Bekoff's Minding Animals**

Marc Bekoff makes great contribution to unveiling animals' inner world, guiding human-animal interactions, and protecting animals through his long-time observation of and interaction with various animals. He is well-known for his research in animal behavior, cognitive ethology, behavioral ecology, and compassionate conservation.

Similar to Plumwood and Donovan, Bekoff suggests that we listen to animals' voices and pay attention to them. He also objects to anthropocentrism and suggests to replace anthropocentrism with biocentrism and egalitarianism, and to develop a new paradigm with compassion, respect, and love for all animals. In one of his books named *Minding Animals: Awareness, Emotions and Heart*, Bekoff contends that "The guiding principles for all of our interactions with animals should stress that it is a privilege to share our lives with other animals; we should respect their interests and lives at all times, and the animals' own views of the world must be given serious consideration" (Bekoff, 2002, p.139). The book discloses many facts about animals' behavior, minds, emotions, and feelings.

Just like what the name of the book implies, Bekoff on the one hand insists that animals have minds of their own, and on the other hand suggests that we should mind animals, or in other words, show care and love for them. Meanwhile, Bekoff believes that "As we learn about other animals and how important they really are to us, we will learn more about ourselves. This knowledge and the intense feelings animals bring forth will help make us nicer to one another and nicer to the planet as a whole" (Ibid, p.198). Bekoff believes that animals have minds and emotions, and the way we treat animals, to some extent, affects the way we treat other humans.

Besides the above philosophers and scholars, there are still many others who have made and are still making efforts for research on interspecies relationship, such as Mary Midgley with her book *Animals and Why They Matter?*, Cary Wolfe with his book *What is Posthumanism?*, as well as his edited work *Zoontologies: The Question of the Animal*, and Carol J. Adams with her book *The Sexual Politics of Meat*.

On the whole, the interspecies ethics broadens the perspectives of human-animal relationship, developing from the former rationalized methodology closely related to anthropocentrism, to a capacious paradigm where a dialogical interspecies relationship is possible. In this sense, the interspecies ethics is a further step in the development of animal ethics.

## CONCLUSION

To sum up, in the first stage, animals' consciousness, minds, emotion, etc. are often denied. They are deemed to be inferior to humans and to exist for humans' sake. Such anthropocentric prejudices against and instrumental views of animals get worsened due to Descartes' mechanism view of animals as mere automata.

In the second stage, the ideas on animals in the first stage are under scrutiny and criticism. Some animals' sentience, feelings, individuality, etc. are recognized. Singer's call for animal liberation and Regan's defense of animal rights play an important role in awakening more and more people from the anthropocentric and instrumental viewpoints. The Cartesian mechanistic view of animals and the limitless instrumentalization of animals are under fierce attack.

In the third stage, the animal ethics in the first and second stages receive doubts and criticism. The limitations of Singer's utilitarianism and Regan's animal rights according to animals' similarity to humans are exposed. Even Derrida's emphasis on animals' gaze and thoughts is still not enough in some scholars' eyes considering a lack of the interspecies interaction. Animal ethics in the third stage goes from one side to mutual sides, and pays more and more attention to the cross-species interconnection and interaction. The human-animal interactions are studied, emphasized and called for. The communicative or dialogical interspecies ethics overthrows the former anthropocentric and dualistic views on animals and human-animal relationship. In a word, the animal ethics in the three stages progresses from monological perspective to relatively dialogical one.

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