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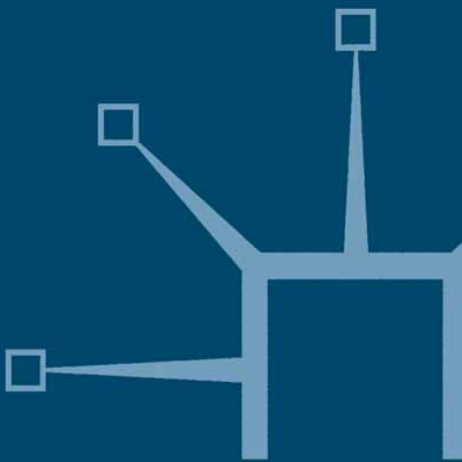
Animal Rights and the Politics of Literary Representation

John Simons



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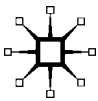

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In memory of the millions of animals slaughtered in the foot and mouth epidemic of 2001

Schafe können sicher weiden,
Wo ein guter Hirter wacht.
Wo Regenten wohl regieren,
Kann man Ruh und Freide spüren
Und was Länder glücklich macht.

J. S. Bach, Cantata: *Was mir behagt, isi nur die muntre Jagd*
BWV 208 Nr.9

(Where there is a good shepherd watching them, sheep may safely graze. Where rulers rule wisely, one can experience peace and tranquility and the things that make nations fortunate.)

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A Very Brief Prelude

Five years ago I was in the privileged position of being asked to deliver an inaugural lecture. The lecture was entitled 'Animals and the Scope of Criticism' and the book you are about to read is, in many ways, an expansion of the ideas sketched out in that lecture. As I was preparing the text for my talk I was struck by the etymology of the word 'inauguration'. It means 'to begin something', but it carries within it the sense of beginning something by first checking that the omens are propitious. The way to do this is to slaughter animals and look at the patterns of their entrails. What occurred to me as I contemplated this was how tied up we are in the death of animals and how even such as innocent and pleasurable activity as an inaugural lecture had behind it the smell of blood. The Latin *inaugurare* means to take omens from the flight of birds but the official augurs were ritual slaughterers and in modern Britain there are increasingly few birds.

In this book I argue in various ways that it is all but impossible to disentangle ourselves from the history wrapped up in the idea of inauguration. I also express considerable scepticism as to the power of philosophy to enable us to do this. I am more concerned with showing how literary texts can be read with a view to exploring their articulation of the animal world and the relationship of humans with that world. Although I do propose some ways forward in the final chapter, these should ultimately be seen as tentative and subordinate to the act of attempting to use the texts of our cultures to think ourselves into a position which might break us free from the terrible treatment of animals that has marred most of histories.

In some ways I am offering an alternative set of stories and that could be read as a move towards the construction of a specific canon. However, I would not wish this interpretation of my intentions to be taken too far although, to some extent, that is one possible outcome of my project. I would prefer readers to look at the ways I have approached texts and then to see how the ideas I have developed in my readings might work in other contexts.

In order to play down the canonising effect, I have also quite deliberately chosen an eclectic and ahistorical approach in that I do not work through my material period by period. It would have been possible to include far more material and it would have been necessary to do so

had this book taken the form of an historical survey of the problem of animals in literature. Smart, Blake and Cowper are not given anything like the attention they deserve in this context, Whitman is not mentioned at all, and although I cite Dr Johnson I do not dwell on his relationship with the 'very fine cat' Hodge. Similarly there is little attention paid to the extraordinarily rich response to animals which is to be found in the poetry of Thomas Hardy and John Clare. In the modern age, Ted Hughes and Les Murray in particular deserve attention.

I do, however, provide the reader with some contexts for my work and parts of this book are deliberately constructed so as to provide what is, essentially, a brief course in animal rights thinking and its history. This is not a textbook, but I am working on the assumption that not everyone who might be interested in what I say about the politics of literary texts will necessarily be familiar with the politics of animal rights. Indeed, one of the chief points in writing the book at all is to address what I see as the grave shortcomings of literary studies where the address to the non-human experience is concerned. Similarly, my address to theory does not offer a textbook approach. Those who are familiar with the philosophical contexts that are the subject of implied engagement in this work do not need them restated here. Those who are not can find plenty of expository work elsewhere.

I hope that anyone who reads this book and finds some merit in it will locate that merit not only in what it says about literature, but also in what it says about the way we live and the way we might live if we chose. There is always more to be said and not everything that could be said is said here. What I have tried to do is to say the things that seem to me most important and to say them as clearly and appropriately as I can. I am, in many ways, stepping back behind the trajectory of literary studies as they currently exist as this book addresses truth and ethics and proposes that we act on the messages I read in our culture.

Finally, this work is designed as a useful book in that it offers an account of things that could and should be changed, and is, in itself, a contribution towards changing them. I did not start out with the intention of writing something quite as polemical or quite as directed towards action as this book has become. I do not see myself as a campaigner. However, as I worked on the texts and as I read around and researched the field I found myself frequently overwhelmed with anger and dismay. Tragedy is marked by pity and terror and anyone who spends as much time as I have in the last few years studying the ways

in which humans treat animals will encounter plenty of both. They will also encounter the hubris of the human condition as it relates to animals and, possibly, the anagnoresis inherent in our encounter with the suffering of the non-human. If history repeats itself, the first time as tragedy, the second time as farce, I am sad to say that it seems that we have lived in a history where no such chance of repetition will be possible.

It would not have done justice to the experience of doing this work if the feeling that was released as I thought about my topic had not been represented in the final product. Even less justice would have been done if at least one of the aims of this book were not to advocate a different way forward. This is an academic book about certain aspects of the literary representation of animals. But that is no reason why it should not also be a contribution to a wider debate in which many thousands of people of all walks of life are currently engaged and which they hold as central to their idea of what it is to live a good life.

1
Introduction: What is an Animal?

It was Mark Twain who advised us to distrust any enterprise that required new clothes. By the same token we might feel that we could trust something that begins with a prayer, so here is one of St Basil the Great's:

> O God, enlarge within us the sense of fellowship with all living things, our little brothers to whom Thou hast given this earth as their home in common with us.
>
> May we realise that they live not for us alone but for themselves and for Thee and that they love the sweetness of life even as we, and serve Thee better in their place than we in ours.[1]

When St Basil wrote this round about the year 370 he was expressing the Orthodox belief that the created world is not simply there for human beings to exploit, and he draws attention to the place of animals in that world as having its own meaning and its own feeling. St Basil is very clear that animals are not automata or mobile foodstuffs and that they have an ability to experience life that needs and deserves to be recognised. This experience may be understood as analogous with that of human beings. In this insight St Basil anticipated much of the later thought that will be analysed in subsequent chapters and which, in one form or another, will constitute the subject of this book.

*

Eight years ago I was sitting at a table in Tia Sophia's cantina in Santa Fe, New Mexico. I was eating a bowl of very hot red vegetarian chilli and, between scorching mouthfuls, I was contemplating a poster. The poster was a large black and white photograph of a porcupine. The

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creature was sitting up and holding its front paws together. It had very long and very beautiful claws. As I ate my chilli I began to wonder about those claws. In particular, I began to wonder about the porcupine's experience of them. Did it feel them only as tools and weapons? Did it have any aesthetic apprehension of them and, if so, what would porcupine beauty be like? Above all, I wondered if the porcupine felt any ownership of those magnificent black curves. As a life-long vegetarian I knew that neither or I nor any other human being had any claim on them. But did the porcupine feel that it had a claim of its own? Most people feel, rightly or wrongly, that they do have property in their own bodies and political movements ranging from Abolitionism to Feminism have depended very directly on the idea that our bodies are our own. In 1726 a man called William Brown was entrapped by the constables at Moorfields in London which, at that time, was a well-known meeting place for homosexuals. On his arrest he is alleged to have said:

> I did it because I knew him and I think there is no crime in making what use I please of my own body.[2]

This startlingly modern outburst shows very clearly how the political realities of so many lives have been defined by the struggle between the individual and the forces of collective power to regulate and control the contours of the body and the desires which that body acts out.

Generally speaking there would be few in the modern western world who did not accept to some degree the proposition that, when all else fails, the human being has property in his or her own body. For example, hardly anyone would dissent from the proposition that we have, at the very least, the right not to be arbitrarily attacked or killed. Animals do not usually share that right, if it is a right. In contemplating the porcupine I began to consider not only the question of what it is to be an animal but also the question of animal rights more generally. We can own an animal in that we can take on the responsibility for its care and welfare. However, do we really own the animal or simply exercise a benevolent (or malevolent) power over its life? Is there a difference between owning its life and owning its body? I do not necessarily think that the ownership of animals is to be well understood by the analogy of slavery.[3] Even so, readers of the memoirs of ex-slaves like Booker T. Washington's *Up from Slavery*, or Frederick Douglass's *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, or a novel like *Uncle Tom's Cabin,* will recognise how important is the distinction between

life and body for anyone who lives in conditions of powerlessness. Can animals have any apprehension of the world which makes such a distinction possible?

*

In the early eighth century an Irish monk was sitting in his cell or, perhaps, the scriptorium of his monastery. He had come a long way from his home in the far west and was now copying Greek and Latin in a monastery in southern Austria. In boredom, joy or simply the wish to leave something of himself (if only his native Irish language) to posterity he wrote:

> I and white Pangur practise each of us his special craft: his mind is set on hunting, my mind on my special craft.
>
> I love (it is better than all fame) to be quiet beside my book, diligently pursuing knowledge. White Pangur does not envy me: he loves his childish craft.
>
> When the two of us (this tale never wearies us) are alone together in our house, we have something to which we may apply our skill, an endless sport.
>
> It is usual, at times, for a mouse to stick in his net as a result of warlike battlings. For my part, into my net falls some difficult rule of hard meaning.
>
> He directs his bright perfect eye against an enclosing wall. Though my clear eye is very weak I direct it against keenness of knowledge.
>
> He is joyful with swift movement when a mouse sticks in his sharp paw. I too am joyful when I understand a dearly loved difficult problem.
>
> Though we be thus at any time, neither of us hinders the other: each of us likes his craft, severally rejoicing in them.
>
> He it is who is master for himself of the work which he does every day. I perform my own work directed at understanding clearly what is difficult.[4]

The anonymous monk (although the poem has, without much reason, been on occasion attributed to the scholar Sedulius Scottus) is here expressing sentiments not so far different from those expressed in the prayer of St Basil the Great which was quoted above. Pangur the cat is apprehended as having an experience of life that is every bit as real as the monk's. This is not, however, a piece of whimsical naturalism. In the Byzantine world of which the monk was a part (this was before the Great Schism of 1054 and the Church was still undivided) St John Climacus had suggested that the attitude of calm concentration requisite for true worship was to be seen as like that of a cat's fixed on a mouse.[5] Even so, although the monk is here, arguably, showing off some of his piety and learning, I think that it is clear that he is also writing from within a very sensuous experience. The cat is exploded out of the rhetoric of the scriptorium and is seen as a being with its own existence and its own interests. These interests are understood entirely through those of the monk but this does not mean that the monk sees the cat simply as a strange reflection of himself. Indeed, he makes this very clear: the cat is 'master for himself' and, again, 'likes his craft'.

I think that as the monk contemplated the bright page of his manuscript and thought about Pangur's lithe spraggling form and darting pounces he also began to think much as I did, also far from home on a scholarly expedition, over eleven hundred years later. He knew from St Basil that the cat had been given a completeness from God and did not require the services of human beings to maintain him. But I think that he also began to consider what it is to be a cat and what a cat's worldview might be like. It is also pleasant to record that as I have stretched out over this millennium and more, and thought of my brother scholar and his cat in that cold cell and typed these words as a virtual manuscript in my study, one of my two white Turkish angora cats has been sitting on my desk and rubbing his face on the corner of the bright little screen and watching the movement of my mouse. It is this kind of moment that makes life worth living.

*

Over the past twenty years or so the discipline of English has undergone some radical changes. These may be briefly characterised as follows:

- an identification of the received canon of literary works as representative of the interests and experience of a relatively small group defined by gender, class, ethnicity and sexuality;

- an increasing concern with the social dimension of the literary text as against its internal structures or perceived aesthetic value;
- a broadening of the scope of the subject to include not only literary texts but all manner of other textual phenomena such as films;
- a seemingly exponential development of various theoretical positions drawn from many different disciplines (notably psychoanalysis and political science);
- a politicisation of textuality and its study to expose the operations of power within allegedly neutral aesthetic discourses.

In a later chapter (which is recommended only to those who are interested in such things and will be pretty dry stuff to those who are not) I shall conduct a critique of some of these developments. At this stage it is only necessary to point out that the overwhelming effect of these changes is to foreground a range of very specific political and social positions. These developments in the academic world represent a shadowing of changes in western society more generally and, as such, it would have been surprising if such a widely taught and studied discipline as English had not responded in some way.

Most institutions now operate within a set of assumptions which would have seemed revolutionary a quarter of a century ago and still cause amazement and amusement to colleagues in many countries of the European Union and the former Soviet bloc. These prevent, as far as possible, overt discrimination against people on the grounds of their race, ethnicity or gender and, increasingly, their physical ability and sexuality. Quite right too. What the present study seeks to explore, however, is not the strange history of the social changes in the UK and US (it is, I believe, true that no woman in France has ever won a case for sexual harassment at work) which have been reflected within the literary academy. Rather I want to answer a question: What would literary studies look like if animal rights had attained the same priority and the same urgency of concern as the kinds of human rights briefly described above? I also want to ask how literary studies can respond to the changes in attitudes towards animals that are now such an important part of popular consciousness and public debate.

My contemplation of the porcupine's claws in Santa Fe would have been quite different had I been looking at a poster of a Native American or a baby. Similarly my apprehension and analysis of what is going on in a cultural text and, specifically, a piece of literature should be quite different if I read it not for the signs and traces of human struggle but rather for the tracks of the animals with which we share

the planet. In this book I want to explore that difference from a perspective that seeks not only to show the way in which reading habits are formed within a matrix of competing discourses and ideologies but also tries to express how a text feels when it is read in a new way. I do not propose to make any attempt to write an extended cultural history that provides final answers to this question. Rather I want to explore a number of fairly well-known texts, and some that are less familiar, in order to provide a sketch map of what should be and will, I think, become a major area of concern for literary studies and already is for society at large.

In exploring literature with this purpose in mind I intend to try to separate out several different ways of describing animals. The important thing is to stress the ways in which animals appear in texts, are represented and figured, in and for themselves and not as displaced metaphors for the human. It is vital to stress this from the outset as the aim of this study is not to reproduce in yet another form the exploitation of the non-human by the human. The anonymous Irish monk was clearly able to detach himself from his contemplation of the cat and appreciate the cat-for-himself and I want to see how often this kind of detachment is achieved and what forms it takes. In this I might compare my approach to that of Steve Baker whose excellent book *Picturing the Beast* seeks largely to show how representations of animals have been used to shape understanding of human identity.[6] What Dr Baker succeeds admirably in doing is bringing together a host of images and texts, largely drawn from the more or less contemporary mass media, and then demonstrating the various ways in which these have been used in order to comment on the anxieties, crises and alarms of the society which produced them. In particular Dr Baker's work shows how central the representation of animals has become to our attempt to talk about ourselves. Yet the animal never escapes the trap set for it by the human. The dancing cows in the Anchor butter advertisement (made to dance, by the way, by the judicious application of mild electric shocks), Babar the elephant, elegant as a barrister, holding court in his morning coat, or Art Spiegelman's Maus, on the run from feline Nazis, do not exist beyond the need of the human to articulate his or her experience using the full richness of the available symbolic languages.

But animals are not symbols. They are real and we would easily recognise the exploitative and degrading nature of representations of human beings if they were of the same kind as those images of animals that we regularly consume. When we do see them we usually label

them as pornographic. We are also, most of us, in the curious position of consuming not only representations of animals but also the animals themselves. If you really are what you eat, then it may be not so surprising that animals are so often used to provide imagined testimony and representation of the human experience. And that is the problem. How can we dissociate ourselves from ourselves and enter an animal world? Of course, we cannot but we can imagine and we can speculate. It is the imaginative and speculative acts of literature which come closest to the animal experience in itself which will be the subject of this study.

Karl Marx wrote that 'the history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles'.[7] This model of the centrality of the human experience was an attempt to recoup the possibility of a teleological hermeneutic on the grand scale. The sorts of changes in both social attitudes and structures and in literary studies to which I have alluded above represent a progressive erosion of faith in the possibility of such a grand vision. Marx has been rewritten and the term 'class struggles' has been replaced by 'gender conflict', 'racial antagonism', 'sexual prejudice' or any other phrase which sets out the strife between the able and not able, the old and young, the colonised and the coloniser. In this book I am proposing that there is yet another way of rewriting Marx:

> The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of the struggle between humans and non-humans.

I will seek to show that the history of literary studies and its relationship with the world at large can be rewritten and that this rewriting will demonstrate the centrality of particular non-socialised relationships and the operation of the prejudice known as speciesism.[8]

In the above I used the phrase 'non-socialised'. This is important as it bears on the working definition of the distinction between the human and the non-human on which will depend the subsequent arguments of this book. By non-socialised I mean that the relationships between humans and animals take place outside any form of social contract or agreed ways of behaviour. If we consider the rewritings of Marx I set out above and the difference between them and the final one which I proposed we will note one very obvious thing. All previous struggles of liberation have been conducted voluntaristically between the oppressor and the oppressed. While it is true that, say, peasant revolts have often been led by disaffected aristocrats and mutinies by rebellious

officers the broad historical fact is that people and groups liberate themselves. They do not wait for others to come along and do it for them except in the special case of military invasion and occupation. Such struggles are made possible and fall within the analytical domain of political science precisely because oppression is visible as the breaking of a social contract. Whether this contract be defined as a feature of the post-Enlightenment polity, custom and practice or simply represents the commonly held rules of decent behaviour is irrelevant. What matters is that such struggles take the form of progressive or revolutionary adjustments of the social relationships between individuals and groups and that both sides participate, in some way or other, in a complex and rule-bound interaction. In other words, the process is profoundly socialised.

When we turn to the relationship of struggle between humans and non-humans we immediately note that only one side has any ability to effect a voluntaristic participation. To use an example that puts it plainly: we eat animals because we want to, we do not have to and common sense suggests (*pace* arguments about the evolutionary benefits of domestication, which is not voluntaristic anyway) that animals do not like being eaten. If you doubt that, visit a slaughterhouse. It therefore follows that to speak of 'Animal Liberation' is to use the term 'liberation' quite differently from the way it is used in a quaint old phrase like 'Women's Liberation'. There is no social contract between humans and non-humans and therefore their interactions are not at any fundamental level socialised. Which is not to say that individual humans and individual animals cannot interact in ways that may properly and sensibly be described as social.

The implications of this for our ability to distinguish between humans and animals and to involve ourselves in thinking about animals are important. In particular this line of argument leads away from what seem to me trivial definitions of animals based on physiology and speculations about self-consciousness or moral independence and towards a different level of distinction. I would wish to argue that humans and animals do not differ in significant physiological ways.[9] They share sentience and they relate to their immediate environment in ways designed to ensure their own survival and also that of their group. I will deal, very briefly, with issues of higher intellectual, moral and emotional functions and the history of attitudes towards the existence of these in non-humans later. For now though it is enough to say that speculation on these matters is merely speculation and that just as

we may make assumptions about the emotional life of another human, we may equally make them about that of an ant.

Where a difference seems genuinely to exist is in the question of what it is to be human or non-human with respect to a very specific behavioural area. It has recently been argued that gender and sexuality is not a matter of biology or physiology but rather a matter of performance.[10] As humans we perform. It is performance that defines and enables us, to some extent and on some occasions, to escape the seemingly overwhelming deterministic influences of history and culture. If we cannot escape them we can, at least, exercise some choice in the nature of our determination, much as prisoners on Death Row in some American states are given the choice of how they wish to be executed. A human, then, is an animal that can perform.

A non-human seems to be constructed in an entirely opposite way. Animals do not perform being animals.[11] Plainly, they can be trained by humans to do various things and even to become like other animals. It is also clear that, under conditions of captivity in particular, animals will develop behaviours which could be seen as essentially performative. However, I think that when I look at a cat I am not looking at an organism which is performing being a cat. Similarly, it appears that the Edenic environments and societies that are often seen as the preserve of great apes are more the result of a neo-pastoral impulse in the popular reception of contemporary primatology than of objective analysis or observation.[12] The porcupine's claws about which I wrote earlier belonged to the porcupine but I am not sure that the porcupine was performing an act of ownership in the way that my ownership of things and even, to some extent, of my own body is performed. Consider, for example, the statements about the body which are made in the Anglican marriage service. Here it is very clear that the participants are entering into a contract that changes the nature of the way in which their bodies are owned. If the ownership of the body were an absolute ownership then it would be quite impossible to perform, or, I suspect, even conceive of, a contractual relationship that would alienate that property. The marriage ceremony suggests that at a deep level in Anglo-American culture the body is the property of the individual, but that the ownership of that property is not absolute and can be voluntaristically traded. As I said above, animals cannot enter in voluntaristic contracts and, therefore, if we assume that an animal does have property in its body, then the nature of that property and that ownership must be absolute and inalienable.

In this sense we can say that a non-human is an animal which cannot perform. This argument is important for the understanding of the ways in which animals appear in necessarily human cultural products such as literary texts. If we do accept that performance is a defining human quality, so defining that it is impossible to escape it, then we must also accept that all representations of animals will, to a greater or lesser extent, be conditioned and determined by the drive to perform. Non-humans have no style. The difference we see between, say, a borzoi and a bull terrier is a function of our own performative urge. The two dogs would have other things to worry about if they met each other. In analysing literary texts, then, it is important to bear in mind that while we can safely distinguish between different treatments of the non-human and identify exploitative and non-exploitative representations we cannot, in the last instance, escape the structures which define us as human and enable us to tell the difference between a person and an animal. It is, of course, significant (and I shall return to this later) that most western rationales for slavery and genocide have depended on a blurring of the distinctions and the identification of, for example, West Africans and Jews as non-humans. By being designated as non-humans such victims cannot voluntaristically alienate their property in their bodies. These then become fair prey for the animal performance of humanity and commodification.

*

Over the last five years or so I have been exploring these topics and other related ones in various papers and public lectures. In particular, I have lectured on animal rights and culture in a number of European countries, notably Estonia, Montenegro and Macedonia. The responses of academic audiences in these countries are worth analysing here not only because it is instructive in itself but also because it draws attention to a number of issues which need to be addressed as a further part of the underpinning of the arguments which will be developed later on. The main reaction was one of incredulity. Vegetarianism is virtually unknown in these countries outside the Orthodox Christian disciplines of regular fasting. Human rights have until recently been so carelessly tossed aside that it comes as a surprise that these should appear not to be at the top of any intellectual's agenda. The kinds of question I have been asked range from 'could you kill a human?' through to 'how do you survive without meat?' One very interesting perception was that the problem with animals was not how to

attribute rights to them but how to prevent them from infringing human rights.

The issues here are interesting first in that they demonstrate rather clearly how peculiar, in global terms, is the Anglo-American position with regard to a range of rights both human and animal. It would be easy to say that an espousal of animal rights or, at least, the cause of animal welfare is the signifier of a privileged society which has not enough to do in meeting its own basic needs. There may be some truth in this, but it is also true that societies that are much poorer than our own have far more advanced positions on these matters. For example, the Jains of India have rest homes for elderly cows. It is also true that most wealthy western societies outside the Anglo-American nexus have not developed similar consciousness. Spain and Italy are good examples here where, presumably, attitudes to animals have been long conditioned by the Roman Catholic Church following the extremely animal-hostile theology of Thomas Aquinas.[13] So we must probably conclude that Anglo-American attitudes to animals are the result of a determining combination of relative prosperity and the social democratic institutions that this enables, early secularisation and the weak influence of Roman Catholicism.

In addition, it is clear that health consciousness is far more a matter of public debate in the Anglo-American sphere than it is more generally. The issue of tobacco smoking is the best example here, but a concern with dietary matters also stands out. It would be naïve to suggest that all Anglo-Americans are deeply concerned about the effect of diet on their health: a stroll round Fort Lauderdale or a perusal of health statistics for Glasgow would soon correct that view. Furthermore, many other countries, Latvia for example, have regulations on chemical additives in food that are far superior (in being stricter) to those in the UK. None the less, it is the case that, in the UK in particular, the adoption of a vegetarian diet by large numbers of the population (perhaps as many as 10 per cent) can easily be identified as a major social change over the last twenty years or so. This change of life style is not only motivated by health issues but also by a consciousness that eating meat and fish involves participation in an unacceptable level of cruelty to animals. The popular rage against blood sports (even Roger Scruton admits that 'field sports' is a euphemism) also seems unique to the UK.

The current work operates within an engagement with specific social and economic circumstances. At the same time it shows how there is a transhistorical dimension to the human/non-human relationship and

that this conditions cultural production across very wide time frames. I am not arguing that what we find here is a universal condition, but rather a condition which has been with us for so long that it appears to be universal. I believe, in fact, that we are entering an era in which a very long history is finally being challenged. To explore the relationship at all is a part of that challenge.

2
The Animal in Some Contemporary Thought: A Survey

This is not a philosophical study, nor is it a work of political science. My aim throughout will be to keep in view the ways in which our reading and appreciation of cultural text are determined and conditioned by our attitude towards animals and the question of their rights. However, in order to contextualise my later analyses and to give the reader who may not be familiar with the wider debates some material on which to base his or her judgements, it will be helpful here to review at moderate length the chief theories upon which the proposition that animals have rights has been based. In addition, there will be some consideration of work that is positively hostile to the idea.

I will begin with an exposition of the work of Peter Singer and contrast it with the positions of Tom Regan, Carol Adams, Mary Midgley and Stephen Clark. I will also consider, briefly, the animal theology of Andrew Linzey (this will be especially important in contextualising the analysis of Humphrey Primatt in chapter 3). Finally, I will address the objections to the work of all of these thinkers, or, at least, to the positions they espouse, by Roger Scruton and Peter Carruthers. What I wish to show is that there is a vigorous debate which is manifested not only in a polarity of those who believe that animals may be considered to have rights and those who do not, but also within the community of thinkers who have tried to articulate the case for animal rights.

What an exposition of this debate will show, among other things, is that the question of animal rights cannot readily be separated from the more general philosophical debate about the nature of a right. Nor can it be separated from other political and social positions that concern themselves with the attribution or withholding of rights to or from specific social groups. The question of power as it manifests itself in the distribution of rights cannot be disentangled from the specific question

J. Simons, *Animal Rights and the Politics of Literary Representation*

of the relationship between humans and non-humans. I will, as far as possible, try to avoid straying into areas which are purely concerned with the philosophy of rights but, at times, this will be unavoidable as some of the thinkers whose work will be described here can only really be understood by an attention to these issues.

Before I begin it may help if I briefly outline my own position as it is that, rather than a specific espousal of the work of any one of the thinkers mentioned above, which will ultimately inform the analyses of texts in the subsequent chapters. First of all, I am uncomfortable with the idea of rights both in general and in particular. A 'right' seems to me to imply the abstract attribution to an individual or to a group of the ability to access specific amenities or privileges or to expect particular kinds of treatment. The problem with this position which, I think, is much the same as the one which derives from the great tradition of the European Enlightenment, is that it dehistoricises the specific struggles through which individuals or groups have won the privileges which most citizens of social democracies today enjoy. For example, the assumption of a right to freedom of expression can, if uncritically assumed, cause us to forget the fight against tyranny and dictatorship through which it was won in most European countries. In addition, the assumption of such a right immediately plunges us into debates on censorship which fatally undermine the absolute nature of the right to freedom of expression. Most people would, I believe, accept that child pornography is a bad thing and it is right to censor it in order to protect those who cannot protect themselves. Yet, if this is true, how can we maintain the notion of a right to freedom of expression? If a right is not absolute, then it can only be yet another transitory allocation of privilege and not something that applies to all people at all times.

The example given above shows us a major facet of the problem of rights and that is the question of competing rights. A number of trivial instances could be adduced here but the general case is surely that the attribution of a right to one individual will, of necessity, in its application or enjoyment, imply, from time to time, the diminution of the rights of another. It would appear to me, therefore, that to treat rights as if they were absolute and universal statements about the nature of an individual's life among other individuals is quite impossible except at a level so abstract, so specific or so minimal, that the right in question would be qualified into near non-existence. I believe that when most of us speak of rights what we are actually referring to is a set of privileges and expectations which have been historically developed

and mutually agreed in a form of social contract which is ratified in different ways by particular cultures at different times.

In this sense I believe it would be true to say that in so far as we can talk of rights in a phrase like 'my rights' we are actually referring to a set of expectations as to the relationship we have not with our social environment but to other individuals. In other words, if rights can be said to exist, they exist in the hands of others. I have no rights in myself but I look to you to behave as if I have. In return I shall safeguard your position by reciprocating that behaviour. If we take one of the chief philosophical positions on this matter, that is that rights are a function of responsibilities, we can see how my definition can begin to constitute a more or less coherent account of the problem. Normally, the rights/responsibilities dichotomy is articulated by arguing that an individual has rights only in as much as he or she has the responsibility to understand, enact and respect them. In practice, no one really believes this (or if they believe, they do not act on it) as we do not take away the rights of the newborn, the horribly injured, the comatose and the mentally impaired and societies where this has happened, such as Nazi Germany, are usually regarded with revulsion, hatred and fear. In my formulation rights (for want of a better word) and responsibilities do not constitute a dichotomy. Rather each of us has a responsibility for the rights of each other. That is surely why we do not eat the newborn or leave brain damaged crash victims to die in their cars.

It is thus the case that if we can talk about rights at all (and we plainly need to in order to describe our mutual interactions) we should do it not by a prescriptive approach to particular situations but by far looser assumptions about mutual responsibility in general situations. However, where the case of animal rights is concerned we need to address the limits of the responsibility I have briefly described above. I suspect that many readers will, to a greater or lesser extent, have found that what I have argued up to this point is, at the very least, harmless speculation. Few people would, I think, take exception to the proposition that human beings have a duty to sustain other human beings especially if these other human beings are, for one reason or other, unable to sustain themselves.

The issue of animal rights creates a challenge not so much to this position in itself but to its limits and also to the implications of holding to it from within an anthropocentric worldview. The question is: if we attribute to ourselves, in certain circumstances, a duty of care to the helpless human (and thus create the appearance of a right) why should we not do the same for animals? We have already shown that

where responsibility is absent or unable to be fulfilled we do not necessarily withdraw the claim to a right. What then is the difference between an animal and a newborn child? If we assume our duty of care is not to the child but to its parents the problem still remains as we have no grounds not to extend our concern to the parents or to the associates of the animal. Thus, a traditional argument from responsibility seems to expose us to an infinite regress which can be arrested only by an assumption either that there is something superior about the human (and, by implication, inferior about the non-human) which demands a different response or that in the matter of rights there can be distinctions between humans and non-humans.

What does this all come to mean in practice? Simply this: a right is a negative entity that implies far more strongly the right to be left from injury, molestation and coercion than it does the right actually to do anything. In this sense we may consider a special case of the right to self-defence as something which is intrinsic to each individual. Yet even here, legal practice seems to imply (in, for example, the doctrine of proportionate response) that this right is strictly limited. We are able to exercise our right to self-defence only to the extent that we do not fatally impair the rights of our assailant by, for example, killing or permanently maiming them. Thus, even in a justified act of violent self-defence we are enjoined to be mindful that we hold the rights of others in our hands even when they are determined not to offer us reciprocal concern. To find out how the law operates in this respect with regard to animals try killing a dog that you think is threatening to bite you and see what happens to you in court. It may well be that what is being defended here explicitly is the property right that the owner is deemed to hold in the dog. But may there also not be here some recognition that the firm distinction in the matter of differential rights between humans and non-humans is not absolutely tenable and is, in fact, capable of provisional and arbitrary permeation?

What I am describing here is, of course, the fundamental ground on which speciesism, the position that one species has superiority to another, is based. It is possible and, I think, respectable to defend speciesism on the simple basis that we have a duty to protect our own species and thus ensure its evolutionary survival and if this means treating other species with less respect or regard then so be it. This position is clear and more honest than arguments which try to promote the special case of the human by linking rights and responsibilities together by overriding, ignoring or bracketing as special cases all counter examples. Many would, I think, assent to it but even here

how many of those who do would also now believe that it was right virtually to exterminate the North American bison or to hunt dangerous (and they are dangerous) tigers into extinction? Why do we have doubts about such attacks on other species if they are not founded in some suspicion, however flimsy, that the superiority of the human is not quite so logically unassailable as it appears? Perhaps we may have a sense that an impoverishment of the biosystem does, in some sense, constitute a diminution of us all. Of course, it does (though killing a tiger diminishes the tiger far more than it diminishes you or me), but surely the evolution of a different attitude to the environment and a greater level of concern for non-human species might be symptomatic of an enlightenment born not out of mere self-interest but of a dawning recognition that the relationships between humans and non-humans cannot be sufficiently explained or maintained by the assumption that one group is superior to the other.

I thus unmask myself as an unrepentant bunny hugger but if I was on a sinking ship and had the choice between saving the life of a child or a dog I would choose the child. This does not mean that I necessarily perceive the child as superior to the dog (or, perhaps better, the dog as inferior to the child) but rather that I recognise a natural affinity between myself and the child which I express by a particular act of concern. Natural affinity is, I think, a quite different thing from an abstract conception of rights or an argument about responsibility. Nor would my decision to save the child be based on a calculation of the amount of good which would be created by so doing when compared with rescuing the poor dog (who by now is going under for the third time). I would do so because it would feel right and for no other or better reason (I will talk a lot about feeling in a subsequent chapter). In my view, an act of concern, a moral act if you like, which is based on a calculation of the relative benefits of its effect is no moral act at all. Faced with the choice of eating the child or eating the dog I would do neither as both acts would feel equally wrong.

*

This discussion of the relationship between rights considered as an abstract property, morality and the relative value of any act leads us into a discussion of the work of Peter Singer. Singer's *Animal Liberation*, which was first published in 1975, constitutes the first major landmark in later twentieth-century treatments of the questions which form the subject of this book.[1] If at some points my analysis of Singer's positions seems hostile I would not wish this to obscure the great debt that all

workers in the field owe to his pioneering studies and his opening up of the discursive boundaries of the subject. Although I do not find the philosophical basis of Singer's account of the human/non-human relationship at all convincing or, indeed, congenial, I would not wish readers to assume that, for this reason, they should disregard his work or lose sight of its immense contribution to the cause of animals.

In fact, *Animal Liberation* has two distinct facets. On the one hand, it seeks to set out the philosophical foundation of an inquiry into the nature of animal rights. On the other, it acts as a committed analysis of the ways in which humanity has exploited and killed its companions on this planet. It is with this latter aspect that I will deal first and in a largely descriptive and very brief manner. This is because, to some extent, what Singer has to say has become the common knowledge of most westerners. Of course, part of the reason why such concerns are today commonplace is precisely the permeation of Singer's intervention into the common pool of opinion and information. At the same time, it is important not to lose sight of the very practical foundation of Singer's approach as this helps to account for the nature of his philosophy and ethics.

The bulk of *Animal Liberation* is taken up with an impassioned depiction of the mechanisms by which animals are exploited. Singer tackles such issues as the use of animals in scientific research, factory farming and the environmental consequences of a meat-based diet. What I think was new about Singer's approach was that his rage, tempered by a committed but scholarly discussion of the facts as he saw them, was directed not negatively and solely against the military-industrial complex so favoured as a target by radicals of the time. Instead, Singer found a positive direction and worked towards a new concept: animal liberation. In the years since the book first appeared the Anglo-American polity has seen major changes in its attitudes towards animals. Vegetarianism is no longer an eccentricity. The giant supermarket and pharmaceutical chains have embraced the market benefits of an ethical policy towards the animal testing of products. Organic and free-range foods are available in every shop and advertised on television. Ecology and environmental consciousness, and in this sense a concern for animals should be considered as closely related to these fields, are high on the political agenda. Animal Liberation has also, unfortunately, become a feature of the landscape of terrorism.

There are many reasons for this change. However, I do not think it would be wrong to say that the exposure of the hideous practices of farming, medical science and industry, which writers like Singer made

their business, created a widespread revulsion and a popular (in the sense of commonplace) determination not to collaborate in the work of exploitation. In his Preface to the revised edition of his book (1990), Singer acknowledges this fact:

> To reread the original preface of this book is to return to a world half forgotten. People concerned about animals don't offer me ham sandwiches anymore. In Animal Liberation groups all the activists are vegetarian; but even in the more conservative animal welfare movement, there is some awareness of the issue of eating animals. Those who do are apologetic about it and provide alternatives when preparing meals for others. A new consciousness exists about the need to extend sympathies for dogs and cats to pigs, chickens and even laboratory rats.[2]

Singer is right. For example, my own experience of being vegetarian in 1972 is very different from my experience of being vegetarian in 2001. Notice how Singer prioritises the issue of meat eating. The question of diet is central to that of animal rights as the consumption of the dead bodies of creatures who have been killed solely for our nourishment is the ultimate and highest expression of the speciesist stance and, therefore, Singer correctly draws direct and primary attention to it in his account of speciesism. The distinction between animal liberation and animal welfare is also an important one to which I will return later. Lastly, we are reminded of the interesting distinctions that we commonly make between different kinds of animals, cats and dogs, for example, versus pigs and rats.

Reading Singer's account of the mechanisms of animal exploitation is both encouraging and depressing. On the one hand, we see the progress that has been made in consciousness raising and the many organisational and legal controls which have developed to offer some measure of protection; the chapter on 'Becoming a Vegetarian' is, in some places, pleasingly and painfully dated. On the other, the updated version of the book reminds us that new forms of exploitation and cruelty are constantly developed and that the deterioration of the environment has accelerated bringing with it a threat to the habitat and therefore, survival, of many species. It is characteristic of Singer's approach that he devotes significant space in his preface to his foundation of the Great Ape Project.[3] This project is not simply designed as a practical response to the desperate plight of great apes. It is also an attempt to develop a practically defined space in which a political and philosophical position may enact itself. As Singer himself says:

> … the extension of the moral community to all great apes will not be an easy task. If it can be accomplished it will have an immediate practical value for chimpanzees, gorillas and orang-utangs all over the world. Perhaps, even more significant, however, will be its symbolic value as a concrete representation of the first break in the species barrier.[4]

The idea of the project is that great apes should be extended the rights of life, liberty and freedom from torture that are, in western-style democracies, seen as the foundation of civil society and the social contract. What is especially noteworthy is the way in which Singer analyses the significance of the proposal as this begins to show us the philosophical basis of his position.

The relationship between the practical objectives and desired outcomes of the Great Ape Project and its more ideological dimensions leads us readily to an understanding of the ways in which Singer grounds his position. I have discussed some of the problems associated with the attempt to prioritise moral and ethical decisions and attitudes from the perspective of final outcomes above and I must now return to this issue in an analysis of Singer's views. Fundamentally, it appears to me that the chain of events which may or not follow any outcome is, at best, only vaguely predictable and that, therefore, it is impossible to calculate the relative merit of any action or thought except in so far as we can see its immediate outcome. Singer, on the other hand, adopts a robustly utilitarian position which implies the possibility that a calculus of benefits may be constructed and it is on that calculus that the drive to liberate animals rests.

This position has been well summarised by Keith Tester:

> Singer does not believe that animals have rights. No, he is more concerned with the morality (or otherwise) of the acts of society and individuals. This is why the book is called *Animal Liberation*; Singer argues for moral, utilitarian acts, not a respect for intrinsic rights. He wants the acts which will liberate animals from speciesism.[5]

It should now be clear why the brief discussion of the priority which Singer gives to the Great Ape Project in introducing the new edition of his work opens up the discussion of his philosophical position. At bottom, the reason for Singer's distaste for an abstracted doctrine of rights derives from the radically secular nature of his thought. He even objects to the characterisation of *Animal Liberation* as the 'Bible' of the animal rights movement:

> It is a line which I cannot help find flattering, but it makes me uncomfortable at the same time. I don't believe in bibles: no book has a monopoly on truth.[6]

Singer is not a theologian, but his characterisation of Christian attitudes to animals is almost entirely based on his reading of Roman Catholic thought and although he does nod towards the far more animal-friendly positions to be found in Orthodoxy he is overwhelmed by the western tradition.[7] This bias has an effect that pervades the book.

Singer is right to distrust the notion of absolute rights (which is not necessarily implied only by religious positions), but the rigour of his utilitarianism seems to make it difficult to discern why he cares so much about animals (and he plainly does). *Animal Liberation* is a deeply committed book, but the austerity of its philosophical grounding is such that it makes it difficult to see why it should have been written about animals. Singer does claim that 'Animal Liberation is Human Liberation too.'[8] But if he is attempting only to create an overarching moral system, based on utilitarian principles, why does he spend so much time arguing such a specific case for animals? If the goal of developing a widespread consciousness of animal rights is to create a space in which animals can become, and be perceived to become, the subjects of their own experience and not the objects of human need, then surely it is necessary to identify the specificity of their cause and not merely to bring them into a fold of moral concern.

In setting out his thesis Singer approvingly quotes Jeremy Bentham on animals and the possibility that, one day, they might indeed be considered to have rights:

> The question is not, Can they *reason*? nor Can they *talk*? But, Can they *suffer*?[9]

Bentham is absolutely right. That is the question (or one very important question), but the answer to it does not necessarily lead us into an answer defined by the principles of utilitarianism. But for Singer the case for animal rights rests precisely on those principles. We should treat animals equally, he argues, for the same reason that we treat members of different races or gender equally: they share an equal capacity to suffer. In other words, the fundamental position of utilitarianism, which may be summed up as claiming that moral acts are those which offer the greatest chance of happiness to the greatest number, is to be extended to those animals which are fully equal to humans in the primary capacity to feel pain and misery.

No one could, I think, argue that this was not the case. We might discuss the extent to which an animal's emotional life can be understood by analogy with that of a human, but the sight of a chimpanzee whimpering when its only toy is removed from its cage and its 'owner' taunts it ought to be enough to convince most reasonable people that something is there which needs to be considered and acted on.[10] The problem for me with this argument is not its practical outcomes but the way in which it absolves us from the responsibility of taking on the specificity of the non-human experience. Blake wrote that 'One law for the lion and the ox is oppression' and most of us will recognise, probably from experience, that the most unfair system is the one which treats everyone the same.[11] The notion of equality as it is understood in western democracies is precisely based on the premise that equality and sameness are not identical qualities.[12] But Singer's philosophy (though not necessarily the way in which he expresses it in practice) seems to me to depend on a merging of the two terms.

It cannot be true that because a lion has the same ability to suffer as a child it follows that their interests will be the same. This is where the real problem with the utilitarian approach exists, at least as far as I am concerned. The question of rights on which any kind of fair treatment for animals must be grounded depends, if it is fully to represent the differential experience of the species, not on equality of being but on equality of interests. It is strange that Singer's extensive analysis of the suffering of animals in farms, zoos and laboratories is fully cognisant of this point and yet, in the final analysis, it appears to be rejected in favour of a narrowly conceived utilitarianism. It could be argued that this is because Singer is really interested in the nature of liberation and not in animals, but I do not think that this is so. Rather I believe that the pragmatic need to make a strong case impels him towards the clarity and rigour that the Benthamite position offers. He turns away from a more diffuse consideration of the nature of the differences which enable the distinction between humans and non-humans to be properly acknowledged. It is, of course, these distinctions which constitute the experiential basis of speciesism – and, by the way, sexism and racism – so without recognising them it is not possible properly to create a system which might counteract the priority which they are afforded in general perception.

What this comes down to saying is that while Singer bases his position on the *similarities* between humans and non-humans I am arguing that the really important things are the *differences*. Of course, my ability to do this and think this is, at least in part, dependent on the fact that I

am writing nearly a quarter of a century after the first edition of *Animal Liberation*. This means that I have the luxury of living in a world where the question of animals is not the province of a marginal and idiosyncratic liberalism. It was necessary for Singer to take his line in order to gain the credibility that his work so desperately deserved. Having said that, it is important to contest the utilitarian line in theory, if not in practice, if a more sophisticated account of the relationships between humans and non-humans as these are expressed in cultural production is to be developed. Only by contesting Singer's view can the representation of the non-human experience be separated from the realm of symbol and metaphor and be understood as, in some cases, capable of constituting a genuinely different way of seeing the world.

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Probably the most thoroughgoing confrontation of Peter Singer's arguments is Tom Regan's in his book *The Case for Animal Rights* and it is to this that I shall now turn.[13] Regan's disagreement with Singer is based on the view that a rigorously applied utilitarianism ignores the claims of the individual. In this his position is not unlike my own except that Regan goes further down the road of constructing a set of rights which may be considered as abstract and absolute. Regan's work, therefore, consists of a refutation of utilitarianism and a positive statement of a different position. Fully to explore and describe the complex arguments which Regan mounts to dispose of Singer's brand of utilitarianism would not be appropriate here but they may be (crudely) summed up as follows:

- Utilitarianism does not enable an analysis of the claims of the individual to be fully articulated
- Living subjects have a value whether or not they are the object of another's actions
- Singer's assumptions about the preferences of animals (e.g. to go on living) and the nature of these preferences are not consistently demonstrated

The objections to Singer are thus founded, on the one hand, in a dispute with the fundamental terms of his position and, on the other, in an attack on the consistency and philosophical rigour of his argument. Indeed, Regan argues that the assumptions which guide Singer's thought may, in fact, work against the practical outcomes for which he hopes by dependence on, or failure sufficiently to interrogate, existing attitudes as to the nature of what is good or preferred.

The chief difference between the two approaches taken by Regan and Singer are, however, not be found in the detailed articulation of philosophical inconsistencies or in a head-on clash between two different value systems. It is in the very different orientations of the two books. *Animal Liberation* is, in essence, an extended and occasionally emotive polemic designed to awaken the conscience of the reader and to provoke him or her into action or a change of life. *The Case for Animal Rights*, on the other hand, is a measured treatise which is much more explicitly aimed at the academic reader than *Animal Liberation*. It is designed to set out a closely argued philosophical case for the attribution of rights to animals and to analyse what the nature of those rights might or might not be. Regan spends much of his time in a careful and dense critical survey of the nature of the intellectual problem. This is not to say that his work is not committed in the way that Singer's is, but rather that Regan is attempting to open up a different kind of discourse. This is understandable as he would not, I think, wish to contest the factual, or even, at the basic level, the political, accuracy of Singer's lengthy account of farming practices etc. As he says:

> The pages that follow contain comparatively few facts about how animals are treated. There already exist books not soon to be surpassed that cover these matters.[14]

By setting the practical aspects of his field to one side, Regan leaves himself free to concentrate on philosophical and ethical matters.

So what is the core of Regan's argument? He begins by making a case for the idea that animals have an awareness of the world. In this he challenges the Cartesian view of the animal as machine and proposes that both 'common sense and ordinary language favor the attribution of consciousness and a mental life to many animals'.[15] He then argues that it is possible and proper to view animals as individuals who not only have a consciousness but also a self-consciousness of their place in the world. From this it follows that animals have a 'welfare' and can experience the difference between good experiences and bad experiences. This, Regan argues, is not different from the general features of human welfare as these are experienced. At this point in his work Regan enters a long and complex argument as to the nature of ethics and duty in the course of which he engages with Singer's utilitarian stance.

Thus far, *The Case for Animal Rights* constitutes as much a critical review of an admirably wide-ranging body of philosophical knowledge as an advancing of a particular position. Regan then turns to the ques-

tions of justice, equality and rights, and it is in these sections that the cases he has hitherto argued begin to coalesce into a coherent theory of animal rights. An important distinction between moral agents and moral patients has been previously made, but the position that moral patients have inherently less value than moral agents has been stringently rejected. For Regan, animals are not moral agents but, in so far as they are individuals subject to external action and force, they are moral patients. It therefore follows that:

> The validity of the claim to respectful treatment, and thus the case for recognition of the right to such treatment, cannot be any stronger or weaker in the case of moral patients than it is in the case of moral agents.[16]

From this it follows that animals have rights:

> Their basic rights are validated by the appeals to respect that, as *individuals* who possess inherent value, they are due as a matter of strict justice.[17]

Regan then clarifies the point very specifically:

> Because they are not moral agents, they [animals] can neither do what is right nor what is wrong; like human moral patients, therefore, animals can do nothing that merits treatment that is prima facie violative of their rights. … The principle that it is prima facie wrong to harm the innocent demonstrably applies to our dealings with animals.[18]

Thus, the nub of Regan's argument seeks to draw clear parallels between the recognition of individuality, consciousness and innocence that we readily and naturally attribute to, say, the newborn child and the situation of non-humans. However, it should be noted that this case is not made by an appeal to the emotions or to unexamined principles, but by a vigourous and rigourous philosophical argument which is articulated in minute detail. As David DeGrazia has rightly said:

> His [Regan's] *Case for Animal Rights* is perhaps the most systematic and explicitly worked-out book in animal ethics.[19]

What this implies is that my summary of Regan's work does not do it justice and I freely admit that. The aim of this chapter is merely to set

out, for the reader, the main themes of the intellectual debate within which this book is to be placed. My painfully short summary is not a substitute for reading *The Case for Animal Rights*. The remainder of Regan's book is concerned with a discussion and examination of the implications of his 'rights view'. In this section he deals with issues such as, for example, hunting, animals as property and animals in scientific experimentation. But by this time his main work has been done. He has made his case and concludes with the hope that 'the publication of this book will play some role in advancing this great movement, the animal rights movement, toward … the stage of adoption'.[20]

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Rather than continue with an analysis of another essentially philosophical approach I will turn to a very different kind of thinker and discuss the work of Carol Adams. In *The Sexual Politics of Meat* (1990) and *Neither Man nor Beast* (1994), Adams seeks, with brilliant conviction, to set out the relationships between the treatment of animals and the politics of gender.[21] The subtitles of the two books, 'A Feminist-Vegetarian Critical Theory' and 'Feminism and the Defense of Animals', show as clearly as any exposition can what they are about. In this section I will concentrate on *The Sexual Politics of Meat* as this is the chief text in which Adams makes her distinctive contribution.

From the earliest point in her book Adams seeks to hammer home a prime and, I think, original perception:

> People with power have always eaten meat … Dietary habits proclaim class distinctions, but they proclaim patriarchal distinctions as well. Women, second-class citizens, are more likely to eat what are considered second-class foods in a patriarchal culture: vegetables, fruits, and grains rather than meat. The sexism in meat eating recapitulates the class distinctions with an added twist: a mythology permeates all classes that meat is masculine food and meat eating a male activity.[22]

We may argue as to whether or not this is strictly true for all cultures at all times but the fundamental perception that meat is associated with power seems to hold. Indeed, it is validated in other studies which come from very different political positions, such as *Meat, A Natural Symbol* (1991), by Nick Fiddes, which approaches the question from an essentially sociological standpoint, or Juliet Gellatley's post-BSE polemic, *The Silent Ark* (1996), which comes out of the militant campaigning wing of the vegetarian movement and draws explicitly on the pioneering environmentalism of Rachel Carson.[23]

The method Adams adopts is to show how the language of gender and sexual oppressiveness to women, the language of patriarchy, cannot be separated from the language of speciesism – although this is not a key term for her. She demonstrates this in a series of brief analyses of various cultural artefacts, all of which serve to reinforce the profound connection between meat eating, attitudes to animals and sexism. Indeed, it seems that meat eating and sexism cannot be separated either as discourses or as practices:

> Eat Rice, Have Faith in Women. Our dietary choices reflect our cosmology, our politics. It is as though we could say, 'Eating rice is faith in women.'[24]

In exploring her thesis Adams ranges across both canonical literary texts and the ephemera of modern American life:

> Men's descriptions of their own violence suggest the series of overlapping but absent referents. In defense of the 'Bunny Bop' – in which rabbits are killed by clubs, feet, stones, and so on – sponsored by a North Carolina American Legion post, one organizer explained, 'What would all these rabbit hunters be doing if they weren't letting off all this steam? I'll tell you what they'd be doing, they'd be drinking and carousing and beating their wives.'[25]

Adams also underpins her arguments by an historical review of the alliances between feminism, other forms of social radicalism and vegetarianism. For her the core of feminist-vegetarian critical theory is to be found in the perception that 'women and animals are similarly positioned in a patriarchal world, as objects rather than subjects.' [26] In this she shares the position of, for example, Coral Lansbury and Moira Ferguson in connecting the oppression and ill-treatment of animals with racism and sexism.[27] As we have seen, this is a perception shared by both Singer and Regan. Where Adams differs from all these other writers is that she attempts to undermine the discursive platform on which even an animal-friendly position that seeks to ally the animal rights movement with other liberational struggles can have the effect of reinforcing speciesism by converting animals into a metaphorical vehicle for the plight of oppressed humans.

It is true that Adams seeks to deconstruct 'the texts of meat', as she frequently calls them, in the service of new way of understanding the oppression of women and as a way of identifying a new canon of

women's writing. It is worth noting, as an aside, that this canon is predicated on very different assumptions from the gynécriture of Luce Irigaray and Hélène Cixous. However, in her specific view that the oppression and violence meted out to women is *the same* as that meted out to animals she refuses the option of making a hierarchy of suffering. In this respect her fundamental position on the notion of animal rights is not unlike that of Tom Regan, albeit that she arrives at it from a totally different direction and articulates it by totally different methods. *The Sexual Politics of Meat* is a polemical book but it remains consistent in its method throughout and is clearly focused on its thesis. As she says in *Neither Man Nor Beast*, the articulation of the argument about the role of meat in our culture represents 'a feminist quarrel with the "facts" – the givens – of all animals' lives today, including ours'.[28] It is that quarrel and the history that gives it form that underpin the argument of *The Sexual Politics of Meat* but, above all, it is the perception that whenever we use the word 'animal' we are, by implication, also using the word 'human'.

In some ways, the introduction of Adams's work at this point does not go very far to advancing the general case for animal rights. But that is not what she is attempting to do. Her distinctive, perhaps almost oblique, approach to the issue does, however, serve a very valuable purpose in the present context. At this moment, it helps to refocus attention on the issues that will be the main theme of this book. Adams's close attention to culture as this is manifested in textual detail reminds us that what we need to do is not to reproduce well-made cases for the rights of animals or to strike out in a new direction of our own, but rather to seek the traces of speciesism and to analyse how they take a variety of forms and a plethora of significations. There are still thinkers to be considered here but it is timely to step back and enable reflection on the relationship between this discursive account of the field and the major objectives of the present work.

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A consideration of the work of Mary Midgley, especially of her book *Animals and Why They Matter* (1984), brings us back to the philosophical ground previously explored in the discussion of Regan and Singer.[29] Like Regan, she is concerned to demonstrate through close argument the ethical foundations on which an understanding of the relationship between humans and non-humans might be built. In another work, *Beast and Man. The Roots of Human Nature* (1979), Midgely argued at some length for the importance of the recognition that whatever

differences might exist between humans and non-humans both share an animal nature.[30] This perception leads her to claim that this common ground should help us recognise animals as individuals and therefore possessors of the moral relevance which entitles them to sympathy and considerate treatment. For Midgley, then, an animal is an end in itself and cannot be appropriated for the use of humans.

This thesis underlies *Animals and Why They Matter*, although it is not argued there at the same length. The book is written, in Midgley's own words, for the general reader and, as such, it lacks the philosophical technicality of *Man and Beast*. But, in a way, this only goes to show how arguments which seem difficult to the academically trained mind are self-evident in other situations. Midgely proceeds by posing a number of questions which are rooted in well-known ethical and political debates. She then goes on to demonstrate how the scope of these arguments might be extended across the species barrier. For example, she explores the problem of competition and the relative priorities which we might set in deciding how best to manage our environment:

> The problem of competition presents itself to many people in a form more or less like this: Must we really acknowledge all our long-lost cousins and heave them into the humanitarian lifeboat, which is already foundering under the human race? Or can we take another look at the rule-book and declare the relationship too distant, so that we are justified in letting the whole lot sink?[31]

Midgley begins to look at this problem by pointing out that, in fact, the alternatives posed are too stark and too absolute to represent a usable model. We simply do not think of our relationships with each other and with animals in such ways: we respond in a variety of fashions according to the situation and according to the object of our response. She also points out that, in any case, although the problem of resource allocation is often presented using the lifeboat as an analogy, we have, in practice, other resources and ways of thinking available to us which mean that 'competition is *not* the basic law of life'.[32]

Midgley does, however, point out that, in life or death situations (e.g. in a fire), we do not act with egalitarian impartiality but, naturally, we will tend to seek first to help those with whom we have particular ties. And we are right to do so. The question, however, is whether, given enough time and enough opportunity to rescue everyone, there would be a point in the queue at which we would cease our efforts.

Midgley argues that this would not be the case for two eminently practical reasons:

> First, sharp competition is not always present. (In fact, for us in the prosperous west it is pretty rare.) And second, there are plenty of other claims which can, on occasion, outweigh nearness.[33]

She admits that all but the highest minded who base virtue on absolute impartiality would not deny this in so far as it applied solely to the human race. However, why should it also not apply to animals? This question opens up a most interesting insight: even if we are prepared to accept that we might set our priorities so as to consider non-humans as a factor in decision-making on resource allocation, what Midgley calls the 'inter-species exchange rate' is, in fact, set so highly in favour of humans that there is little difference between the relative dismissal and absolute dismissal of the claims of animals.

It is clear, therefore, that a different view of animals is needed and Midgley's demolition of the competition argument is one way of beginning to express it. She points out, for example, that someone defending himself or herself against a bear is in a very different position from someone who coolly takes aim with a high velocity rifle and kills a bear simply for fun. So she does not deny that there are genuine cases of competition. Individuals have the right to do their best to survive and this may, of necessity, lead to inter-species conflict. She correctly points out, by the way, that vegetarianism, a central facet of Singer's and Regan's positions, is, in these terms, greatly in the interests of humans who are struggling to maximise the nutritional capacity of the planet. One of the problems, however, is the symbolic value of meat eating (in this she shadows Carol Adams's arguments) and the strength of the 'symbolism depicting a straight life-and-death clash between animals and man'.[34]

Ultimately, Midgley's arguments, which are full of common sense as well as philosophical rigour, lead her to demonstrate that the problem lies in our tendency to see ourselves as inhabiting a series of concentric circles. We may each have different positions as to how many of these circles our concern will breach, but it is rare that our concerns will reach to the very outside and, indeed, the model, based as it is on progressive exclusion, makes this almost an impossibility. Surely, she argues, the fact is that we live in a series of interlocking claims which is greatly more complex and, in this configuration, we may well find that our moral choices are effected on the basis of decisions that are not subject to a simple standardising formula.

Interestingly enough, given the treatment of Singer above, she cites utilitarianism as just such a formula. In a world articulated by such an interlocking moral set we may well find it difficult to argue that we can absolutely exclude the non-human from whatever calculations we may have to make. As she says:

> [Animals] can be in terrible need, and they can be brought into that need by human action. When they are, it is not obvious why the absence of close kinship, acquaintance or the admiration which is due to human rationality should entirely cancel the claim. Nor do we behave as if they obviously did so.[35]

Many of Midgely's arguments, especially those that seek to show how, in spite of the grand model of species conflict which our culture has developed, we do behave as if we recognise the claims of animals begin to impinge on the ground explored in much more detail by Jeffrey Masson and Susan McCarthy in *When Elephants Weep* (1994) and, subsequently, in Masson's *Dogs Never Lie about Love* (1998) and *The Emperor's Embrace* (2000).[36] These books, which will be discussed later, together with Marjorie Garber's *Dog Love* (1996), make strong claims for the recognition of the emotional lives of animals but, more importantly, do so by evaluating the role of emotion in our own relationships with non-humans.[37] Midgley is very aware of the difficult issues relating to feeling, especially where concern for animals is at question. She does look at the question of animal consciousness (also important to Masson) but, ultimately, her case for animals, like that of James Rachels in his critique of Darwinism, rests on principles of concern for the individual and the impossibility of setting aside this concern absolutely and finally when the species barrier is reached.[38] Finally, like most animal-friendly thinkers, she reminds us of the historic and cultural parallels between forms of prejudice (e.g. racism and ageism) and how a consideration of these will show us why the issue of animal rights should be important to us.

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In the work of Stephen Clark we remain with a thinker whose style is not unlike that of Mary Midgley. Clark's thought is rigorous but it is articulated with the utmost clarity and common sense. Clark's major works are *The Moral Status of Animals* (1977) and *The Nature of the Beast* (1982).[39] His other books have included much material on animals especially where the contemplation of the nature of the non-human

experience can help to extend our understanding of the fundamental questions of the philosophy of mind, evolution and environmental politics. The chief thing that distinguishes Clark's work from that we have briefly described above is his explicit use of a religious and specifically Christian framework:

> It is a minor irony that Christ's own sardonic instruction to rely on the Lord who remembers the falling sparrow, who clothes the anemones and finds the ravens their food, is usually quoted to 'prove' that he thought people – or at least his followers – more valuable than sparrows, and so licensed to take unfair advantage of sparrows, anemones and ravens. But saints live within the promised covenant, 'with the beasts of the field and the fowls of heaven, and with the creeping things of the land' when God shall have broken the bow and the sword and the battle out of the land and made them to lie down safely (*Hosea* 2.18). The beasts will be at peace with us, said an early commentator on the Gospel of Mark, 'when in the shrine of our souls we tame the clean and unclean animals and lie down with the lions, like Daniel'. [40]

Clark's work attempts to set the question of animal rights not only within the specifically social framework of the interactions between humans and non-humans, but within a wider, almost cosmological, notion of a biosphere, a Nature, which has an intrinsic value composed of the sum total of the potential of the creatures which inhabit it.

Clark is thus deeply sceptical of Singer's utilitarian model because of its inability to account for the value of the individual and its moral claims. Clark also shares Midgley's deep distrust of the cult of scientific objectivity. However, rather than remaining at the level of painstakingly exposing the fallacies in the scientistic worldview, he points to the erosion of the natural sensibility of human beings as this might express itself in concern for all creatures. In this regard, Clark's thinking forms part of an holistic account of the relationship between man and nature and the necessity of concern for animals as part of the critical need to care for the environment. Keith Tester acknowledges this too when he points out that if we do not learn to respect animals we will destroy the world:

> So long as we *civilized men* imagine ourselves to be apart from the land, and from our fellow creatures, we shall attempt to exploit them for our private gain, and the attempt will kill us.[41]

It is thus necessary to seek to understand animal rights not merely as a function of a more generalised debate on the nature of rights and the ways in which an understanding of this debate might help more generally to liberate mankind. It is also important to see the whole of creation as an interlocking mesh of moral values and individual claims in which no group can claim an absolute moral primacy.

In his collection of essays, *Animals and their Moral Standing* (1997), Clark returns to the themes of his earlier books. The essays constitute:

> my attempt to think through the implications of a great discovery (call it a revelation): that the real world, the world that we are 'meant' to see, is one composed of many living creatures who are all, potentially, our friends.[42]

I find it quite wonderful that a Professor of Philosophy in a prestigious British university is prepared to express himself in these terms. In fact, it is so refreshing that I would say to readers of these pages that if they would like to read further in the books I am so briefly treating here but have only time to read one, make it one of Clark's. The essays in *Animals and their Moral Standing* range over the critical refutation of utilitarianism, the ethics of animal welfare and the problem of animal consciousness. It should be added here that this last concern is also dealt with in detail by Regan and Midgley and, of course, Rollin. I have tended to avoid detailed analysis of positions on this matter for two reasons: first, the arguments are complex and may detract from the key issues of the human/non-human relationship; second, it seems to me that the argument from consciousness (i.e that animals deserve consideration because they have a recognisable (self)-consciousness) is true in itself but is not sufficient to justify the moral statement (and the practical acts which necessarily follow it) that humans have no absolute prior claim on our concern. As I have suggested above, a moral act is not to be understood or justified because it springs from a scientific or philosophical argument but because it is right and our ability to understand that rightness is, somehow, divorced from our ability to analyse it.

Nevertheless, Clark's argument about consciousness is worthy of brief mention if only because he proceeds not from the philosophy of mind but from moral philosophy. He also returns to a theme explored in a previous work, that of nature as text:

> Koreans may not be factually wrong to think of dogs as dinner: neither are we wrong to think of them as friends. Which story

> would we rather tell, which story choose to live in? Better: which story is already telling us? [43]

This is not a usual way of exploring the nature of animal consciousness. It does, however, have the signal merit of escaping the human-centred paradigm by which all post-Enlightenment philosophy – even that which is radically anti-humanistic – is configured. This leads Clark to a dependence on a reality that is both knowable in ourselves and understandable in others, both human and non-human. This real world is not controllable but it is something about which we know a good deal even if we like to pretend that we do not.

Clark's critique of utilitarianism incorporates an anxiety born of this commitment to the notion of animal consciousness as a knowable facet of a knowable world. I will not attempt to reproduce the ingenious arguments (chiefly based on the exposure of contradiction and internal inconsistency) with which he demonstrates the seeming impossibility of being a utilitarian and espousing a belief that animals have rights. What one sees in Clark's writing at this point is a characteristic union of philosophical argument and a straightforward statement of a set of deeply held convictions such as the truth of the proposition that animals have rights and the moral probity of the choice not to eat meat. There is nothing to be gained merely in the demolition of an uncongenial philosophy. Indeed, such an action would be irrelevant if it did not lead to a new understanding on which action and life-choice were based. In Clark's work the notion of reality is important and this is reflected in the nature of his critique of other thought systems. Philosophy is not an abstract conceptualisation or language-game: it is way of understanding what we are and, more importantly, what we should do.

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The explicitly Christian nature of Clark's position leads naturally to a consideration of Andrew Linzey's *Animal Theology* (1994).[44] In this work, Linzey seeks to demonstrate the theological basis of animal rights based on the assumption that consideration for animals and the recognition of their rights is the expression of a moral debt which we owe to them as God's creatures. Much of the book is concerned with the analysis of previous theological positions and the establishment of a platform on which a concern for animals can be shown to be not only consistent with the Christian method but also directly required by it. In this much, it is not relevant here to analyse the details of Linzey's position.

The second half of Linzey's book is concerned to show the iniquity of animal experimentation, genetic engineering, meat eating and hunting. In this his approach is not unlike Stephen Clark's (or indeed Tom Regan's, with whom he has collaborated on a number of books) in that the theological justification of animal rights and a concern for animal welfare is related to a series of practical concerns and to the supplementary theology which needs to be deployed in order to articulate them in a self-consistent manner. Linzey's position is also, at this point, similar to that taken by Tony Sargent in his *Animal Rights and Wrongs* (1996).[45] Sargent's theology is based on a quasi-fundamentalist reliance on scriptural authority and so is distinct in kind from Linzey's, but it still serves the purpose of explaining how and why we should behave, especially in the case of opposing the cruel trade in the live export of animals. Linzey is important here as he demonstrates that it is possible to construct an argument for animal rights without recourse solely to a secular and humanistic framework. This is vital for understanding the analyses of cultural texts which will come later in the main body of this book as there I shall consistently seek to show that in thinking about and depicting animals we are not imprisoned by our status as humans or constrained by it to the extent that we can see non-humans only as an extension or representation of our own condition.

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I will conclude this chapter with a brief consideration of two thinkers who are articulate opponents of the animal rights position. The first is Peter Carruthers. In his book *The Animals Issue* (1992) Carruthers attempts, within the framework of a more general ethical theory, to demolish the claim that animals should be considered to have rights.[46] His main argument is based on contractualism which he sees as, in a broader sense, providing a robust framework for moral theory and speculation. On this basis animals may not be afforded rights because they fail 'to qualify as rational agents'.[47] Carruthers admits that we may have duties towards animals but these duties manifest themselves essentially as duties to other human beings. We should respect the feelings of animal lovers and also pay attention to the qualities which animals may evoke in us. Carruthers argues that this positioning of animals as non-rational does not disqualify non-rational human beings from being accorded rights but, at this point, his argument appeals to 'the slippery slope' and 'social stability'.[48] It would, therefore, appear that a moral framework based on contractualism is capable of maintenance only through the allowance of special cases and that Carruthers, for various

reasons which may involve high speculation or personal prejudice, is unwilling to allow that animals may form such a special case.

Carruthers deals pretty readily with Peter Singer (as, I am afraid, everyone must when Singer is seen in purely philosophical terms), but his confrontation with Tom Regan is more interesting. Carruthers's chief objection to Regan is that his work involves a moral intuitionism which makes a 'complete mystery, both of the subject matter of morality and of our supposed knowledge of moral truths'.[49] I am not sure that this is so, although I have no difficulty with intuitionism. I note, however, that in his disposal of Singer, Carruthers argues that 'we find it intuitively abhorrent that the lives or sufferings of animals should be weighed against the lives or sufferings of human beings'.[50] Isn't it odd that someone who inveighs against the alleged reliance on intuitionism of a thinker whose ideas he dislikes should rely on his intuition to demolish a different enemy? Carruthers does succeed in providing a thought-provoking critique of ideas which deserve rigorous testing (and I would not want it to be thought that he in any way advocates cruelty or exploitation) but, ultimately, his position seems to rest not on a consistent philosophical or moral argument but on a rather personalised scepticism.

Roger Scruton's *Animal Rights and Wrongs* (1996) is a lively and much more direct assault on the animal rights position.[51] The book is a terse, testy and rather entertaining polemic which is marked by Scruton's characteristic intelligence. Scruton does not attempt to conceal some his prime motivations: the defence of hunting, shooting 'n' fishing and the exposure of what he sees as sloppy thinking. Indeed, in his account of the joys of angling he is at pains to demolish the view that fish do not feel pain – a view that I have heard expressed by otherwise intelligent and sensitive people. Instead, Scruton comes straight out with it:

> Angling is an abundant source of human happiness … It is also a social institution through which friendships are formed and cemented, neighbours united and the competitive instinct peacefully exercised.[52]

From a utilitarian viewpoint the calculus might well begin to favour (as Scruton archly points out) these undeniable social benefits. We are, therefore, presented with a stark choice: is the price of these benefits (i.e. the torture of fish) really worth paying? In my view, this question need not be a matter of utility but one of morality. Scruton claims, perhaps rightly, that no serious angler deliberately hurts a fish – any

more than necessary! – and so cannot be the victim of moral condemnation. It is true that there is a difference between wanton cruelty and angling, but that is a human perception: we cannot ask a fish. Scruton also points out that field sports help protect the environment. This may also be true but, in a different but related context, I doubt if a whale really cares if it is eaten in a Faroese village or a Tokyo restaurant. For it, the result is the same disaster.

Ultimately, Scruton's arguments are exposed in his assault on what he calls sentiment:

> [it is] a vice which certainly does infect our dealings with the animal kingdom … Many of the questions I have discussed have been so clouded by sentimentality that it is worth offering an account of it.[53]

Notice the violence of the language. It is as if sentimentality is a disease; and while Scruton may be right in identifying the highly emotive component of some work on animal rights – I doubt if he could survive a reading of Maureen Duffy's *Men and Beasts*, for example – it appears that he can confront it only by an equally emotional appeal.[54] At this point, Scruton is really arguing that anyone who adopts an animal rights position is a child who is incapable of making well-founded moral distinctions. The identification of a concern for animals with childishness or effeminacy is a theme to which I shall return in subsequent chapters.

This brief account of Carruthers and Scruton completes the review of the works on which the current theoretical and philosophical debate on the status of animals may be said to rest. It has been by no means exhaustive but I believe that it has accounted for the books that most people would agree constitute the core texts of animal rights thinking. In the chapters that follow there will be occasional reference to some of these works but, broadly, the concern will be to demonstrate how literary texts have depicted and represented the non-human experience. To understand the politics of this representation it is not necessary to understand the finer points of the philosophical debate over animals and their status. It is, however, necessary to understand that this status is not self-evident and that the different approaches to animals adopted by different texts may be theorisable within one of the frameworks described in this chapter. It should be said now though that, in most cases, that theorisation will be left to the reader.

3
Animal Rights in History: A Survey

In this chapter I shall be reviewing the work of some of the more important thinkers who contributed to the development of an animal rights consciousness in the past. I shall also be examining a small group of historical works that, over the last 35 years or so, have helped to create a climate in which speculation on the relationship between humans and non-humans is a respectable, if not mainstream, activity within the academic world. It is, of course, the case that a concern for animals is by no means limited to philosophers and critics. Indeed, one of the chief things that motivated me to write this book now was precisely what seemed to me to be the discrepancy between the huge public interest in animal matters and the relative lack of a corresponding discourse in academia.

I shall return to this theme in a subsequent chapter but perhaps it will suffice here, again, to point out that in the last decade as many as 10 per cent of the population have begun to describe themselves as vegetarian. People who would never dream of breaking the law or opposing the police stood in front of lorries at the channel ports to try to prevent the cruel trade in the export of live animals. One of the biggest mass demonstrations of modern times was that held, simultaneously, by supporters and opponents of blood sports in 1998. This social phenomenon deserves serious attention and although this book is not sociological or anthropological in method or orientation I hope that it does reflect, within cultural studies, an interest which can be found on the streets of most British towns in the stalls and booths which invite people to sign petitions against various aspects of cruelty to animals every Saturday. It is surely also no accident that television programmes that celebrate the work of the RSPCA (such as *Animal Hospital*) or veterinarians (*Vets in Practice*) retain a prime time popularity.

J. Simons, *Animal Rights and the Politics of Literary Representation*

The English have always, it is alleged, had a distinctive fondness for animals. Whether their love of blood sports and historical addiction to animal baiting really bears this out is a matter of opinion. But it is true that Britain had a Society for the Protection of Animals (founded 1824, the prefix 'Royal' was added in 1840) before it had a corresponding body for the protection of children.[1] Liverpool, then one of the largest cities in the Empire, celebrated the jubilee of King George III by founding a humanitarian society for the welfare of animals. 'It's the Roast Beef of Old England that makes us what we are' runs a traditional patriotic song penned well before the BSE crisis and it is certainly the case that, when compared to our fellow citizens in the European Union (especially in France, Spain and Portugal), we have been very quick to replace that beef by nut cutlets.[2]

England also produced Thomas Tryon, one of the earliest thinkers of the modern age to develop a systematic philosophy of vegetarianism. Tryon argued that a vegetarian diet was both healthier than an omnivorous one and also was to be commended as enabling the human to avoid cruelty to animals. Although Tryon was by no means the first Englishman to recommend or adopt vegetarianism for one reason or other he was perhaps the first to link a concern for the welfare of non-humans with an espousal of other causes such as the abolition of slavery and better asylums. He thus represents an important precursor to the thinkers discussed in chapter 2.

However, the first thinker whose work I intend to discuss in detail is Humphrey Primatt. Primatt was born in London in about 1734 and spent most his life in East Anglia as a gentleman and clergyman. He graduated BA in 1757, MA in 1764 (both Cambridge) and DD in 1773 (Aberdeen) and seems to have spent a blameless and uneventful life about which very little is known in spite of recent research. In 1776 he published his only book, *The Duty of Mercy and the Sin of Cruelty to Brute Animals*.[3] In this work Primatt sought to demonstrate that the duty of mercy enjoined upon us by God through the Christian revelation is a duty which extends not solely to humans but to all sentient creation. In this respect it will be readily seen that Primatt anticipates the line of thought, if not the philosophical method or ideological conviction, of contemporary thinkers such as Singer, Regan and Clark.

What Primatt consistently argues, and in this he is close to Singer (but without the utilitarian calculation), is that pain is an evil and we, as humans, have no right to inflict it on each other or on animals. Primatt's argument is simple, clear and full of common sense:

> Pain is pain, whether it be inflicted on man or beast; and the creature that suffers it, whether man or beast, being sensible of the misery of it whilst it lasts, suffers *evil*; and the sufferance of evil, unmeritedly, unprovokedly, where no offence has been given, and no good end can possibly be answered by it, but merely to exhibit power or gratify malice, is cruelty and injustice in him that occasions it.[4]

We can see from this that Primatt's interest in the problem of animal cruelty has two distinct dimensions. First, there is the concrete problem of pain and the absolute need to avid inflicting it as a part of our general duty to ensure that evil is minimised in the world at large. This would appear to provide the basis for a ruggedly utilitarian approach to the issue. However, second, Primatt incorporates a moral critique that encompasses both the sufferer and the perpetrator. In this regard he anticipates arguments that direct us to a far more sophisticated notion of the duties and relationships between humans and non-humans and, conversely, lead to the thoroughgoing development of the idea of speciesism.

It can be readily seen that Primatt had already worked through for himself the implications of this second dimension of his position:

> A brute is an animal no less sensible of pain than a man. He has similar nerves and organs of sensation; and his cries and groans, in case of violent impressions upon his body, though he cannot utter his complaints by speech, or human voice, are as strong indications to us of his sensibility of pain, as the cries and groans of a human being, whose language we do not understand. Now, as pain is what we are all averse to, our own sensibility of pain should teach us to commiserate it in others, to alleviate it if possible, but never wantonly or unmeritedly to inflict it. As the differences amongst men in the above particulars are no bars to their feelings, so neither does the difference of the shape of a brute from that of a man exempt the brute from feeling; at least, we have no ground to suppose it. But shape or figure is as much the appointment of God, as complexion or stature. And if the difference between complexion or stature does not convey to one man a right to despise and abuse another man, the difference of shape between a man and a brute, cannot give to a man a right to abuse and torment a brute.[5]

Pausing only to note the clarity of argument here and to lament the passing of simple language in modern philosophy, let us further

explore what Primatt is saying. First, he assumes (not unreasonably one would think until one considers the Cartesian position that animals are machines – is it not a matter of wonder that such a psychopathic delusion should be the basis of an influential philosophy?) that animals have feelings which can be understood by reference to our own. Second, he makes a staunch defence of the position that the rights and duties that humans owe to each other cannot be modified by reference to external factors such as skin colour. Third, he points out that the external differences between sentient beings are arbitrary in as much as they result from the will of God and, as such, they cannot be used as a human pretext for prejudicial treatment.

The third aspect of Primatt's account will be of little interest to those who do not share his Christian faith. However, the first and second can surely stand up in a secular context and are worth further discussion. Primatt's idea that we can know something of the world of animals by the common-sense assumption that particular physiological features (e.g a neural network) which are shared with humans have the same, or nearly the same, function seems to me self-evident. Yet how much of the defence of cruelty to animals through blood sports and vivisection depends precisely on a denial of this issue? We have already seen how Roger Scruton's defence of angling honestly admits the absurdity of the proposition that fish feel no pain. Equally my allusion to Descartes above leads also to the kind of argument mounted by Masson and McCarthy in *When Elephants Weep*. Here they show very clearly how Darwin's insistence on the primacy of an emotional life for animals, analogous to that of humans, and having a clear evolutionary function, has been, since the days of scientists such Claude Bernard (who was so mad that he vivisected the family dog on the kitchen table – much to the detriment of his marriage), progressively censored out of academic discourse in order to justify pointless and cruel experimentation. As James Rachels points out:

> We kill animals for food; we use them as experimental subjects in laboratories; we exploit them as sources of raw materials such as leather and wool; we keep them as work animals. These practices are to our advantage, and we intend to continue them. Thus, when we think about what animals are like we are motivated to conceive of them in ways that are compatible with treating them in these ways. If animals are conceived as intelligent, sensitive beings, these ways of treating them might seem monstrous. So humans have reason to resist thinking of them as intelligent or sensitive.[6]

For Primatt and, as we shall see, for other eighteenth-century and nineteenth-century writers, the emotional and physiological life of animals was a matter of sensibly held certainty not abstruse speculation.

Primatt's comment on complexion is taken up at some length elsewhere in his work:

> It has pleased God the father of all men, to cover some men with white skins, and other with black skins; but as there is neither merit nor demerit in complexion, the white man, notwithstanding the barbarity of custom and prejudice, can have no right, by virtue of his colour, to enslave and tyrannise over a black man; nor has a fair man any right to despise, abuse and insult a brown man. ... Now, if among men, the differences of their powers of mind, and of their complexion, stature and accidents of fortune, do not give any one man a right to abuse or insult any other man on account of these differences, for the same reason, a man can have no natural right to abuse and torment a beast, merely because a beast has not the mental powers of a man. For, such as a man is, he is but as God made him; and the very same is true of a beast.[7]

Primatt is here following a line that Thomas Tryon had pioneered in pamphlets such as *Friendly Advice to the Gentleman Planters of the East and West Indies* (1684) and which had certainly become a feature of a complex of radical discourses in the first half of the eighteenth century. He is also adumbrating the very same concerns with the interconnectedness of various forms of oppression that we saw in Singer, Regan and Adams. However, notice that he is very clear that what is at stake here is to be considered within the framework of natural rights and not as a pragmatic response to a specific contingency. It is noteworthy that while the French Revolution made it a priority to liberate the animals in the Royal Menagerie and to make common cause with them as fellow victims of the *ancien régime* the parallel project to abolish slavery in the French colonies was less enthusiastically carried out and, in fact, black people were denied their rights in metropolitan France.[8]

Primatt's work is, of course, intended to make a case for our duties towards animals very precisely by showing how such a duty is enjoined upon us by the conditions of divine will as manifested in the Creation. Much of his book is dedicated to a painstaking examination of Holy Scripture to underpin this position and, as such, it is perhaps of less interest here to many readers. Primatt points out that 'we may pretend to what religion we please, but cruelty is atheism'.[9] In doing this he is

clearly arguing that the circuit of moral concern, defined by the injunction to 'do unto others as, in their condition, you would be done by', may and should be extended to include non-humans.[10] For Primatt, as we have seen, this is not only a matter of religious faith which can be logically defended by theological scholarship, but also a matter of reason which can be logically defended by observation and argument. Primatt himself is clear on this matter:

> As it is of no consequence to the brutes, for whose sakes this treatise is published, what may be the different modes of of faith or forms of worship among men, I have endeavoured to write it without any bias, prejudice or partiality.[11]

Although Primatt wrote the most interesting, comprehensive and attractive account of animal rights he was by no means the only writer of the eighteenth century to address this issue. Some of these are briefly discussed in the section on Henry Salt (below) but we should also mention John Hildrop's *Free Thoughts Upon the Brute Creation* (1742) and Robert Morris's *A Reasonable Plea for the Animal Creation* (1746) as precursors of Primatt. Richard Dean's *An Essay on the Future Life of Brutes* (1767) and James Granger's *An Apology for the Brute Creation* (1772) were both scripturally based works which sought to defend animals against abuse and to demonstrate their place in creation. John Oswald's interesting *The Cry of Nature* appeared in 1791. It is interesting because Oswald had served as a soldier in India and there became influenced by Hinduism to the extent of becoming a vegetarian: here we see what is, I think, the first recognition, in the context of animal rights at least, of the superior moral development of some eastern cultures when compared to those of Europe. Also important were George Nicholson's *On the Conduct of Man to Inferior Animals* (1797, reprinted in 1801 as *The Primeval Diet of Man etc*) and Thomas Young's *An Essay on Humanity to Animals* (1798). Both texts pick up on the similarities between cruelty to animals and other social abuses such a slavery and thus can be easily contextualised in the ferment of radical ideas which was abroad in England in the 1790s. One author who contributed to the debate on animals and the debate on radical politics was Joseph Ritson, perhaps the most important medievalist of his day and certainly the most interesting. In 1802, Ritson published his *Essay on Abstinence from Animal Food as a Moral Duty*. This brought together thoughts on animals, humans and literary texts. This book was surely an influence, together with John Newton's *The Return to Nature* (1811),

on the most celebrated vegetarian tract of the early nineteenth century – at any rate it had the most celebrated author – Percy Bysshe Shelley's *A Vindication of Natural Diet* (1812).[12]

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We will now leave Primatt and his near-contemporaries in order to turn to the work of Lewis Gompertz. Gompertz (1779–1861) was an activist in the cause of animal rights and animal welfare. He advocated a vegan diet and even refused to use horse-drawn transport. In 1826 he took over the post of secretary to the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and, after resigning, allegedly due to the anti-Semitic views of some members, not only founded the Animals' Friend Society but also edited its journal *The Animals' Friend, or the Progress of Humanity*. He wrote two books on the topic of animal rights and welfare: *Moral Inquiries on the Situation of Man and of Brutes* (1824) and *Fragments in Defence of Animals* (1852).[13] It is with the first of these that we shall largely be concerned here.

Gompertz's method is far more scientific or, technically, philosophical than Primatt's. He proceeds by the construction of a series of axioms and theorems and then by a lengthy dialogue between two characters called Y and Z in which the various positions axiomatically developed are tested. Gompertz admits that in arriving at a coherent and complete theory of how the relationship between humans and non-humans should be regulated there are 'an almost infinite number of subjects to be considered'. He concludes, however, that the most essential are:

> First. The nature and degree of the sensations, the construction and constitution of men and other animals.
> Secondly. What are the most rational ideas regarding prior and future states of existence.
> Thirdly. The nature of personal identity.[14]

It is within the examination and study of these three fields that a view of 'what right man has to exert his power over other animals, to slaughter them for food, to enslave them to perform his labour, and to punish them for his pleasure' may be attained.[15]

Note that in this list Gompertz is consistent in his refusal to distinguish between humans and non-humans on the grounds of fundamental animal characteristics. Man is another animal and, as such, it is right to proceed as if we can learn about the physiological and emo-

tional lives of non-humans by reference to that of man. Indeed, Gompertz goes so far as to argue that although we may not reasonably dispute that man is an animal which is endowed with a higher degree of reason than is observable in other creatures, it is also possible to observe in non-humans higher qualities such as 'maternal, filial, conjugal, and in some cases paternal affection', 'heroic and superior courage', 'candour and loyalty'.[16] He claims that we may learn to increase these virtues in ourselves by an observation of non-humans and cites a number of anecdotes to prove his point. It is thus the case that we cannot safely make a distinction between man and animals solely by reference to particular qualities and, therefore, we cannot make a case for the exploitation of animals by man by arguing that there is a sharp distinction between the two.

Gompertz's ideas on the analogous sensations of pain and pleasure that man and animals feel are quite simple and based on the same kind of common-sense arguments as those we saw in Primatt whom he cites with approval and alludes to when he says that '*Pain* is *pain* and *pleasure* is *pleasure* in spite of anything to the contrary'.[17] His arguments on personal identity are, however, original in this context and worthy of further consideration. Gompertz's views are not entirely clear and do, in my opinion, show traces of the Pythagoreanism of which some of his enemies in the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals accused him. (He always denied this.) What he appears to be claiming is that there is a difference between self-identity, which is peculiar to every being and, indeed, thing and the circumstances in which an entity finds itself. We can know our own identity but no other and are never in danger of mistaking ourselves for another person. No one would doubt that humans have both a self-identity (personal identity) and that this is capable of perpetual variation as more humans come into the world. From this Gompertz concludes that animals must have a similar distinctive personal identity as:

> It appears not absurd to surmise, that the power of production of animals would cease, if their numbers should amount to a certain magnitude; because, there is no apparent necessity for supposing that the number of *identical selves* must be infinite: but if finite, when they were once united to bodies, so as to constitute animals, it would be impossible for any more animals to be born, for want of identical selves; and this number may not be immensely great.[18]

This extremely curious notion leads to a debate on the Lockean model of the will and a conclusion which sets limits on the just punishments

for crimes as acts of will or that involuntary crimes committed in error should be the responsibility of the perpetrator rather than the cause of sufferings to others.

This kind of argument is important to Gompertz's overall theory because it places it within a more general view of society (structured along broadly utilitarian lines) and enables him to make connections between the duties owed by humans to other humans, especially as these duties are conducted within asymmetrical relationships of power and property, and those duties which humans might reasonably owe to non-humans. Furthermore, his analysis of the similarities between humans and non-humans, as far as instinctual behaviour is concerned lead him to the view that there must be a corresponding similarity in the mental state. For Gompertz the question of whether mind proceeds from a series of biochemical reactions' is located in autogenic neurological pathways or is of a more spiritual nature is less important than the claim that we can find only similarities between species. It is these similarities which constitute a platform on which an ethical theory incorporating the whole of creation can be built.

Towards the end of his book Gompertz constructs a number of dialogues which seek to explore the limits of his theories. These are surprisingly wide-ranging and modern. They include not only the basic questions of meat eating and slaughter but also discussions of the ethics of dairy products, animal products in soap and other commodities, silk and wool wearing and, finally, speculate on the rights and wrongs of eating vegetables. At this last point Gompertz takes the opportunity (as Singer was later to do also) of providing a quick cookery lesson:

> But the cooking of vegetables is not well understood. Much attention is necessary in the choosing, and in the manner of dressing them; most vegetables having but a very short time allowed them, when they may properly said to be good, and during which they are much more wholesome and nutritious than either before or afterwards. The length of time of their boiling is very essential; it should, in my opinion, be much greater than is commonly allowed; and enough to prevent any kind of crispness; but not more, as then the organisation will be destroyed, and the water will intrude itself in their substance.[19]

This homily against the perils of *al dente* vegetables is, however quaint it may now seem, very important to our understanding of Gompertz.

A moral argument, however passionately expressed or coherently argued does not in itself guarantee anything. What is needed is action and the change of life style which would encourage us to replace boiled beef by carrots.

In the dialogues Gompertz's approach is not unlike Peter Singer's in other ways too. Broadly speaking, he aims to set up a series of dilemmas and then to solve them by approaching them by a utilitarian calculus. Here is an example:

> Y: Is it not better that we should cause them [animals] to have a short and happy life than a long and miserable one?
> Z: Then it is right for one man to kill another, if he fear not the laws of his country, and if he fancy it is to the benefit of the other.[20]

This kind of reasoning can work at this very basic level but as I have suggested in my previous treatment of Singer, it leads to problems when cases become very complex. Gompertz, like Singer, has an ethical framework that may well obviate such arguments, at least to the committed reader, but whether an uncommitted reader would ever be swayed by an argument from utility seems to me doubtful. None the less, Gompertz has to conform to the philosophical needs of his time – he is not, in this sense at least, an original thinker – and so the dialogues between Y and Z take, on occasion, the feel of a dinner party chat between Mr Gradgrind and Mr Bounderby.

In the final chapters of his book Gompertz turns to the 1822 Act against the cruel and improper treatment of cattle. This had been framed by Robert Martin MP, himself an important figure in the inauguration of the RSPCA, and who was pilloried for his pains with allegations of effeminacy.[21] Gompertz provides a constructive and critical reading of this Act and compares it with a contemporary Act which provided for the punishment, or rather correction, of vagrants by submitting them to the treadmill. The reason for this comparison is significant as it is designed to demonstrate the nature of the cruelty and lack of sympathy which flows through society as Gompertz found it. The pointlessness of causing vagrants to walk treadmills (often to their serious injury) is compared with the utility of educating them or teaching them a trade. If improvement in behaviour and self-reliance is what is being sought, Gompertz argues, then surely this would be a more rational use of time in prison. Although these sections of the book do not necessarily add much to Gompertz's overall arguments,

they do play a useful role in bringing to the public attention, in a practical manner, not only specific questions of cruelty and the remedies against it that might be found in law, but also the deep nature of a society which enables and, indeed, promotes, the disregard of the non-human experience.

As the above discussion probably shows, Gompertz does not necessarily add much to our understanding of animal rights as an abstract issue. Nevertheless, he is an important figure in the history of the animal rights and animal welfare movement. He identified and spoke out against every serious issue (except, of course, genetic manipulation and cloning) which is currently on the agenda for anyone who is concerned with animal rights. He also identified (in Y's questions to Z's arguments) the main objections which anyone attempting to defend animals' rights will still encounter. It is worth leaving him with a quotation from his thoughts on Martin's Act which has an uncannily contemporary relevance:

> Though perhaps misplaced, we cannot permit this opportunity to pass without adverting to an objection which has been made to Mr Martin's proposed Amendment of this Bill. This gentleman has been taxed with interfering in the pastimes and diversions of the poor, by attempting to prevent the cruel sports of bull and bear baiting etc, while the equally cruel sports of the rich of hunting and shooting have been passed over by him. But the absurdity of this charge is almost too evident to render a defence necessary. Does it follow that a person is to withold the performance of the good which may be within his power, because he does not attempt that which may seem beyond it?[22]

In 2001 it would appear that, in this respect at least, little has changed and the voice of Gompertz still demands and deserves attention.

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In 1892 Henry Stephens Shakespear Salt published his *Animals' Rights Considered in Relation to Social Progress*.[23] This was not the first use of a phrase which combined the word rights with the word animal. That distinction goes to Thomas Taylor who, in 1792, anonymously published a work entitled *A Vindication of the Rights of Brutes*, ironically as an attempt to undermine and mock the work carried out by Mary Wollstonecroft in her *Vindication of the Rights of Women* and, by association, Thomas Paine's *Rights of Man*. This was followed in 1796–98 by

the two volumes of John Lawrence's *A Philosophical Treatise on Horses and the Moral Duties of Man towards the Brute Creation*. This work has a chapter entitled 'The Rights of Beasts' in its first volume. In 1838 appeared William Drummond's careful treatise *The Rights of Animals and Man's Obligation to treat them with Humanity* and, in 1879, Edward Byron Nicholson's *The Rights of an Animal a new Essay in Ethics*. Nevertheless Salt's book brought together a complex of issues and concerns that make his work the most important early contribution to the issue and was followed by other works in the same theme. Some of these will be discussed below.

Before going on to an analysis of Salt's arguments it is worth pausing over his life as it helps to demonstrate the ways in which a concern for the rights and welfare of animals is often associated with an involvement in other radical causes. This is best exemplified by feminism as represented today by the work of Carol Adams and earlier by activists such as Frances Power Cobbe in England and Caroline White in the US. There are, however, other connections. Salt was one of that group of upper-middle-class Victorians who turned against the privilege offered by their social standing and engaged in various struggles on behalf of the oppressed. Thus Salt, an old Etonian and graduate of Cambridge, was associated with William Morris and John Ruskin. Later he met George Bernard Shaw whose militant vegetarianism is today less well known than his other radical interests and Edward Carpenter, another Cambridge man, whose socialism, feminism and espousal of homosexual rights is best understood in the context of the community, based on strict vegetarian principles that he founded at Millthorpe in the 1880s.[24] When Salt said his farewells to Dr Warre, his headmaster at Eton, Warre sadly opined that his rejection of all the principles of the public school system was down to his vegetarianism.[25] In 1888, Gandhi was converted to vegetarianism by choice and principle by Salt's essay *A Plea for Vegetarianism* and, in 1931, when the Vegetarian Society hosted a dinner in Gandhi's honour Salt (who had also introduced Gandhi to the writings of Thoreau and may, therefore, be seen as indirectly responsible for Indian independence) was seated at his right hand.

The range of Salt's interests can best be judged by a consideration of his *oeuvre*. There were biographies of Thoreau (1896) (also one of Carpenter's chief influences), James Thomson (1889), and Shelley, whose radical vegetarianism was also the subject of an essay by Carpenter (1896). Critical works included writing on Tennyson (1893) and Richard Jefferies (1894 and 1905). In *On Cambrian and Cumbrian*

Hills (1922), *Our Vanishing Wildflowers* (1928) and *The Call of the Wildflower* (1922) Salt also concerned himself with ecology and naturalism. He translated Virgil (1928) and Lucretius (1912) as well as producing two volumes of his own poems, *The Song of the Respectables* (1896) and *Cum Grano* (1931). His opposition to corporal punishment was expressed in *The Flogging Craze* (1916) and this should be related to his two volumes of memoirs concerning Eton College (*Eton under Hornby* (1910) and *Memories of Bygone Eton* (1928). He charted his own life in *Consolations of a Faddist* (1906), *Company I Have Kept* (1930) and, most memorably, *Seventy Years among Savages* (1921). His lifelong socialism was represented by *The Heart of Socialism* (1928) and his talents as a playwright by *A Lover of Animals* and *The Home Secretary's Holiday*.

This list shows Salt as literary gentleman of radical interests, at least some of which anticipate more contemporary concerns. As such he was a rare but not untypical specimen of a certain kind of Victorian. However, his commitment to the cause of animal rights and vegetarianism was more unusual. This was not solely expressed by *Animals' Rights*: Salt also produced *The Creed of Kinship* (1935), *The Humanities of Diet* (1897) and *The Logic of Vegetarianism* (1899). Like Gompertz, Salt's activism did not stop short at the production of books. He was also active in the formation, in 1891, of the Humanitarian League. This organisation brought together people who, like Salt, connected pacifism and socialism with vegetarianism and anti-vivisectionism. Unfortunately, Salt could see no future for the League after the Great War but during its lifetime he edited, and wrote extensively for, its two journals *Humanity*, later renamed as *The Humanitarian* (1895–1919), and *The Humane Review* (1900–10). This brief review of a great body of work exemplifies the breadth of Salt's interests but, more specifically, it demonstrates the ways in which the cause of animals was inextricably linked in his mind with a range of other social issues. The articulation of arguments about animals could not, in Salt's view, be pursued in isolation from a more general consideration of oppression and injustice, and that is why his major work looks at animal rights as a function of social progress. We saw in Gompertz and Primatt and in the various modern thinkers whose work was reviewed in the previous chapter how the question of rights must be considered both in the abstract and in the general before it can be considered in the particular and Salt's wide-ranging account of society, nature and culture represents perhaps the most thoroughgoing example of this necessity.

Before proceeding to the analysis of Salt's position in *Animals' Rights* it will be helpful to indicate how the book is designed to take the

reader from a philosophical debate on the nature of rights through a series of increasingly detailed examples to some propositions for action. This will show how Salt's account of the issues is inseparable from his drive to do something about them. The chapter headings are as follows:

1. The Principle of Animals' Rights
2. The Case of Domestic Animals
3. The Case of Wild Animals
4. The Slaughter of Animals for Food
5. Sport, or Amateur Butchery
6. Murderous Millinery
7. Experimental Torture
8. Lines of Reform

It will be seen from this table that Salt's work represents an exceptionally comprehensive and detailed engagement with the major issues which anyone concerned with animal rights must address. For example, the section on millinery, which today appears dated, includes arguments against the use of leather, fur and feathers in clothing and contains detailed refutations of the case in its favour.[26]

Salt's view on the nature of rights is perhaps best approached by a short appendix added to the 1922 edition of his work. In this he confronts the definition of 'rights' developed by D. G. Ritchie in his *Natural Rights* (1895). Ritchie adopts a 'duties' approach and argues that while humans have duties of kindness towards animals these should not be confused with the attribution of rights to animals as animals have no reciprocal duties to man. As Salt trenchantly puts it:

> I take this to mean that, in man's 'duty of kindness,' it is the 'kindness' only that has reference to animals, the 'duty' being altogether the private affair of the man. The kindness is, so to speak, the water, and the duty is the tap; and the convenience of this arrangement is that man can shut of the kindness whenever it suits him to do so; as, for example, it suited Mr Ritchie in regard to the question of vivisection.[27]

The nub of this for Salt is that Ritchie's argument proceeds on the assumption that as animals are not persons then they have no rights. However, Salt's view is that there is no sufficient difference in kind between humans and non-humans that can justify 'an absolute line of

demarcation' as between 'persons and things'.[28] The question of difference is answerable solely in reference to degree and, therefore, as we cannot deny the right of sentient beings to freedom from suffering when these beings are humans, so the same argument (being based on the presence or absence of sentience) must hold good for non-humans too. Salt also reminds us that rights are not absolute but conditional and that recognising the rights of others does not mean that we are unable to assert our own. Thus if we shoot a tiger that is trying to eat us we do not, in any material way, affect either its rights to freedom from unnecessary suffering or, more importantly, imply that we are any less human or it any less sentient.

In fact, some of Salt's argument had been made, as he himself acknowledged, by J. B. Austin in his *The Duties and Rights of Man* (1887). Although Austin did not allow that animals had rights (on the grounds of their absence of reason) he did claim that humans have indirect duties towards them. The grounds of that claim were founded on a proposition that because animals, like humans, were undoubtedly sentient and capable of feeling pain, the infliction of needless suffering upon them is criminal in that it constitutes a conscious violation of one's own nature. This argument (which is not unlike Primatt's) does not go so far as that of Salt, who is far readier to attribute more than merely instinctual sentience to the non-human community. But it does provide a basis on which an argument that reduces the difference between humans and non-humans to one of degree not kind can be deployed. Salt mounts this argument, to devastating effect, in the main text of his book.

Salt begins his work by asking whether or not animals may be considered to have rights. Invoking both Spencerian and Benthamite principles he concludes that they do and this claim is based on their sentience. The basic rights of an animal are the same of those of a human and consist in:

> the 'restricted freedom' to live a natural life – a life, that is which permits of the individual development – subject to the permanent needs and interests of the community.[29]

Animals are not exempt from necessary killing (neither are humans) but, like humans, they are to be protected and exempted from all unnecessary suffering. Salt's demolition of both religious and Cartesian arguments against this position is, in his own words, nothing more than 'a moment's candid investigation' of 'a series of shuffling excuses'

designed to 'lull our consciences'.[30] Indeed, the forthright way in which Salt approaches his definition of rights and his, probably unphilosophical, clearance of the dead wood of history, allow us to see how practical his approach to the question is going to be. In many ways Salt is as much concerned, if not more concerned, with animal welfare as with animal rights and very early on he quotes Martin's Bill (discussed at length by Gompertz) as:

> a memorable date in the history of humane legislation, less on account of the positive protection it provided, for it applied only to cattle and 'beasts of burden', than for the invaluable precedent it created.[31]

Even so, Salt, unlike Gompertz, is not a strict utilitarian and we should not confuse a practical approach to animal rights and welfare with a morality based on calculation.

The ensuing chapters seek to work out the general principle of rights and, essentially, to educate the reader into a new way of seeing the nature of the relationship between humans and non-humans. Salt shows it as a traffic in exploitation and cruelty and, above all, he shows this cruelty as unnecessary and, mostly, avoidable. Having done this, Salt turns to describing ways forward. How would a society that acknowledged the rights of animals actually operate? First, there is the need for education which is the necessary precursor of legislation for how can offences be punished when they are not perceived as morally wrong? Then comes legislation. Here, Salt believes that existing law already presents the opportunity for the suppression of much cruelty if only magistrates would interpret it aright. Specific laws should be passed immediately against three things: blood sports; the live transportation of animals to slaughter over long distances; and vivisection.

A reader in 2001 will, no doubt, be astonished by this list as all three issues are still matters of live public debate in the UK and successive governments continue to trim, prevaricate and dither around them. Meanwhile, stags are dismembered alive, sheep left to die from thirst and rabbits deliberately blinded. One can see why the Great War so disillusioned Salt as to cause him to abandon the formal organs of the humanitarian project.

The reason for this lack of progress is not hard to understand in Salt's own terms because for him a change in social attitudes could not be invented or legislated into being. It depends on a majority belief that:

> man, to be truly man, must cease to abnegate his common fellowship with all living nature[32]

Salt operated in an environment which, as I have suggested, left him far from isolated. In the US, for example, J. Howard Moore took a line very similar to that taken by Salt in his *Better-World Philosophy* (1899), *The Universal Kinship* (1905) and *The New Ethics* (1907). In fact, Moore's admiration for Salt was immense as their correspondence shows:

> I have just finished your little book on 'The Logic of Vegetarianism.' It is the best thing on this subject in existence – bold, brilliant, unanswerable. I am glad you are on earth. If it were not for a very few souls like you, this world would seem to me an intellectual solitude.[33]

In Moore's work we find a gentle counterpoint to Salt's more polemical style. Salt's espousal of animal rights has, therefore, to be seen not within a framework of conventional politics or philosophy (although Salt was not an idealist and acknowledged the necessity of working with and through both) but within the eclectic doctrines of humanitarianism and the complex of ideas which surround them. This worldview comprises an holistic approach to the multiple relationships which human beings necessarily experience – with themselves, with each other, with non-humans, with the environment – and should not be segmented into 'causes' or confused with series of single-issue political arguments. The multiplicity and variety of Salt's published work reflects the need to educate: it will/would be a long-time before the kinds of ideas and beliefs recommended by Salt become so commonplace as to be invisible.

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Now that the review of what seem to me to be the most important pre-twentieth-century animal rights thinkers has been completed I would like to turn to a discussion of the ways in which animals rights and issues concerning animals have been treated in a selected number of more or less contemporary historical and critical texts. The reasons for this are twofold. First, I wish to situate my own work within an existing discursive field. Second, the ways in which the history of the non-human experience has hitherto been written will enable some further analysis of the issue of animal rights as a set of positions which exists in relation to a number of other political, philosophical and cultural

concerns. This work will largely be concerned with cultural, specifically literary issues, but where works have adopted a more conventional historiographic approach they obviously have an important relationship to this work in so far as it will proceed via a broadly diachronic method or, perhaps more accurately, a method which never loses sight of the specific historical moments at which specific acts of textual production took place.

The first work to be considered is also the oldest. E. S. Turner's *All Heaven in a Rage* first appeared in 1964 at a time when the current interest in animal issues and related environmental concerns was, at best, embryonic.[34] It is a fairly plain account of the ways in which consciousness of cruelty gradually enforced a more merciful attitude towards animals and is written from a largely British standpoint although, in fact, it also covers such issues as, for example, the ancient world (Pythagoreanism) and the European Enlightenment (Cartesianism). Turner addresses the major issues – blood sports, farming, fur, the RSPCA and the development of legislation – but although his book is consistently condemnatory of cruelty and, if this can be said, pro-animal – he does not situate his writing within a coherent or consistent theory of rights.

In this respect *All Heaven in a Rage* (the title is derived from a line in William Blake's 'Auguries of Innocence') is a text about animal welfare rather than animal rights. The connections between the two kinds of position are intimate and inextricable but there is a difference. The present work looks at the issue from a rights perspective while acknowledging that while welfare can and does exist without rights the converse can never be true. It seems to me that the welfare issue is solely a matter of politics, while the issue of rights can be properly explored only within a broader philosophical context. Indeed, I would argue that, in reality, the communal recognition of animal rights which a consistent policy on animal welfare would demand can only be achieved by cultural change from which assent to legislation would naturally follow. This is why important 'animal thinkers' such as Richard Ryder, who coined the word speciesism – now common in dictionaries but not, alas, on the Microsoft spellchecker loaded into the laptop I am currently using, although Microsoft is – and Bernard Rollin, will not get the attention that they would certainly deserve in a work with a different purpose.[35]

Although Turner's book is a very plain account, it does fulfil a very important purpose in that it demonstrates very clearly how important events like the foundation of the RSPCA and the passing of Martin's

Act were linked to changes in the sensibility of British society at large. A good example of this is the development of 'improving literature' for children. In the work of tractarian writers such as Sarah Trimmer or Thomas Day's *Sandford and Merton*, we see during the eighteenth century an increasing tendency to inculcate consideration for animals and distaste for cruelty into the education of the gentry. This is, of course, a part of the transformation of the gentleman from rough-riding squire to Victorian *paterfamilias*. It is also part of the Christianisation of gentry culture which found some kind of apotheosis in Arnold's Rugby as memorialised in *Tom Brown's Schooldays* which, in some ways, might be seen as a response to Day's work although significantly it does not deal with cruelty to animals.[36] This process led to a perceived feminisation (of which much more later) and certainly Martin and his supporters were mocked as effeminate for their concern for animal welfare. In his Afterword to the 1992 edition of his book Turner points out the mirth that characterised a debate in the European Commission when the question of animal rights arose reminds us of the abuse thrown at Martin.[37] Although this should not surprise us, given the Common Agricultural Policy's mission to subsidise primitive farming methods, Turner performs a useful service here by addressing the deep cultural issues which underlie all debates about the nature of the non-human.

The most complete history of animals (and the environment) in recent times is undoubtedly Sir Keith Thomas's *Man and the Natural World* (1983).[38] This comprehensive work surveys, as its sub-title reminds us, 'Changing Attitudes in England 1500–1700'. This work explores a vast range of material in order to show how challenges to previously unquestioned assumptions as to the nature of non-humans and the right of humans to exploit the natural world in whatever ways they chose lead to fundamental redefinitions of the nature of humanity itself. Thomas explicitly says that:

> it is impossible to disentangle what the people of the past thought about plants and animals from what they thought about themselves.[39]

From my perspective this book is important because it demonstrates how the textualisation of the non-human can, in itself, represent an exploitative appropriation of the animal experience. I am not, however, suggesting in any way that this was one of Sir Keith's purposes.

Man and the Natural World is best understood as a part of that multi-faceted project to locate the roots of modern subjectivity which

engaged many British historians during the 1970s and 1980s and remains a core concern of the historical establishment. In this respect one might almost say that the book is not really about animals at all. Comparable works are John McKenzie's *The Empire of Nature* (1988) and Alfred Crosby's *Ecological Imperialism* (1986).[40] In the former, the purpose is to show how the ideology and practice of Imperialism manifested itself in, among other things, big game hunting; in the latter, we see an attempt to show how specific attitudes to nature and their technological and environmental consequences enabled Europeans to colonise most of the rest of the world. Although these works do not seek out the roots of the modern they do use the analysis of the human relationship with the non-human as a vehicle for the explanation of the relationship between humans. Even Clive Ponting's *A Green History of the World* (1991), which has an explicitly environmentalist agenda, is fundamentally designed to describe how humans have used the planet and not what consequences this has had for the non-human.[41]

It is also important to mention a very fine book by Joyce Salisbury, *The Beast Within* (1994).[42] This deals with attitudes to animals in the Middle Ages and, as such, it could be seen to represent a version of Sir Keith Thomas's book, albeit one that deals with an earlier period. What is of especial value in this work is its confrontation with the later medieval rediscovery of the idea that people were animals and the consequences of this for behaviour and culture. As I have suggested above, this notion is of great importance to the understanding of most positions that relate to the question of animal rights. I think that the prominence it is given in Salisbury's book does demonstrate that the work is more than a neutral history that seeks to show how people dealt with and thought about animals. The book, by virtue of this particular section, becomes a genuine attempt to understand the non-human, if only by acknowledging, and taking seriously, the non-human component of the human experience.

What I am arguing here is that there is a difference between history that seeks to explore the human experience and history that seeks to explore the non-human experience. That might appear to be platitudinous or trivial, but it is of fundamental importance to my own project to keep before the reader the sense that although we cannot become the voice of the animal experience, we can attempt to understand that experience as far as possible without using it to structure a new way of understanding ourselves. Harriet Ritvo's *The Animal Estate* (1987) offers a slightly different approach.[43] This is a study of English attitudes to

animals during the nineteenth century and considers a range of views, all of which are ultimately derived from a shift in the power relationship between the human and the non-human. Ritvo argues, convincingly I think, that the development of a scientific discourse of natural history and an associated taxonomy during the Enlightenment facilitated a shift that enabled nature to be viewed as other than radically antagonistic. In other words, the new knowledge offered a mastery that permitted tolerance. I will leave the reader to ponder the interesting implications of this position for understanding post-war shifts in racial and gender relations and observe only that Ritvo's argument does offer a space for the non-human which is subtly different from that allowed by Sir Keith Thomas.[44]

The reason for this is that by displacing the search for subjectivity into the search for power and domination Ritvo actually decentres the human experience from its dominant position. This is not to say that *The Animal Estate* is not, ultimately, a book about humans. It does, however, provide an account of the topic that problematises not the ways in which humans and non-humans interact and the consequences which derive from that interaction but the structures which make that interaction possible and give it concrete form. In this respect I believe that Ritvo is writing towards a history which is equally oriented to the human and the non-human experience. One might compare, for example, a similar effort in Carol Adams's *The Sexual Politics of Meat* (see chapter 2 above) with Coral Lansbury's *The Old Brown Dog* (1985). Whereas Adams is attempting to bring the twin causes of animal rights and feminism into a unifying theory, Lansbury's book (subtitled 'Women, Workers and Vivisection in Edwardian England') uses the material to provide a sustained metaphor for the asymmetrical relationships between the sexes. 'Surely,' she says, 'no human activity is more embued with paradox than our attitude to animals and, in this context, the way men have regarded women.'[45] Although Lansbury does make convincing connections between various practices which affected animals and women in various ways it does not seem to me at all necessarily to be the case that the human attitude to animals should always be a special context for men's attitude to women. For example, Peter Mason's book, *The Brown Dog Affair* (1995), also looks at this Edwardian controversy (in 1907 there were a series of riots about the treatment of a brown dog in a medical laboratory) as evidencing attitudes to medicine and class politics.[46] Similarly the involvement of early feminists in the Old Brown Dog riots surely makes it impossible to distinguish safely between the *human* attitude to animals and *men's* attitude to women.

It seems to me that Lansbury wanted to write a book about the experience of women and to make some valuable points about the history and current state of gender relationships. In this context the Old Brown Dog is actually an irrelevance or, at best, a bit-part player in a drama where human beings have all the best roles. Lansbury also writes about the symbolism of Black Beauty. This theme is also taken up by Moira Ferguson.[47] In both these cases the horse becomes a metaphor for the oppressed, for the non-white, for the victim. But what about the horse? I have no doubt that Lansbury and Ferguson are quite correct when they identify a rich vein of symbolism in Sewell's text. But might it not also be a novel about the way horses are treated?

What I am saying here can easily be misunderstood so I want to make my position quite clear. I am not attributing any base motives to Lansbury, Ferguson or to any other of the excellent writers that I have dealt with in the above paragraphs. Nor am I arguing for a vulgarisation of the historiographic or critical process by which all attempts to see symbolism, metaphor, or any other trope, in the text are condemned as fanciful. Far from it. As I shall show in subsequent chapters, the use of the animal experience as a metaphor for the human is a major vehicle for the expression of the non-human. Indeed, the radical silence of the non-human makes this inevitable. What I am saying, however, is that to write about humans does not necessitate writing about animals as if all that such writing can do is it explore humanity. The Old Brown Dog really existed and really suffered. Black Beauty did not exist but we rarely shrink from imagining the inner life of characters in the books we read – it may even be true that the exposure of the inner life is a defining characteristic of the literary – and Sewell does actually give us an inner life for her equine hero, much as Jack London was later do with his intrepid canines.

It is true that *Black Beauty* is a book designed to teach people how to treat horses and, in this sense, Ferguson and Lansbury are quite right to pick up on its human dimensions. But it is also about a horse. Could one write about, say, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* without mentioning racism or the specific social condition of the Afro-American under slavery? I suppose one could but it would be a very odd and unsatisfactory approach. Why then write about books about animals without engaging with the non-human? I think the answer is, unfortunately, all too clear: the human experience bulks so large and is so important to us that it tends to blot out all other concerns wherever we encounter them. This is the problem that confronts us whenever we address the issue of the non-human. We cannot understand the world outside our

own experience and that which we intuitively attribute to others, both through our own sympathetic imagination and through what others do and say. But the world of the non-human remains like a nineteenth-century map of Africa and, in charting it, we will inevitably seek to draw such bearings as enable us to return home. It is possible, however, that we can learn the local language or, at least, understand the local customs and, in doing so, we might enter, with imaginative sympathy into the non-human world and construct it so that we can understand not only in and for ourselves but also for the non-humans who experience and suffer it alongside us.

This partial review of the field will, I hope, have given the reader sufficient background knowledge to consider the set of critical readings which now follow. In these I shall no doubt fall into all the traps that I have identified in my comments on the historians discussed in this chapter. What I shall consistently have in view is the endeavour to represent the non-human experience in itself and of itself. When Wittgenstein observed that if a lion could speak we could not understand him he was right.[48] However, lions cannot speak and it may be the case that it is that very silence, and the contemplation of the analogous silence within ourselves, which enables us to have some insight into 'lion-ness' and even to speak about it to each other.

4
A Chapter of Vulgar Errors

This chapter is an attempt to put some of the readings that follow into some kind of theoretical perspective just as the previous chapters have attempted to give an historical overview. As this book is not an attempt to produce any kind of consistent theoretical statement about the nature of the non-human experience this chapter is more of a critique of a range of positions and an investigation of the limits of certain ways of thinking (including my own). The reader who is simply interested in seeing how non-humans are dealt with in a range of texts may safely skip it.

The following two anecdotes will help the reader catch the tone of what is to follow in this chapter as what I wish to do here is to mount a rearguard action for feeling and interpretation and to attempt to recuperate certain modes of seeing the world which have, perhaps, long been decried. About fifteen years ago I was sitting in the library of the University of Wisconsin's Eau Claire campus where I was participating in a faculty exchange programme. At that time I was working on some highly theorised essays on Shakespeare and Milton and was catching up on my reading. I was looking at a recent text on Renaissance tragedy and as I read became more and more aware that the text was not about Renaissance tragedy at all but rather about a political argument with the Thatcherite government.[1] That in itself did not raise any qualms as it seems to me perfectly proper that scholars working in historical fields should show how the past can operate as a tool to open up the pressing concerns of the present. However, what did concern me was a series of statements about nuclear war and its crucial position in the armory of the bourgeoisie as it conducts its part in the class struggle.

J. Simons, *Animal Rights and the Politics of Literary Representation*

This struck me as absurd and as I watch the last dead leaves of winter floating down the Chippewa river my sense of absurdity turned into a sense of disillusion and then rejection. I was deeply sceptical about the nuclear war scares of the late 1970s and early 1980s in any case.[2] But that was not what bothered me. In taking this turn the author had completely abandoned any pretence or attempt to write about Renaissance tragedy and was pursuing what seemed to me a line of thought which was entirely the result of a predisposed theoretical position. In other words, what was being said here was being said because a theory demanded it, quite irrespective of its meaning, relevance or application to any possible reader.

This was an important moment for me as I had not previously seen this kind of mechanism at work and was still myself operating within a field constructed by a range of literary and political ideas drawn from the complex of theories which can be broadly described as poststructuralist. As someone who was still relatively near the beginning of his career I had grown up in universities where the controversy over theory had only just begun to rear its head and, like many scholars of my peer group, I had adopted theory not only because it offered more interesting and, apparently, challenging ways of reading and understanding cultural texts but also because it offered a way of breaking free of the kinds of work being done by the majority of my senior colleagues. It was, with the 20/20 vision of hindsight, a wonderful mechanism by which *épater les bourgeois*. I remember being told that what 'theory' (and I shall use this vague term for the time being) was about was the replacement of one orthodoxy by another. I rejected this view at the time, but now I do believe this to be the case and, furthermore, in that Mid-Western library I believe I saw for the first time what this replacement might mean.

Perhaps we can break down this anecdote a little and see what is so dangerous in the way of thinking that suddenly brought me up short. First, it is surely the case that contributions to scholarship should not be ephemeral. Let us ask a number of questions here. Would any reader today (any reader under, say, thirty, that is) have any idea of what an engagement with Thatcherism means, especially in the context of Renaissance drama? Would any American reader even then have known this? How valuable then was this argument and this book? It is true that all scholarly work must bear the imprint of its time and as we read the criticism of the past we must stay attuned to the forces that bore on it when it was written and when it was received. But there is a difference between an awareness of the way in which thought is formed

by contingent historical circumstance and the open use of scholarship to conduct parochial squabbles of a party political nature. The unmasking of Paul de Man as some kind of Nazi was presented as a scandal (in the theoretical sense) but the only scandal was the scant acquaintance with history that marked his deconstructionist fellow travellers. Anyone who had spent a few hours pursuing the European contexts of Anglo-American modernism surely knew all about de Man's past – or so it seemed to me. When this 'unmasking' took place the only surprise was that no one seemed to know about it. The other surprise was, of course, that anyone cared, especially as some of the lionised texts of the time, for example, Kristeva's work on Céline, felt to me quite comfortably situated in a fascist worldview. This is not to say that Kristeva or anyone who is still interested in her work is a fascist, but rather that I could not tell the difference between certain passages in de Man which were now being cited as evidence of his murky past and similar ideas in a whole host of other poststructuralist texts.

Second, it concerned me (and still does) that the disastrous possibility of a nuclear war pursued in the name of mutually assured destruction should have become a token in a verbal game. This contempt for the possibility of mass annihilation and suffering which I catch in the rhetoric with which I am currently engaging seems to me no better nor worse than what I assume to be the same contempt – let's be kind and call it lack of imagination – in the minds of the Pentagon and Kremlin strategists who had the power to unleash it. The effect of this kind of thinking seems to me to deflect attention not only from the ostensible object of the critical process but also from the extensional world within which that process is situated.

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Before moving on to look at these issues in more depth here is the other anecdote. A very dedicated student whom I had taught as an undergraduate went to do a postgraduate course in literary theory. He thought that he would do one of his essays on the question of animals. The response he got from his tutor was along these lines: 'What are you? Seven years old?' This answer sums up so much that is wrong with the critical establishment and its intolerance of anything that breaches its orthodoxies and so might challenge them. At the same time it is especially significant in the light of thinking about animals in culture. I have already shown how a writer such as Roger Scruton condemns his opponents ultimately on the grounds that he sees in their position an infection of sentimentality. I have also pointed out how

the earliest campaigners for pro-animal legislation were mocked for their alleged effeminacy. As Carol Adams has shown, the links between constructions of masculinity and certain attitudes towards animals are not hard to find.

In the nineteenth century we can see this in, for example, the novels of Anne Brontë where in both *Agnes Grey* and *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* the heroine finds her unruly male charges torturing animals and being encouraged to do so by their reprobate male elders.[3] In *Wuthering Heights* the young Heathcliff wiles away his time by hanging puppies, while in George Eliot's *Daniel Deronda* Mr Grandcourt subtly torments his adoring spaniel Fetch by petting and feeding a lapdog while Fetch whimpers and howls at his feet.[4] In these works a clear link is being made between power and, specifically, power as it exists in an intersection between gender and class and cruelty to animals. The connection between oppression and violence as this is legitimised by masculinity could not be made clearer. But the victims are not only the hapless animals, they are also the women and other outsiders (Jews, for instance, to pick up the example from George Eliot) who are struggling for a place in the worlds of the novels.

When my student was insulted, his tutor was drawing on a grand old tradition of oppression and one which involves an inherent sexism as that association of childishness and sentimentality which I catch in her remark is precisely that used by the MPs who howled down Robert Martin's speeches in the House of Commons and also that contested by novelists such as those I have cited above. In other words, her remark was sexist in as much as we cannot drive a wedge between the association of femininity and sentiment and between the child and the woman in this kind of oppressive discourse. Now, as the person involved is both a Marxist and a feminist we see a very interesting effect at work. The association of critical thought with animals brought out the language of gender and class oppression that is, in all other critical contexts, kept firmly in the closet. From this I conclude two things. The first is that the critical discourses which generally act as the problematic within which the field of literary studies comes into being are radically speciesist. The second is that as we cannot readily separate speciesism from other forms of oppression we must conclude that these discourses are radically sexist as well.

This all creates a terrible problem as from this it follows that much of the critical discourse of the past thirty years has been busily engaged in sawing off the very branch on which it sits. At one level this is not sur-

prising as the deconstructive project's love of paradox, its demonstration of the impossibility of certain kinds of fixity, and its abolition of metalanguage, are at least in part, designed to challenge the linearity of thought which enables certain kinds of oppression to gain legitimation in the first place. But what if all the deconstructive project is nothing more than a fifth column which perpetuates oppression by making it increasingly difficult to contest it from within an academic discourse that shares with the world at large no language with which to speak about it?

This last point is important as it seems to me that what is happening in academic life is an increasingly hermetic withdrawal from the society with which it should be in dialogue. The effect of this is that radical thought – i.e. the thoughts some academics have as they observe the class struggle from their offices – is becoming entirely irrelevant to action in the world at large. That is not to say that radical academics are not activists in one cause or other, but rather that the nature of activism may be entirely untouched by what passes for radical thought. If the academy withdraws from the public arena in this way it cannot look to that arena for support when the going gets tough. And it has got very tough. A further irony is that the opening up of higher education to a mass public will amplify the effect of withdrawal by driving further wedges between the majority of students' experience of education and their experience of life. Dr Johnson said 'books without the knowledge of life are useless for what should books teach but the knowledge of life?'[5] We would be well advised to reflect on what Johnson meant by this and how we can rediscover that knowledge not only in our books but also in our language and the dialogues that language makes possible or, I fear, impossible.

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Some readers may by this time have assumed that what I am saying is that the theoretical turn has simply imposed a bout of navel gazing on the academic world and that the need to work within a particular kind of philosophical tradition has disabled the academy from making socially relevant interventions in the world of which it is a part. But I am not saying that. Indeed, I am very much in sympathy with Judith Butler's confrontation of this position in her *Bodies that Matter*.[6] As she points out:

> To claim that discourse is formative is not to claim that it originates, causes, or exhaustively composes that which it concedes; rather, it is

> to claim that there is no reference to a pure body which is not the same as a further formation of that body.[7]

It seems to me that what Butler says here is not to be refuted. Indeed, as I have argued in a preceding chapter, the difficulty in dealing with the non-human is a difficulty which exists not only because of the gulf which separates us from the animal experience but also because of the implication of the very things I wish to dispute in the only language I have at my disposal.

What I am concerned about is slightly different and it is that the totalising effect of theoretical discourse *per se* has the effect of closing off thinking rather than liberating it. As my second anecdote above suggests, the habits of mind developed by some modes of thought lead one into areas to which, in every other instance, one would react with hostility and distaste.

In writing this book it would have been very easy for me to have demonstrated the ways in which the non-human experience and, specifically the difference between that experience and the human experience can be theorised. I could, for example, have deconstructed the Judaeo-Christian creation story. In this narrative God creates the animals first and then mankind. I could have proceeded by showing that the ability of the non-human to find a place in the world depends on its taking up of a linguistic space prepared anteriorally for it by the humans who name it. It would therefore be the case that the human precedes the non-human. The effect of this would be that if we took the conventional distinction between human and non-human, i.e. the presence of reason, which was taken up from classical antiquity and re-stated in, for example, Heidegger's *Letter on Humanism*, we could show that there was some form of coextensivity between Reason, now given its full capital, and language.[8] However, we could also show that the linguistic device of naming depends in itself on a pre-existent matrix of significance on which and from which the human namer draws to structure the non-human into the realm over which he now has power.

But this would be to reduce language to a nomenclature. In order to reassert the systematic axis of language I could then have argued that as the human finds itself in language too it would not be possible to attribute a primordial precedence to humanness except in so far as the possession of language (reason) enables it to adopt the position of namer rather than named. If we explore this position further we would then find that the very processes which enable the non-human to be

distinguished from the human are not processes derived from 'nature' but rather from the articulation of a particular linguistic process. This would mean that in naming the non-human the human effectively abolishes it, deletes it, or holds it *sous rature*. However, as we have already shown that there is no primordial precedence in the process of naming, we could also show that the very act of naming and, therefore, abolishing the non-human is, simultaneously, an act of abolishing the human too. This is a pretty little paradox with which a good deal of fun could have been had in constructing readings of texts.

Alternatively, I could have suggested that the non-human does not take its place in the symbolic order except in as much as it is interpellated as alterity by those who are already being formed within that order. Here I could have brought together issues of gendering to show further how the formation of a gendered body and a social position consequent on that formation are the domain of a human who is dependent on a desire both to reach out to the scary non-human and to keep it away in the flux of the semiotic. I might have asked if animals dream. If I had concluded that they do not I could have shown that the absence of a dream field means that they can never be at home. They could then have entered the realm of the abject and, again, I could have constructed some nice little readings along these lines.

Further, I could have asked about the commodification of the animal body. Does it exist solely as a term of exchange in the symbolic economy of the postmodern condition? Is the non-human experience as we perceive it necessarily always a simulacrum in which we embody a fantasy of nature and then endlessly recycle it? What place does the non-human have, I could have asked, in a postmodern world where difference is increasingly erased in the service of identity and the encounter with the animal is figured as an encounter with a commodity?

Any of these positions would have made an interesting book. No doubt the reader will have noted that I am quite fascinated by the kinds of thinking which might have been done to construct these little sketches of ideas into fully blown arguments. But where would the truth be and where would feeling be? The work carried out in this book follows Hamann's advice to Herder – 'Think less and live more' – and tries to carry the critical project beyond a language-game and into an arena where the representation of the non-human is constantly to be tallied off against the plight of animals all around the planet.[9]

To give an example of the dangers of the kind of thinking I am reacting against here is a well-known passage from Lyotard:

> This is a period of slackening – I refer to the color of the times. From every direction we are being urged to put an end to experimentation in the arts and elsewhere.[10]

Lyotard goes on to defend and define his position against a battery of assaults which he briefly describes in varying degrees of detail. There are two things to say about this. The first is that a careful reading of the whole passage suggests that much of what is now designated as postmodern represents a list of tendencies which Lyotard actually opposes. The second, and this is more important, is that we have nothing but Lyotard's assertion that the 'color of the times' is as he describes it. Let us ask a fundamental question. Is it really true that in the late 1970s 'we' were being urged to put an end to experimentation? I would argue that this is, at the very least, contestable and, at most, simply wrong. It is not wrong within the self-consistent world of Lyotard's thought, but I don't think that there could be a serious argument mounted to show that the period in which Lyotard was writing was a period in which experimentation in the arts was discouraged (any more than it has always been) or that 'society' became any less intractable.

Indeed, we might even argue that the period in which issues of race, gender and sexuality acquired unprecedented attention and in which social changes which responded to this attention were well under way, exhibited rather the opposite features. If we assume, that is, that these issues constitute the kind of transgressive and provocative experimentation that Lyotard had in mind. The problem should now be clear: Lyotard's thought is based on a number of assumptions about the nature of the world in which he found himself. I think it would be very easy to show that these assumptions were wrong.[11] Where does that leave Lyotard's thought?

Let's look at the other side of the coin. Let's suppose Lyotard is right. Have the last twenty years offered another way forward? If they have, then perhaps we could thank Lyotard for an intervention which provoked a much needed reaction to 'slackening' and reassertion of the traditional role of the *avantgarde*. But if they have, then why should we see Lyotard's thinking on this matter as of continuing importance except as an important historical curiosity. Why then should this matter still be one for debate and contest? If we now live in a condition of postmodernity, then the need of philosophy is surely not to theorise that condition but rather to understand it as a precondition for what will follow.

What I am saying here is that the trajectory of postmodern thought has developed as an engagement with itself and not as an engagement with those things which might test its validity or otherwise. To some extent this has become true of all lines of theoretical engagement with culture and politics and it is this that I am attempting to react against in this book. In the *Theses on Feuerbach*, Marx observed that:

> The philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways; the point is to change it.[12]

I have by my side two books. One is Lyotard's *The Postmodern Condition*; the other is Juliet Gellatley's *The Silent Ark*. Given the need to make a decision as to which one would be more likely to fulfil Marx's challenge I have no doubt that Gellatley's is a far more important book than Lyotard's.

Of course, the uncritical adulation of Lyotard must also be related to the thankless task that many western intellectuals have set themselves of salvaging the discredited body of Marxism after the collapse of the Soviet Union. I find this an amazing enterprise. I have been told, by a perfectly intelligent person, that the students in Tiananmen Square 'went too far'. I have recently read an article in a European journal that circulates widely in the former Eastern bloc in which a French academic calls for the need to restore the reputation of Lenin.[13] This will strike my friends in Albania, Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Poland and Serbia as a quite extraordinary notion. I am talking here about fellow academics who have been sacked, denounced by their colleagues and interrogated by the police, sent to 'the bosom of the proletariat' (labour camp), seen their hard-won publications sent for recycling into cardboard, denied the right to use their own and their students' language in a professional context and persecuted in all manner of petty ways. They are not subversives, nor spies, but simply university teachers who tried to explore their world in ways that took them, usually unwittingly, beyond the confines of Party ideology. I do think that we should certainly restore the reputation of Lenin and one way of doing it will be to make sure that the stories that millions of eastern Europeans could tell about their lives are constantly kept in front of the noses of foolish westerners who should know better.

The reason for including this rant is that I think it would be true to say that the great majority of the cultural theories with which I am attempting a generalised critical engagement here are underpinned by

a Marxist or Marxian view of the world. When we understand this we can begin to see how important it is for these theories to keep the world at a distance. How embarrassing it is to jettison a century of theory-making just because millions of people were killed as a result of putting that theory into practice, and how vulgar it is of me to point it out. And is the theory really undermined by its unfortunate consequences? It is rare to find someone as honest as my colleague who is prepared to defend the Chinese army's massacre of unarmed protestors, but what systematic response have western Marxist academics made to the discovery that the peoples of Eastern Europe spent nearly fifty years living in misery? I think that the answer is none.

This shameful lack of responsibility is part of the reason that I am here developing such hostile positions to theoretical discourse of a poststructuralist nature. My suggestion above that such a discourse is, in fact, a fifth column for oppressiveness may now be seen in a different light. The occlusion of thought and the limitation of imagination which adherence to these modes of seeing appears to entail fills me with dismay especially when I see it replicated in a new generation of academics who have no personal experience of engagement with the history of the mid-twentieth century.

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So far, this chapter has been a kind of intellectual autobiography. I want my reader to be able to place what I have to say in subsequent parts of this book within a clearly stated and explicitly personal context. This context is both intellectual and emotional. When I first began to be interested in the question of animals as an academic topic I noticed two things. The first was that I found it difficult to make a transition between a concern that permeated my private life largely through long- standing dietary choice and ethical conviction and its objective professional study. The second was that as I read more and more about animals I found that I could not respond to texts about them in the way to which I had become accustomed. Fundamentally, I was overwhelmed by emotional involvement with the animals who were the subject of my reading and my response to the various narratives I was studying was shot through with what is best described as 'feeling'.

An emotional response to texts, to art, has not been at the centre of the critical enterprise for a very long time. It has been superceded by juridical and political concerns and to reaffirm its primacy here is still difficult. The fundamental problem of *de gustibus non est disputandum* is

at its most acute where the issue of feeling is concerned. Furthermore while it is easy to see why readers might be interested in a philosophically based analysis of the internal structures of texts or a political analysis of their social relationships and functions there is no obvious reason why they should be similarly interested in a personal response. It is not my intention to mount an argument for this here. At the same time, we may ask what it is that attracts people to reading in the first place and why some go on to spend the best part of their life in studying it and writing about it.

The most obvious route to an answer to this question is plainly the psychoanalytic one and it is likely that what we see in the attraction to writing is an overwhelmingly powerful cathexis which, for various reasons, operates in some people more strongly than in others. The whole question of desire and its relationship to textuality has been at the centre of the critical enterprise for a good twenty years and there is no need to sketch its history here. But sometimes the answer to a question, however rigorously worked out, does not seem to satisfy the questioner. The issue of feeling is one such question. I am quite happy to accept a psychoanalytic explanation of why certain things make me feel a certain way. For example, I physically feel what I believe to be great art as a chemical change in my body not unlike the feeling one gets when driving too quickly over a humpback bridge. I can't explain that to myself but just as A. E. Housman got a closer shave on a morning when he had a poem coming on so I infallibly and involuntarily respond to certain works of art. It's not easy to use this as a teaching device nor would I wish to try to use this, presumably autonomic, reaction as a substitute for a different kind of critical response. All I can say is that, for me, certain works of art have the power to strip away all intellection and all the contingent circumstance of daily life and, for a moment, project me, somatically, into a wholly aesthetic mode of being. I don't think it would be right to ignore this even if it is not easy to make it usable.

The question is then not 'why does this happen?' but 'what can I do with it?' Let us say that we will not take any interest in the question 'why?' any more than we take any interest in the way our eye muscles work as we scan the page or the way our body stays upright in the chair while we read. The physiology of reading is also, presumably, subject to many determinations but we do not usually consider it as an aspect of our response to texts. But when that physiology is suddenly materially changed by a specific work we should surely be particularly interested not necessarily in the physiology but certainly in the work.

Now, most of the texts dealt with in this particular book do not come under the heading of 'great art' as defined by the humpback bridge test. However the whole question of animals is one which provokes a felt response in me (albeit of a different kind) and I want to try to examine how one can recuperate the issue of feeling against the seemingly endless sterility of much modern critical practice.

This question is related to the one of activism and as this issue is relatively easily dealt with perhaps it can be disposed of here to clear the ground for the more complex argument about feeling which will follow. A few pages back I expressed a preference for the work of Juliet Gellatley over that of Jean-François Lyotard. One reason for this was because I wanted to provoke thinking about a body of philosophy that seems to me to be grossly overrated by comparing one of its more celebrated manifestations unfavourably with a book written by someone who is not even a professional author. The second reason was because I wanted to point out a concrete example of that divide between the academy and the public that I identified as a debilitating feature of academic life at the present time. What Gellatley offers is a compendium of arguments that is designed to stimulate one thing and one thing only: action. She does not, except in the most general sense, theorise her work nor does she argue that it is necessary to share her own knowledge of the animal liberation literature to do something about it. Her writing is designed to be deliberately provocative, personalised and moral. In addition her work is available to everyone both in the clarity of its expression and its direct appeal.

Leaving aside the fact that one of Lyotard's basic premises appears to be erroneous, can we say the same things about his work that we can say about Gellatley's? It is provocative and it is personalised. By its own lights it may be moral. However, it is not written in such a way as to be available to any but those trained or habituated in the reading of continental philosophy. What could or would anyone do as a result of reading Lyotard which they would not have done anyway? Does Lyotard open up a new vista on the world that provokes urgent response? There are some, I have no doubt, who would claim that he does. If this is the case where is the action and where is the change?

I am well aware that in arguing in this way I am opening up myself to a charge of intellectual vulgarity. But let us consider what vulgarity actually means. To be vulgar simply denotes to be common, to be ordinary, to be everyday. There is no necessarily pejorative implication in the act of vulgarisation and so I have no qualms if my positions here are seen as vulgar. I believe that the common and ordinary deserve

high value and close attention. Lyotard needs to cite Habermas, must engage with Heidegger, as he is writing a certain kind of philosophy. I would not wish it to be thought that I am devaluing this activity *per se* as this is not an argument that wishes to identify and pillory certain discourses as irredeemably obscure, irrelevant or elite. That would be vulgar in the pejorative sense. What I am trying to work towards is a position that promotes the world over the word and the thing over the discourse. It is this process that I call action.

George Steiner would probably not thank me for bringing him in as a support here but he once observed that his colleagues found it curious that he spent so much time trying to relate the Holocaust to his work as an academic and critic.[14] In doing so, Steiner was taking action even if that action consisted in writing in certain ways about certain things. There is no sense in which the question of action is necessarily related to a specific activity. Action is, rather, a position that looks to prioritise an object of concern and to find a discursive strategy by which that concern may be articulated. From this position activity, such as, for example, giving up meat, sabotaging foxhunts or campaigning against vivisection may or may not follow. It is also the case that the relationship between action and activity is, necessarily, a personal one and one that must be expressed in the terms of the individual's ability and character. We do not all want to go to prison for criminal damage nor should we feel that our contribution to any given struggle, however small, is marginal or insufficient.

I want to suggest then that writing is a form of action, but only when it adopts the priorities I have sketched out above. Furthermore, it is almost always the case (possibly always the case) that action as writing is likely to follow activity in a more general social field. It is quite possible for the most dedicated adherent of the most abstruse continental philosophy to be involved in activity. My point is that there is no necessary relationship between this activity and certain kinds of philosophy. I would, in fact, argue that there is unlikely to be any relationship at all as what we encounter in this case is an individual responding differently to different sections of his or her life experience.

I want to claim that the thing that triggers action and activity is feeling. Now, I have no desire here to go into the debate between thought and feeling. At one level, I believe that these are not, in fact, different modes of experience or perception. Indeed, I fear that the too ready separation of thought and feeling can lead to the most terrible outcomes. Surely, totalitarian regimes of all shades depend very precisely on this false dichotomy in order to persuade the objects of their

domination to do things that they would not otherwise do. However, it is clear that most people do believe that the way in which they perceive the world intellectually (thinking) is, in some fashion, different from the way in which they perceive the world emotionally (feeling). This should be respected even if we consider it to be merely an effect of language that has no bearing on the actual mechanisms involved.

If I pointed out above how dangerous the process of prioritising what is commonly known as feeling over what is commonly known as thought can be I can now add that the reverse process is equally dangerous. The victims of this process more than anything in the present time are animals. As is shown throughout this book the most common way of distinguishing the human from the non-human is the argument that that former have reason while the latter do not. This may or may not be true but (whatever the case really is) the presumed absence of reason has condemned non-humans to all kinds of cruelty and abuse. The argument that reason (thought) can be a single factor explanation to offer to humanity a superior status over the animal world has distinct advantages. If we deny animals the introspection that reason offers, we can, for example, justify their vivisection. Interestingly enough, this justification also depends on a denial to animals of an emotional life and so medical science is able entirely to delete the mental capacity of its victims by a double movement. On the one hand, the argument goes like this: animals can't think, so they don't know what's happening to them, so it can't be cruel. On the other hand, the argument goes like this: animals can't feel, so they can't be distressed by what's happening to them, so it can't be cruel. Very neat, and a thought process which neatly recalls the de(con)structive paradox about primordial precedence I constructed above.

Even if it is accepted that animals do possess one or other or both of the poles of perception designated as thought and feeling their treatment can still be justified by making an evaluative summary of what their thought and feeling consists of when compared with those same qualities as found in human beings. By this argument the processes in humans are perceived as superior to those in animals and this, by a logical turn which I can't understand, becomes a justification for torturing them. All this has already been dealt with earlier and in a different context but it is reprised here to show how we cannot separate the facts of cruelty to animals from the arguments about literary criticism that I am conducting in this section. As I said above, and I meant it: critical discourse is radically speciesist.

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Let us now see how that speciesism is underpinned and nurtured. The claim that humans have a superiority over animals that legitimates behaving in an exploitative manner towards them is usually made on the basis, as I have shown, of an assumption of difference. This difference is usually identified as being in a relationship with thought or reason. The extreme dependence of much contemporary critical discourse on an intellection that quite deliberately and programmatically goes beyond the vulgar sense of things as existing in a bipolar space spinning between emotion and intellect is nothing more that a restatement of this model.

We should not be surprised to find this is the case if we consider that the roots of the greater part of modern criticism are to be found in French schools of philosophy and I am increasingly surprised that little is done to show how specific the influence of French intellectual traditions have been on the formation of this thought. Indeed, to be fair to Lyotard, his gloomy vision of a 'slackening' world may well hold true for France in the 1970s. The same might be true of Baudrillard's French translation of America written against the virulent anti-Americanism that is such a feature of French life. Or, going back into the mists of time, Lévi-Strauss's curious observations on the names of cows and the fluidity of the word *fromage*.[15] The poststructuralist project as it set itself up in French culture is an engagement with the Enlightenment and especially the construction of rationalism which is its heritage and which formed French academic traditions in a very different manner from the way it formed those of the Anglo-American world. Now, lest I may be understood, this is not an attack on the French academy or French philosophy. What I am attempting to suggest is that the opposition against which French poststructuralism defined itself was simply not a central feature of Anglo-American academic life. The effect of this is that positions which were well founded within one tradition became uprooted in another and so, as we saw in the case of Lyotard, a whole host of assumptions which were necessary to create a coherence when the work was in a French context were simply not present. This has led, I believe, to devastating effects on the trajectory of the Anglo-American academy.

But why should this particular aspect of critical theory be adduced in particular to support my claim that it is radically speciesist? To understand this fully we might start by revisiting that discussion about animal rights that took place in the European Commission in 1992

and which was alluded to in the previous chapter. The whole notion of animal rights was treated with what *The Daily Telegraph* described as 'helpless mirth'.[16] Obviously one cannot generalise from the ignorance of unelected bureaucrats, but there is an important point to be made here. A debate in the British Parliament on this kind of topic would have its backwoods follies but, generally, as the seriousness of the current controversy over hunting with dogs goes to show, there is sufficient cross-party consciousness of the high feelings on this issue (both for and against) among the electorate that it would be politically unwise to treat it with levity.

The reason European Commissioners feel that they can do so is that, by and large, there is no lobby for animals in mainland Europe. In France this seems particularly true and I shall be exploring this issue in the final chapter. It is therefore the case that the intellectual furniture of the processes that formed poststructuralism included no allocation of a place for the non-human experience and, therefore, no imperative to consider the implications for this experience of a new model of post-modern, post-rational humanity. And that is a form of speciesism.

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To return to the question of theory in general, is it possible to find a way forward? In my own work, as the reader will see I have deliberately chosen an essentially interpretative and analytical method based on detailed reading. Theory such as it is resides in the models of reproduction and representation that are sketched out in the following chapters and on the idea that it is possible to conduct a dialogue with speciesism and anthropocentrism that tries to find an accommodation with the non-human as it appears in various cultural artefacts.

However, I want briefly to consider the relationship between the work contained in this book and the recent growth in 'ecocriticism'. It is not, of course, the case that an ecologically conscious critical practice would necessarily result either in a non-specieisist practice or even a concern for the non-human. But it is, at the same time, clear that anyone who thinks deeply about the environment and his or her responsibility towards it is likely also to be thinking about animals. It is therefore a matter of some disappointment that a recent anthology of ecocritical texts (and a very good one at that) contains not a single piece that makes the non-human its central concern.[17] We may ask whether this matters in that a concern for the environment and the action that one might take in promoting that concern through the activity of writing is likely to be simultaneously an implicit endorse-

ment of the view that animals have a place in that environment and this too needs protection.

Let us assume that such an endorsement is in place. Perhaps we might ask instead what a 'Green' approach to culture might actually mean. The field as it is beginning to take form depends, as my own work depends, on uncovering a history of Green thought and the traces of proto-environmentalist attitude to nature in a range of earlier texts. This process seems to me to find some fixity in the notion of Romantic ecology.[18] The problem for me is that although it may well be the case that one can find an environmental consciousness at work in texts that were written before the current crisis in environmental management, to open up readings of, say, Wordsworth, to a scrutiny within the context of modern environmentalism is not the same as presenting Wordsworth as an ur-environmentalist. Perhaps nobody is claiming that and I think that Jonathan Bate's reading of Basil Bunting, 'these lines are far removed from any actual Northumbrian ecology' is a welcome acknowledgement of this problem.[19]

So can we find an ecocritical position that goes beyond the idea of bringing together a number of texts which address nature and then analyses them from a perspective of explicit commitment to the environmentalist cause? This is the same problem that I identified earlier in my own review of writing about animals and the differences between the different modes of this activity. We need to write about animals, not necessarily 'for' them except in the sense of 'in their advocacy', and endeavour to break down the barrier of textuality across which we are doomed to see them. Again, Bate addresses this very problem *vis-à-vis* ecocriticism:

> Locked in the prison house of language, dwelling in the *logos* not the *oikos*, we know only the text not the land. Unless, that is, we could come to understand that every piece of land is itself a text with its own syntax and signifying potential. Or one should say, come to understand it again, *as our ancestors did*. For the idea that the earth itself is a text is a very old one. And there used to be an agreed answer about who the author is.[20]

I am not sure about the claim about our ancestors but, broadly, I think Professor Bate is absolutely right here in drawing attention to a methodological problem in ecocriticism that is just as difficult for anyone who wants to write about the non-human. There are also many people (including myself) who still think we know who the

author of the world-text is and I find it interesting that this passage assumes a secularised reader or, at the very least, one whose intellectual outlook is likely to be sceptical.

This raises a fundamental point about the nature of the argument I have been conducting about critical discourse. And it is this: how could such a discourse fit into a religious worldview? I suspect that it cannot and that my own distrust of positions with which I was once perfectly comfortable is related to this possibility. In some ways the thought/feeling dichotomy that I tentatively raised earlier for want of a better way of speaking about these things becomes possible only when the idea of faith is discounted. By faith I mean a way of perception which claims that knowledge (truth) can be attained without recourse to thought (reason) and that the nature of this knowledge may not be available for inspection by a rational process. Now, I am not arguing that faith can be secularised into a mode of critical analysis. Rather I am suggesting that the philosophical *aporiai* of contemporary criticism and its response to the Enlightenment are a function of the assumption that faith is a by-product of a religious system and not a way of seeing the world which is quite distinct and undetermined by any specified social or environmental context.

This notion is not a simple restatement of Nietzsche but it is this very problem that lies at the heart of Nietzsche's thinking. It is therefore interesting to me that Heidegger is increasingly to be found in ecocritical writings for in Heidegger we surely find the most thoroughgoing development of the Nietzschean impulse if not of Nietzsche himself. This worries me as what I find in the intoxicating Heideggerian language is a pulsing protoplasm that ultimately fails to deliver the coherence of vision and the fulsomeness of community which we so desperately need if we are to use the academy effectively as a location from which to speak either for the environment or for animals. I am not saying 'Heidegger is difficult' but rather that there are better ways forward and that time is not on our side. If Heidegger could be read as a recuperation of faith considered as a way of being, then there are certainly better places from which to derive that particular message. So perhaps we return to the question of vulgarity.

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Could we find a way of associating the ecocritical impulse with a criticism that is based on a commitment to animal rights? I'd like to offer a reading of some poems by Marvell and Lovelace to see if this might be possible.

All the evidence that we have of climate history suggests that the seventeenth century was cold. The political turmoil of the middle years of the century led to a withdrawal of many royalist sympathisers. Those who did not follow Prince Charles (Charles II) into exile withdrew to their estates. The cold weather was not only a fact of life but also a sustained metaphor for the absence of the sun in the form of a royal presence. Images of cold pervade the seventeenth-century lyric. Charles Cotton dealt with this by keeping a genial establishment:

> Then give me sack, tobacco store,
> A drunken friend, a little whore,
> Protector I will ask no more.[21]

However, his friend Richard Lovelace pursued a more philosophical line. In his 'The Grasse-hopper' Lovelace apostrophises both the grasshopper as, in the emblematic tradition, a figure of thoughtless pleasure and Charles Cotton:

> Poore verdant foole! And now green Ice! thy Joys
> Large and as lasting, as thy Peirch of Grasse,
> Bid us lay in 'gainst Winter Raine, and poize
> Their flouds, with an o're flowing glasse.
>
> Thou best of *Men* and *Friends!* We will create
> A Genuine Summer in each others breast;
> And spite of this cold Time and frozen Fate
> Thaw us a warme seate to our rest.[22]

The fierce winter has not only frozen the grasshopper, it has also foreclosed the possibilities of friendship unless by some effort summer can be conjured up. But this summer is not the sickly summer of the mid-seventeenth century but a genuine summer that is impervious to the movement of time.

This poem depends then on a metaphor that is also literal. It really was cold and so the metaphorical power of the traditional images of the pastoral landscape is amplified by being organised within an image of a real climatic condition. Lovelace records a specific response to an environmental condition and articulates a model of this condition that is, at once, both figurative and 'real'. The epistemology of the poem, considered as an exercise in a well-developed set of tropes, is entirely coterminous with its ontology considered as the position of the poet and the state of his environment.

When we turn to Marvell we find a considerable number of images of gardens and gardening. The middle of the seventeenth century was the first golden age of English gardening. All kinds of plants were beginning to be cultivated, new species were arriving from all over the newly expanded world, and a new aesthetic for landscape was under development. At the same time this activity had to be carried out against a climate that was hardly propitious for long-term success. Gardening is both a management of the environment and a gentle assault on it. We might thus see in Marvell's fascination with horticulture a double signification by which the metaphorical idea of the managed plot of nature – standing for the state – is matched by the underpinning notion that conflict (both political and environmental) is the force that drives on the gardener's enterprise. This is made plain in 'Upon Nun-Appleton House' where the flowers are explicitly seen as soldiers but it is more subtly expressed in 'The Garden'.[23]

The poem begins by bringing together the idea of military, political or artistic success with the plundering of nature:

> How vainly men themselves amaze
> To win the Palm, the Oke, or Bayes;
> And their uncessant Labours see
> Crown'd from some single Herb or Tree.
> Whose short and narrow verged Shade
> Does prudently their Toyles upbraid;
> While all the Flow'rs and Trees do close
> To weave the Garlands of repose.[24]

This sense of violence done to nature as a signifier of violence done in society (for even poets are violators in the world of seventeenth-century politics) acts as an overture to a poem which will seek to explore the sense of the garden for itself. This becomes a self-organised space that offers an unparalleled opportunity for a quite literal recreation:

> Such was that happy Garden-state
> While Man there walk'd without a Mate:[25]

This sense of the recreated world implies a sense that the world is also fallen but this is not made explicit except through the continuing description of the garden where the classical *topos* of the *locus amoenus* is consistently contextualised by the exterior roughness of the political world with all its damaging threat.

Yet the garden itself is both natural and unnatural. It is natural in that it is made of natural things, but it is unnatural as it is organised so as to reflect human concerns (it is decorated, for example, with a floral sundial). This contradiction is not resolved except by a radical internalisation of experience and a turning towards the internal nature of the mind:

> Annihilating all that's made
> To a green thought in a green Shade.[26]

The natural/artificial environment of the garden becomes then not a mere artefact but an empowering space. But that power is a curiously negating one by which the mind discovers itself only at the moment when it is entirely subsumed into a unity and the soul is transformed into a bird.

'The Garden' then offers a meditation on the paradox of environmental improvement which has to be read against the equally paradoxical manner in which the outside world mends itself through violent struggle. In 'The Nymph complaining for the death of her Faun' we see some of the same themes combined with an interesting perspective on the nature of animals.[27] Again the poem begins by plunging us into the violent world of the English Civil War:

> The wanton Troopers riding by
> Have shot my Faun and it will dye.[28]

The faun my well be an image of virginity and, if so, this is a poem about a rape. But let us read literally for the moment:

> It cannot dye so.
> Heavens King Keeps register of everything:
> And nothing may we use in vain.
> Ev'n Beasts must be with justice slain.
> Else men are made their *Deodands*.[29]

This is an astonishing reversal of expected priorities. The non-human is here brought clearly into the circle of human concern as this is judicially delineated and in transgressive violence the troopers transform themselves into animals or things. The poem then proceeds with a highly sentimental account and description of the faun which ends with a vision of its monument:

> For I would have thine Image be
> White as I can, though not as thee.[30]

The 'purest Alabaster' that the nymph will use will be insufficient to reproduce the colour of her pet.

This notion of the insufficiency of art to represent nature is also found in 'The Garden'. Here Marvell states his intention to carve the names of the trees into the trees' bark as the names of beautiful women that he finds already there are insufficient to express the beauty of the scene. So a carving of a faun will not be a true image of the animal that is now irredeemably absent. The thought of the nymph folds the poem in upon itself as it seeks to represent representations within its own function as a representation. We thus become locked into a seemingly endless regress which parallels the condition by which we cannot escape our place in the world but only manage it in one way or another. Whatever the ideal state of nature that is latent in the environment it is painfully vulnerable to sudden violent disruption from forces which are both external but also, necessarily, inhabitant of the same space.

What we find in Marvell is a surprisingly tough, and resiliently formal, account of the environment and the stress placed on that environment by political turmoil. If Lovelace solves this problem by collapsing the epistemic figuration of tradition into the ontic contingency of life under Cromwell, Marvell takes the process one step further by precluding any recognition that the two might be separated in the first place. If Lovelace's grasshopper remains a vehicle for talking about Charles Cotton, Marvell's faun is both an image of the sexual crimes that emanate from social disorder and also a thing in itself which eludes the protocols of his art and serves even to overturn the demand that that art should be positioned within a normative view of the relationships between humans.

It would be possible to take this reading a good deal further but that would not progress the aims of this book at this point. In carrying out a miniature exercise in ecocriticism I am attempting to demonstrate two things. The first is that an ecological consciousness can be found in early modern writing without any need to project that consciousness into the service of a modern Green politics. This is not to say that a second stage of this reading might not try to do that but rather that a very close historicisation of texts does not necessarily establish a ground that must then be critically reconfigured in order to read in an ecocritical manner. The second is that in finding an environmental

politics at work in Marvell we also find a consciousness of the position of both the human and the non-human within that environment. In the later years of the Civil War and under the Commonwealth the colour adopted by the most radical Republican elements was green (they wore green ribbons in their hats) and so for a seventeenth-century reader the resonance of Marvell and Lovelace's green visions would have been complex. The appropriation of green by the most disruptive elements is played off against the use of the colour as an image of the retreat into a holistically annihilating and quiescent nature. This would have surely made these poems very interesting indeed and offers us the opportunity to read them for their use of colour. In 'The Garden' green is superior to red or white, in 'The Nymph' there is no green only the insufficiency of red, white, purple and amber and so we can even find a politics and poetics of colour against which to read our own politically chromatised concerns.

In proceeding with a very literal reading of these poems I am also suggesting that we can develop ecocritical perspectives that offer a way of bringing these together with the commitment to animal rights. I want to claim that by deliberately adopting a position that starts from the climate as it manifested itself in the seventeenth century and by eschewing any temptation to see these texts as other than artefacts that exist only in so far as we can read them as inscripted on a very particularised historical moment I am adopting a critical method that does not depend on a model of the human experience that is transcendent of that history. For my reading it is only necessary to adopt the view that the creative endeavour is capable of reflecting its surroundings and then arranging them aesthetically. It does not assume a primacy of thought nor does it assume a separation of the human world from the non-human. It merely requires faith in the realities of the past and the intrusion of that past into our own lived experience whenever we read the poems.

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To conclude this chapter I would like, briefly, to relate some of what I have said to the 'critical ecological feminism' developed by Val Plumwood.[31] Plumwood comes from a very different set of positions and assumptions from those I tend to adopt but I think her opening up of academic engagement with the environment to include the idea of caring relationships with others who might be people, trees or wombats is quite admirable. So is Ariel Salleh's careful critique of Marxism and postmodernism in the service of a similar cause.[32]

Thinkers and activists like Plumwood and Salleh (and in the field of cultural studies I would add Carol Adams to this list) offer an inspiring and encouraging example to people like myself as they try to explore the difficult issues of the non-human and press against the weight of critical orthodoxy.[33] It seems to me that if there is to be a way forward here, if we are to reconnect the academy to the society it should serve, then we must pay attention to the kind of work that Plumwood and her colleagues are doing.

In ruminating on what I see as the current ills of the academy and the terrible wedges that currently fragment it and isolate it I have been deliberately polemical in my tone. I have also signally failed to conduct the argument by attempting to engage in a philosophical rigorous manner with the problems of rationalism and dualism that underlie everything I have been talking about. There are two reasons for this. The first is that I am not sure that either rationalism or dualism (and the positions that emerge from a philosophical engagement with them) are quite so monolithically present in western thought as is often suggested. The second is that this is not a book about literary theory but a book about animals and this chapter is here to play a very specific role in exploring how such a book might be written at all. Ultimately though these reasons are subsidiary to my wish to speak out and to place myself as unequivocally as possible within an intellectual tradition and to express, in the most convenient place, some views about the values which I believe need to be reasserted if the critical activity is to continue to have and be perceived to have any ethical validity or practical application.

5
The Animal as Symbol

Throughout recorded history humans have watched non-humans and lived in close proximity with them. This observation has been the root on which the cultural reproduction of animals has been grafted and without this no non-human would have become the subject or object of any aesthetic representation. The methods by which non-humans have become the material of cultural reproduction are manifold and the following chapters will explore three of them: the use of animals as symbols; anthropomorphism; and narratives of transformation. All other modes of representation are variants on these three main techniques. The three categories are by no means hermetically sealed and it may well be that readers will think that some of the examples I give do not fit into the category in which I wish to place them particularly well. This does not worry me as what I am attempting to do here is not to produce a rigorously worked out poetics or narratology of the non-human. I want instead to provide examples of the ways in which animals are depicted in western culture and to comment on the significance of this depiction for the human relationship with the non-human. In fact, I would be very pleased if what I have to say engages any reader sufficiently to make him or her wish to contest and reorganise my arguments.

The method I will be adopting in the ensuing chapters will be to provide a linked but non-sequential series of readings of a range of literary texts drawn from different periods and having varying canonical status. My aim is not to create a new canon, but rather to explore what parts of a canon might look like if the corpus of literature were to be approached from a point of view that is sympathetic to the rights of animals. The texts will be of reasonable familiarity and will not include (with one exception) the range of fairly recent popular narratives that

J. Simons, *Animal Rights and the Politics of Literary Representation*

seek to construct fictive worlds entirely from the perspective of animals. Thus there will be no mystical rabbits, warring moles, magic bears or delinquent laboratory dogs. What I will be attempting to demonstrate is the *presence* of the non-human and the effect of that presence on the act of cultural reproduction.

There is an important distinction implicit in the previous sentence and it should be made explicit. When I speak of cultural reproduction I mean the ways in which aesthetic texts and artefacts are made the vehicle for the exposition, description and analysis of human society and the human experience. I will also speak of representation. By this I mean the tropes and images through which cultural reproduction comes into being and which are the characteristic marks of the aesthetic experience. My readings are based on the proposition that the non-human experience cannot be reproduced but only represented. It is not possible for humans to reproduce the non-human as reproduction is only possible through the iteration (if in highly distorted form) of the core experience of the producer and consumer. If animals could read I might think differently but, as they cannot, I am logically impelled to argue that their experience is necessarily incapable of reproduction. In other words, no human is capable of sufficient understanding of the non-human to act as its reproducer.

This may come down to the question of language or the lack of language. The distinction I am making depends on an assent to the proposition that the most important difference between human and non-human animals is the ability to use complex language and to communicate complex abstract ideas thereby. This is not to say that non-humans do not communicate one with another (although I am sceptical of talking chimpanzees and bonobos) but that the nature of human language is qualitatively different from the cries and gestures of animals to a degree that makes the two phenomena incomparable.[1] Human experience resides in language as it is only knowable through communication. As non-humans are, in this sense, silent, we cannot know of their experience and therefore we cannot meaningfully reproduce it. We can, however, imagine non-human experience and sympathetically engage with it by comparing it with our own. This gives us the ability to represent it.

This is why the idea of presence is so important. The act of representation literally makes that which was once present (or is now absent) present again. It enables something of which we are conscious to be represented to consciousness in another form. On the other hand, to live as a human is to produce the experience of being a human; to

perform it as I argued earlier. To write, or to produce any other aesthetic object by means of a creative activity, is both an ongoing production of experience in the creative act itself and also a reproduction of the experience, real or imagined, which preceded, or was coterminous with, that act. The difference between human and non-human experience is, in this sense at least, crucially like the difference between human and non-human communication systems. The latter cannot be reproduced out of the former as the act of reproduction is only possible through the continued presence of that which was previously produced.

Thus, all the examples of the use of non-humans in literary texts are acts not of reproduction but of representation. This has an important implication. Every time we represent an animal we are, however hard we try and however much we wish it was different, engaging in an act which, to a greater or less degree, appropriates the non-human experience as an index of humanness. All representations of animals are, therefore, a facet of the speciesism which bedevils the human relationship with the non-human and undermines our ability to live in the environment which has been created for us. Obviously to write about a fox is a very different act from hunting one to death with hounds, but it is, none the less, a use of the animal for a means designed to further the aims of the human even where the intention is to alleviate the suffering of foxes. I will return to these themes in the final chapter but I think that this working through of the implied speciesism of all writing (including my own) is necessary at this point in order to create a framework of understanding which supports, or maybe undermines, the detailed reading which will follow. Having done this I will not return to this matter in every example, but I would ask the reader to bear these things in mind as he or she works through the remainder of this book.

*

Let's start with a group of poems by Robert Burns. Burns has, to a large extent, been dislodged from the canon of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century verse and is no longer seen as one of the major poets. But in the nineteenth century his reputation was immense and until the growth of the Tennyson industry he was certainly one of the most widely read British poets. One of Burns's best-known verses is that addressed 'To a Mouse, On turning her up in her Nest, with the Plough, November, 1785'. In this poem Burns laments his carelessness in destroying the little animal's home:

I'm truly sorry Man's dominion
Has broken Nature's social union,
An' justifies that ill opinion,
Which makes thee startle,
At me, thy poor, earth-born, companion,
An' *fellow-mortal*![2]

We see here the underlying and explicit radicalism of Burns's politics. It extends across the species divide so that the brotherhood of man becomes an impossible dream when set against man's ability to transform and dominate the landscape. Note that the 'union' which Burns sees as a part of nature is very specifically identified as social and, therefore, subject to specific relations which are not arbitrary. In seeing the mouse's panic Burns meditates on the commonality between himself and the mouse and brings the non-human and the human into an idealised partnership that is challenged by Burns's own humanity.

However, Burns does not see mortality as being the ground that binds creatures together across the species. The mouse is also different from the man:

But Mousie, thou art not thy-lane,
In proving *foresight* may be vain:
The best laid schemes o' *Mice* an' *Men*,
Gang aft agley,
An' leave us nought but grief an' pain,
For promis'd joy!

Still, thou art blest, compar'd wi' *me*!
The *present* only toucheth thee:
But Och! I *backward* cast my e'e,
On prospects drear!
An' *forward*, tho' I canna *see*,
I *guess* an' *fear*![3]

Pausing only to wonder how it came about that people forgot about Burns, we see here an extraordinary analysis of the human and non-human condition. The distinction which, for Burns, marks the relationship between himself and the mouse is the sense of time as that is articulated through specific experience. It is no accident that the vision of hindsight is a vision of prospects, an eighteenth-century word that

describes a broad landscape and is often used with a specifically artistic context. For Burns, then, the past consists of unaesthetic images of a landscape marred by the intervention of humans. The presence of the mouse in Burns's world becomes also a reminder of the present and the intangible significance of that present when set against an unknowable future and a dismal past. The mouse's experience is defined by what it knows and feels as it knows and feels it, whereas Burns is trapped in the historical narrative of 'prospects' and the guessing and fearing – not words which suggest that any future narrative will be under control – of the future. The mouse lives in a present of physical experience and is touched by it while Burns can only perceive and feel.

A different representation of the animal presence is also found in a later poem 'Address to the woodlark' (1795–6).[4] In this verse the poet listens to the song of the woodlark and tries to catch in it an 'art' which will enable him to win over his lover. The address to the woodlark is not to a bird but as to a fellow poet and, in this, Burns is using some very conventional tropes. However, the bird is not, as it often the case, seen as the messenger of a carefree natural world. The case is very much the opposite:

> Thou tells o' never-ending care;
> O' speechless grief, and dark despair,
> For pity's sake, sweet bird, nae mair!
> Or my poor heart is broken![5]

Here the poet attempts to interact with the bird and to understand its song, but although the song 'tells', its subject is speechless. As Burns listens to the song unfold his hopes that the bird will teach him a natural and beautiful song for his sweetheart become progressively agonised as he tries to fit a narrative to the torrent of notes. Finally, as the stanza quoted above shows, the story becomes too painful and the radical speechlessness of the song fills the listener with despair.

Now, at least two things are happening here. On the one hand, Burns is deliberately undermining a convention of eighteenth-century poetry and showing the natural world as one of grief and gloom rather than one of innocence and freedom. I am sure that this is the case and, as we shall see from others of his poems, this is a view he expresses elsewhere. On the other hand, Burns may be directly addressing, as he did in 'To a Mouse', the distinctive relationship of the human with the non-human. In this poem he tries to impose on the woodlark a human capacity for speech and to find in this narration a usable tool for his own purposes.

In other words, by attempting to appropriate the bird's song he is also attempting to locate the bird's experience within a paradigm of human understanding. He is, to put it bluntly, attempting to reproduce rather than represent what it is to be a woodlark. What happens, however, is that the poem reproduces only the experience of loss with which it started and the human listener is forced into a contemplation of his own inner self when faced with what he can only interpret as a dark and speechless world of care which is, as we saw in the case of the mouse, not defined by time, for the care is 'never-ending'.

We saw in Burns's address to the mouse how the dominion of the human ruins the proper interaction of the species and Burns elaborates on this theme in two other poems: 'On scaring some Water-Fowl in Loch-Turit, a wild scene among the Hills of Oughttertye' (1787) and 'On seeing a Wounded Hare limp by me, which a Fellow had just shot at' (1789).[6] The first poem is worth quoting in its entirety as it shows a remarkably developed model of species interaction:

> Why, ye tenants of the lake,
> For me your watry haunt forsake?
> Tell me, fellow-creatures, why
> At my presence thus you fly?
> Why disturb your social joys,
> Parent, filial, kindred ties?
> Common friend to you and me,
> Nature's gifts to all are free:
> Peaceful keep your dimpling wave,
> Busy feed or wanton lave;
> Or, beneath the sheltering rock,
> Bide the surging billow's shock.
>
> Conscious, blushing for our race,
> Soon, too soon, your fears I trace:
> Man, your proud usurping foe,
> Would be lord of all below:
> Plumes himself in Freedom's pride,
> Tyrant stern to all beside.
>
> The eagle, from the cliffy brow,
> Making you his prey below,
> In his breast no pity dwells,
> Strong Necessity compels.

But Man, to whom alone is given
A ray direct from pitying Heaven,
Glories in his heart humane –
And creatures for his pleasure slain.

In these savage, liquid plains,
Only known to wandering swains,
Where the mossy riv'let strays,
Far from human haunts and ways;
All on Nature you depend,
And life's poor season peaceful spend.

Or, if man's superior might,
Dare invade your native right,
On the lofty ether borne,
Man with all his powers you scorn;
Swiftly seek, on clanging wings,
Other lakes and other springs;
And the foe you cannot brave,
Scorn at least to be his slave.[7]

This poem is clearly addressing the same kinds of issues as those explored in 'To a Mouse', but now the actual effects of human interaction with the non-human and with the environment are spelled out in much more detail. Burns triumphantly addresses the conundrum, which is often put to proponents of animal rights, 'What about animals that kill each other? Surely they don't respect animal rights.' There is a difference he says between the necessity which drives an eagle and the gratuitous cruelty which is lodged in our, punningly, 'humane heart'.

For Burns, there is no doubt that animals have a social organisation which should be, but is not, compatible with that of man. Or rather the social organisation of humans and non-humans should be capable of continuity within the framework offered by the free bounty of nature. However, it is man who wishes to dominate creatures who are in other respects his equal and, while proud of his espousal of freedom for his own kind, he is tyrannical to all others. Ironically, Burns shows how this pride is, in fact, made possible by cruelty and exploitation of animals as in order to demonstrate it man 'plumes himself' with the very feathers which properly belong to his fellow creatures. In this

poem, Burns's representation of the non-human experience becomes a vehicle for his attack on the dark side of his own nature. It is his interpretation of the birds' flight that leads him to a consciousness of what it is to be human and he does not like what he sees.

The address to the hare picks up similar themes but here the human experience is ironically presented:

> Inhuman man! Curse on thy barb'rous art,
> And blasted be thy murder-aiming eye;
> May never pity soothe thee with a sigh,
> Nor ever pleasure glad thy cruel heart![8]

The hunter is, at one level, being very precisely human. His attack on the hare is a reinforcement of the superiority of man over the animals and a restatement of his right to treat the environment as he wishes. However, this act of cruelty deprives him of his humanity in Burns's eyes. The comforts that the hunter may now lose are all human qualities (pity, pleasure) and he can look for nothing from nature while the dying hare can still find some solace in the natural world:

> Go live, poor wanderer of the wood and field,
> The bitter little that of life remains:
> No more the thickening brakes and verdant plains
> To thee shall home, or food, or pastime yield.
>
> Seek, mangled wretch, some place of wonted rest,
> No more of rest, but now thy dying bed!
> The sheltering rushes whistling o'er thy head,
> The cold earth with thy bloody bosom prest.[9]

The hare is at one with nature and nature feeds, comforts and entertains him.[10] The non-human experience is, once again, represented within a comprehensive account of the possible relationships of man with animal, man with nature and animal with nature. The hare may die, but he dies within a world which is made for him and not by him. This, I think, is crucial for an understanding of Burns's attitude. His radical politics led him to a questioning of the ways in which most humans (i.e. the poor) were forced to live within a world that was the construction of privilege and wealth. This state of alienation worked not only to subdue them in the face of their 'betters' but also to strip from them that humanity which would be defined by pity, sympathy

and respect for nature. The inhuman man who shoots the hare is thus not only the producer of a world in which it is impossible to be a hare but also of a world in which it is impossible to be a man. Burns is in no doubt though that it is possible to find a different relationship with the non-human:

> Oft as by winding Nith I, musing, wait,
> The sober eve, or hail the chearful dawn,
> I'll miss thee sporting o'er the dewy lawn,
> And curse the ruffian's aim, and mourn thy hapless fate.[11]

It is noteworthy that the encounters with nature and the non-human which are dramatised in these poems take place within the solitary experience of nature. This is significant as it shows how Burns was unable to represent the non-human within the context of deeply or complexly socialised human interactions. In some ways, Burns's reproduction of his own experience is also a straining against it. By exploding himself out of the mesh of human relationships he becomes a witness to specific experiences, which he then tries to represent through an extremely weakened model of what it is to be human. For a solitary figure, by his or her very nature, cannot talk to anyone.

One last poem, 'Song, composed in August', will provide a comprehensive view of the representation of the non-human in Burns. Again, I will quote it in full:

> Now westlin winds and slaught'ring guns
> Bring Autumn's pleasant weather;
> The moorcock springs, on whirring wings,
> Among the blooming heather:
> Now waving grain, wide o'er the plain,
> Delights the weary farmer;
> The moon shines bright as I rove at night,
> To muse upon my Charmer.
>
> The Pairtrick loves the fruitfu' fells;
> The Plover lo'es the mountians;
> The Woodcock haunt the lanely dells;
> The soaring Hern the fountains,
> Thro' lofty groves, the Cushat roves,
> The path o' man to shun it;
> The hazel bush o'erhangs the Thrush,

The spreading thorn the Linnet.

Thus ev'ry kind their pleasure find,
The savage and the tender,
Some social join, and leagues combine,
Some solitary wander:
Avaunt, away! The cruel sway,
Tyrannic man's dominion:
The Sportman's joy, the murd'ring cry,
The flutt'ring gory pinion!

But Peggy dear, the ev'ning's clear,
Thick flies the skimming Swallow;
The sky is blue, the fields in view,
All fading-green and yellow:
Come let us stray our gladsome way,
And view the charms of Nature;
The rustling corn, the fruited thorn.
And ilka happy creature.

We'll gently walk, and sweetly talk,
While the silent moon shines clearly;
I'll clasp thy waist, and fondly press,
Swear how I lo'e thee dearly:
Not vernal show'rs to budding flow'rs,
Not Autumn to the Farmer,
So dear can be, as thou to me,
My fair, my lovely Charmer.[12]

In this song Burns brings together the conventional poetic devices of rustic seduction and a more savage, satirical vision, which shows how these devices have their roots in the bloody political realities of property relationships which are policed by the various game laws. In juxtaposing these two modes of writing, Burns effects a magnificent subversion of the conventions of eighteenth-century nature poetry as these had developed in the space, both temporal and ideological, between Alexander Pope's *Windsor Forest* (1713) and *Epistle to Burlington* (1731) and James Thomson's *The Seasons* (1730). And, of course, in Thomson one can begin to trace very clearly the outrage against the callous slaughter of animals that is clearly present in Burns and his near-contemporary Cowper.[13]

However, Burns's poem is far more than a commentary on the insufficient relationship between polite aesthetics and sensuous experience, or a wedge driven between the intensional and extensional dimensions of an anticipated poetic world. It is also a vision. In this poem Burns challenges the conventional eighteenth-century view that animals in nature are only to be represented in order to show the increasing dominance of man as a positive force in the shaping of the environment. In this poem he develops the position set out in the poems analysed above that animals have an equal share in the world. The reader is first required to see the landscape much as s/he does in much of Pope or Thomson: squinting down the barrel of a fowling piece. But the poem then slowly shifts its focus and imagines the life of the various birds who are living away from the dangerous sight (pun intended) of humans. It uncovers a scene full of hidden energy in which the landscape enters into a transitive relationship with the animals much as it does with the dying hare discussed above. Burns uses a shift in focus from the human to the non-human as a way of transforming the grammar and vocabulary of the eighteenth-century poem. He is refusing the banal prerequisites of an aesthetic devoted to the articulation of the relationship between man and nature which is expressible only through the complete reification of the non-human and creates in its place the representation of a landscape which has become democratised so that both humans and non-humans may find a distinctive place in it.

The enabling imperatives of the third stanza give to all species the right to pleasure, and this liberational vision releases the conventional description of nature into the service of a more genial account of the place that humans might have within it. The political radicalism that impels Burns's assault on the bucolic world leads him away from a merely satirical smirk at a smug little genre; it gives him an insight which is both revolutionary and revelationary. His poem proposes a great 'what if?' What if animals are sentient? The poem asserts that they certainly are and that this implies the need for a different relationship with them. It also asserts that this revaluation will lead to a new intensity in the relationships between humans. The delicacy of the final stanza escapes cloying sweetness as it has been carved out of a transcendent aesthetic and the political engagement with the 'slaught'ring guns' of Autumn and is accurately placed on the far side of a highly argumentative poem which has slyly emerged from an ostensibly decorative piece of light verse.

The final vision has the lovers walking 'gently' and contrasts with the violence of the poem's beginning; and in this gentleness and the sweetness of their 'talk' they reclaim their humanity against the 'Gentle' Game Laws which blight the countryside. This poem brings together all the themes discussed above and shows Burns as a truly extraordinary thinker where animals were concerned. In representing the non-human within a framework of a specific radical politics he also engages with the reproduction of the human. However this reproduction is complex and seems to me to have three distinct aspects. First, Burns is reproducing a specific experience of political struggle under conditions of injustice. Second, he is showing how the human experience can be reproduced by being remade in a redefinition of its relationship to the rest of creation. Third, he is reproducing the innerness of his own experience and this alone marks him out as a thinker about animals who is on a par with people like Henry Salt and Humphrey Primatt.

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Burns's use of the non-human as a symbolic presence and a referent for the complex of political and aesthetic ideas which circulates within his poetry may be contrasted with a sonnet by Sir Philip Sidney. The western Renaissance is characterised, so far as animals are concerned, by a strong distinction between the human and the non-human which is based on the premise that the human was blessed with a very specific and God-given grace and that this accounts for the uniqueness of humanity in the cosmic scheme. We can, in fact, see in this passage from Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde*, how the role of the animal was defined within such a scheme:

> As proude Bayard gynneth for the skippe
> Out of the weye, so pryketh hym his corn,
> Til he a lasshe have of the longe whippe;
> Than thynketh he, 'Though I praunce al byforn
> First in the trays, ful fat and newe shorn,
> Yet am I but an hors, and horses lawe
> I moot endure and with my feres drawe'[14]

Here a horse's interior monologue is invoked to show how the natural order is to operate. It is notable, however, that the horse himself does not necessarily assent to the natural order; or, rather, that the horse's nature is not entirely controlled by this order. He has his own agenda. The natural order is maintained by the management of man in the

person of the carter who applies the whip. So 'horses lawe' is not a law of horses but a law for horses, which is imposed by the intervention of the superior being, man, and is enforced by violence.

The interaction between human and non-human in this stanza is asymmetrical in that the horse, unlike the man, does not have freedom to operate outside of a law imposed by another species. Man also does not have that freedom as he has to operate within a law imposed by God. But an important part of that law is the responsibility and the duty to manage animals. By the 1570s the possibility of a greater symmetry in the relationship between humans and non-humans had been envisaged and partially articulated by Michel de Montaigne, whose influential *Essais* were translated into English by John Florio in 1603. Montaigne's views on animals were advanced, though not unique, for his time and were especially concerned with the notion that there was not an obvious reason for assuming that humans have a necessary and natural supremacy over non-humans. As he says in his 'An Apologie of Raymond Sebond':

> It is through the vanity of the same imagination, that he dare equall himselfe to God, that he ascribeth divine conditions unto himselfe, that he selecteth and separateth himselfe from out the ranke of other creatures; to which his fellow-brethren and compeers, he cuts out and shareth their parts, and allotteth them what portions of meanes or forces he thinkes good. How knoweth he by the vertue of his understanding the inward and secret motions of beasts? By what comparison from them to us doth he conclude the brutishnesse, he ascribeth unto them? When I am playing with my Cat, who knowes whether she have more sport in dallying with me, than I have in gaming with her? We entertaine one another with mutuall apish trickes. If I have my houre to begin or to refuse, so hath she hers.[15]

The thinking in this passage leads to a dazzling speculation:

> For, we understand them no more than they us. By the same reason they as well may esteeme us beasts, as we them.[16]

Montaigne's subsequent argument suggests that the analogies between humans and non-humans do give us some means of understanding what it is like to be an animal and that that means, necessarily incomplete though it is, is sufficient to undermine all assumptions about the natural and unproblematic superiority of mankind. More subversively,

it also gives us room to doubt whether it is possible to maintain a firm distinction between the human and the non-human as having radically difference modes of experience.

This line of thought is also present in the essay 'Of Crueltie'. Here Montaigne speculates on the contractual relationships which bind man and the natural world together:

> But, when amongst the most moderate opinions, I meet with some discourses that goe about and labour to shew the neere resemblance betweene us and beasts, and what share they have in our greatest Privileges, and with how much likelyhood they are compared unto us, truly I abate much of our presumption, and am easily removed from that imaginary soveraigntie that some give and ascribe unto us above all creatures. If all that were to be contradicted, yet there is a kinde of respect, and a generall duty of humanity, which tieth us not only unto brute beasts that have life and sense, but even unto trees and plants. *Unto men we owe justice, and to all other creatures that are capable of it, grace and benignity.* There is a kinde of enter-changeable commerce and mutuall bond betweene them and us. I am not ashamed nor afraid to declare the tendernesse of my childish Nature, which is such, that I cannot well reject my Dog, if he chance (although out of season) to fawne upon me, or beg of me to play with him.[17]

This extraordinary passage covers a good deal of ground. Readers who cast their mind back to the earlier chapters of this book, where a range of animal rights theories were described and discussed, will surely be struck by the precision with which Montaigne's thinking matches much of what has subsequently come to represent the mainstream of ideas concerning the relationship between duty and right as this underlies the human relationship with non-humans. Indeed, Montaigne even prefigures the argument from human duty that operates if the case for animal rights is not accepted. The economic metaphor ('owe', 'commerce', 'bond') places the nature of the human duty towards the animals squarely in the realm of the contractual and it is clear that this must be a one-sided contract where mutuality is to be found in the operation rather than in the drafting. How else could trees and plants be included? Lastly, Montaigne's point that his love for animals is 'childish' is one that will recur throughout the present work.

In 1581 or 1582, after Montaigne had written his original essays, but before they had been translated, Sir Philip Sidney wrote the following

sonnet as part of the sequence, *Astrophel and Stella*, a virtuoso exercise in the Petrarchan style:

> I on my horse, and Love on me, doth try
> Our horsemanships, while by strange work I prove
> A horseman to my horse, a horse to Love,
> And now man's wrongs in me, poor beast, descry.
> The reins wherewith my rider doth me tie,
> Are humbled thoughts, which bit of reverence move.
> Curb'd in with ear, but with gilt boss above,
> Of hope, which makes it seem fair to the eye;
> The wand is will: thou, fancy, saddle art,
> Girt fast by memory, and while I spur
> My horse, he spurs with sharp desire my heart;
> He sits me fast, however I do stir;
> And now hath made me to his hand so right
> That in the manage myself takes delight.[18]

This poem represents the conventional sixteenth-century view of the relationship between man and animals. As such it represents a different stage of thinking from that of Montaigne. But the passages quoted above from Montaigne do help to provide a valuable context to this sonnet. First, they represent, by opposition, a more fully worked out account of the conventional view than that available to Sidney in a brief lyric poem. Second, they demonstrate the complexities of the intellectual environment within which Sidney operated.

To ride a horse is for a man like Sidney not only a gentlemanly accomplishment necessary for the public display of status, but also a richly symbolic act which reproduces the divine management of creation and reinforces the natural order by which the rational should be seen as superior to the irrational. In other words, the sonnet at first reading would appear to make the distinction between non-human and human sharp and clearly based on the ability of human attributes to dominate those of animals. This is clear in the way that Sidney's description of the way in which he is ridden by love operates by means of the identification of human senses and values (thoughts, hope, will, desire, fancy, memory) which are then transformed into the accroutrements of equestrianism. The implication is that, in the field of the literal, it is these human senses that enable the man to ride the horse and not the other way round.

The poem thus appears at first unproblematic and capable of ready categorisation with all manner of other texts which make symbolic and

objectifying use of the non-human. However when we consider the aspect of Sidney as being himself a horse being ridden by a god, the poem becomes more complex. A contradiction is enacted: within a conventional Christian cosmology the rider (Sidney) sits in God-like state on his mount but, in the pagan world of mythology, Sidney himself is transformed and becomes a god-ridden horse. The sonnet's theology is unexceptional as it thrives on the literary convention by which the pagan personification of desire can happily coexist with Christian virtue in the same text.[19] However, when we look at the sonnet as a document in the textualisation of speciesism the play of different cosmic systems becomes much more interesting. In the poem's 'Christian world' the rider is impeccably and unquestionably human. He rules brute creation in the manner acknowledged and recommended by Protestant, Roman Catholic and neo-Platonic thinkers alike. The position of the human in this world is quite unambiguous. In the poem's 'pagan world' the possibility that the human has an irrational side is allowed more liberty (although under the guidance of a god) and is explicitly introduced into the poem. The relationship between the two poetic cosmologies allows Sidney to introduce a duality into the poem and to explore the ambiguities that arise out of the possibility that man does have an animal nature.

In fact, this ambiguity was to be well expressed by Francis Bacon in his essay 'Of Nature in Men', which was first published in 1597. The title of this essay is itself worth pondering as Bacon is enabling us to draw a sharp and useful distinction between the modern idea of human nature, that is the make-up and behaviour of human beings, and the operation of nature as a force which affects man as well as all other beings. A perception of this distinction, which is perhaps rather unfamiliar to the contemporary mind, gives us a key to understanding how it is that the shift in focus in Sidney's sonnet opens up such a complex set of ideas. For Bacon, man is God-like in his reason but brutish in his passions and has the perpetual task of managing that nature which has embedded itself within him much as Chaucer's carter has constantly to manage his draft horse if order is to be maintained. As Bacon says:

> Nature is often hidden, sometimes overcome, seldom extinguished.[20]

This means that a human being is a composite creation: natural in that he or she is composed of desires and instincts of various kinds, rational

(that is the best word I can think of for the opposite concept in this context) in that she or he is constantly impelled to overcome nature in the realisation of full humanity. This is an organic system in which the human himself or herself can intervene:

> A man's nature runs either to herbs or to weeds; therefore, let him seasonably water the one and destroy the other.[21]

Notice that in this final sentence Bacon has actually shifted his ground from speaking generally about nature in man to specifically about a man's nature. This is an important shift (which has, as we shall see, implications for our reading of Sidney) as it still refuses the generalisation of human nature but, instead, places the responsibility for the management of nature squarely at the foot of each individual. In other words, human nature can be understood only as the process by which nature is managed humanely and as the sum total of the different strategies which individuals adopt to do this and he varying degrees of success that they enjoy. Thus the distinction between the human and the non-human makes itself apparent not in the rational or managerial faculty in itself, but in the ability of the human to use this faculty by the external manipulation of the composite system of which she or he is always an integral part.

We saw that Chaucer's horse was capable of recognising how he was powerless to prevent the management of nature so as to enforce his position within it, but Bacon argues that man is not thus powerless. In this respect he follows the neo-Platonist Ficino whose distinction between the human and the non-human was based on the idea that animals are bounded by the laws and limitation of a nature defined by instinct while men have an infinite faculty for imaginative creation. Another of the great neo-Platonists, Pico della Mirandola, argued something similar:

> For the bark does not define the tree, but its senseless and insentient nature; nor does the hide define the pack-horse, but rather its brutish and sensitive soul; neither does the circular frame define the heavens but rather their rational plan; nor is it separation from the body but spiritual intelligence that makes an angel. For if you see someone given over to his belly and grovelling on the ground, it is a senseless tree and not a man that you see; if you see someone blinded by the illusions of fantasy, as of Calypso, and aroused by its specious allurements, delivered over to his senses, it is beast and not

> a man you see. If you see a philosopher distinguishing the qualities of things with right reason, you will revere him as a heavenly, not an earthly being.[22]

In both these cases a distinction is made not only between man and animals but also between the differing kinds of man. Both Ficino and Pico are arguing, as did Bacon, that although human beings have a reason and intelligence which enables them to transcend instinctual nature, they do not necessarily have the faculty to use it. The intelligence is innate but the faculty has to be learned and practised if full humanness is to be realised. In Pico's world the right application of this faculty can even transcend humanness.

All this has a great deal of importance for our discussion of Sidney and our understanding of his poem. This account of some views that would have been, in various ways, familiar to Sidney, adds some complexity to the analysis of his sonnet. Nevertheless, it is still relatively easy to fit it into the history of the debate on the relationship between humans and non-humans as it was characterised in both the philosophy and art of the sixteenth century and, thus, to place it into a pre-existing symbolic matrix. Easy, that is, if we miss or ignore the importance of Bacon's distinction between man's nature and nature in man. When we take this into account the poem becomes more than a conventional account of the superiority of man over animals as this expresses itself in the art of riding. It becomes also an account of the very human struggle between intelligence and nature and, specifically, an individualised articulation of the internal tensions that arise when intelligence is threatened by the subversive power of desire.

Sidney plays with the metaphorical value of the non-human as well as its literal reality and shuttles between the suggestion that he is a metaphor for his horse and the suggestion that his horse is a metaphor for him. A new thought seems to enter the poem at line 4 and the novelty of this thought perhaps accounts for the semantic difficulties at this point. The verb 'descry' is far separated from its subject, the pronoun 'I', in line 2. This has the effect of weakening the subjective force of the action portrayed and this is a double attenuation working both through the structure of the sentence and the parenthetic apostrophisation of the subject in the phrase 'poor beast'. This draws attention away from the 'I' as human subject which has, in the course of the sentence, replaced itself by the non-human subject, 'horse'. 'I' thus has to govern the subjectivity of both horseman and horse, but if a horse is irrational it cannot strictly be given the human attributes which would

make it capable of the introspective perception implied by the word 'descry'. A horse might be sensible of 'man's wrongs' in that it could feel the whip or the spurs, but it could not 'descry' them. The difficulty of separating human and non-human nature when the passions are under discussion thus disrupts the fundamental syntactic proprieties of the poem as animals are not capable of speech.

In this sonnet, Sidney is wrestling not only with the difference between himself and his horse but also with the difference between himself as man and himself as animal. The neat contrast between pagan and Christian cosmologies enables him to do this while remaining within the boundaries of coherence as he is able to express his internal duality by transferring his intelligence into the persona of a god. The god then manages him though the manipulation and organisation of his instincts. What is interesting about this sonnet in the present context is that it represents one of the earliest moments at which the non-human can be a subject quite distinct from the human and can be described without recourse to the symbolic and objectifying matrices of speciesism is articulated and explored. This exploration is made possible by the complex nature of the distinction between human and non-human on which the sonnet turns. As there is a frank acknowledgement that humans have a dual nature it is possible to have some form of self-consciousness, if only based on the contemplation of experiential perception. This is one reason why memory acts as a governor of the fancy and art that brings the non-human to an expressible level.

This is not, however, to say that, in this model, the non-human is the same as the animal. This is another important distinction that must not be lost sight of in thinking about a Renaissance writer such as Sidney. In writing about his 'horseness' he is not writing about his horse which, in the poem, remains the bearer of both the rider/writer and the metaphors he generates. In fact, it is the very act of writing that enables the non-human to be transcended. In reaching into his non-human nature Sidney is, paradoxically, demonstrating how far distanced from it he really is. This may be another reason for the syntactic attenuation analysed above, but the main point is that the ability to introspect and analyse the composite nature of the human experience is, in itself, evidence of the capacity to move from nature in man to human nature. The mastery which Sidney displays over his horse is thus not merely a symbol of his domination of the animal creation it is also a symbol of his domination over his own self and the subordination of the non-human nature which structures at least part

of his experience. Thus, the hierarchy of being on which the poem is predicated is not a simple duality, but one that opposes a dualised inwardness (human and non-human) to a single outwardness (non-human). Chaucer playfully speculated on the potential duality within the animal but Sidney, with carefully contrived complexity, demonstrates how articulation of the non-human experience is possible without any direct intervention into the animal consciousness. As we shall see in subsequent chapters, this is a quite different strategy from that adopted by authors who depend on anthropomorphism or tales of transformation to do a similar thing.

*

In *Paradise Lost* (1660), John Milton attempted 'to justify the ways of God to Man' and in so doing he had some things to say about animals too.[23] Before going on to read some passages from this poem it is worth dwelling briefly on the parts of the Book of Genesis from which the main events of Milton's epic are derived. Although *Paradise Lost* runs to twelve books, readers who are familiar with the Old Testament will remember that the description of the Creation and Fall takes up very little space indeed.[24] This is significant not only as an index of the extraordinary power of Milton's imagination, but also as a reminder to us that we may not always be as familiar with the founding narratives of western culture as we might like to think. For example, although God gives Adam dominion over the animal creation and the opportunity to name each creature He does not give him permission to eat them and, in fact, such permission is not granted to mankind until after the coming back to dry land of Noah's Ark. It is interesting that the Judaeo-Christian tradition sees man as a naturally (i.e. created) vegetarian being and this has obvious consequences for our view of animals in history.[25]

In *Paradise Lost*, the distinction between men and animals is defined as one which is based on work and a particular relationship with God:

> God hath set
> Labour and rest, as day and night to men
> Successive …
> … other creatures all day long
> Rove idle unemployed, and less need rest;
> Man hath his daily work of body or mind
> Appointed, which declares his dignity,
> And the regard of heaven on all his ways;

> While other animals unactive range,
> And of their doings God takes no account.[26]

At this point in the poem Adam is explaining to Eve the need for sleep and it is noteworthy that he does not make a distinction between the human and the non-human which is based on an awareness of the difference between animal and man. For Adam, man is one of the animals, but he is an animal which has a special place in Creation because of the attention of God. In Book VII, Raphael relates to Adam the story of the Creation and concludes with a magnificent description of the making of the animals. This account ends with the making of Adam himself and here Raphael adds an extra dimension to the definition of the human:

> a creature who not prone
> And brute as other creatures, but endued
> With sanctity of reason, might erect
> His stature, and upright with front serene
> Govern the rest, self-knowing, and from thence
> Magnanimous to correspond with heaven,
> But grateful to acknowledge whence his good
> Descends[27]

This distinction is rather different from the one made earlier by Adam in that it depends on physical characteristics and above all on reason and self-consciousness. As such it is not unlike many modern distinctions and is used to justify the dominion which Adam is given over the animals.

In Book VIII Adam tells Raphael what he remembers about his creation and, in particular, about the conversation he had with God concerning his special nature and the creation of Eve as his partner. Adam points out to God that he cannot reproduce himself and although he is not exactly alone as there are plenty of other animals, he has no creature with which to 'converse'. God's answer to this is interesting as it reinforces Raphael's account of what makes a human:

> Thus far to try thee, Adam, I was pleased,
> And find thee knowing not of beasts alone,
> Which thou has rightly named, but of thy self,
> Expressing well the spirit within thee free,
> My image not imparted to the brute,

> Whose fellowship therefore unmeet for thee
> Good reason was thou freely shouldst dislike,
> And so be minded still;[28]

Once again the distinction between man and animal is made on the basis of self-consciousness and physical characteristic. This passage expresses a memory of an event which precedes the conversation between Adam and Eve which was partially quoted above. Adam has therefore not reproduced precisely the account given him by both God and Raphael. In his account self-consciousness has been replaced by work. In addition Adam tells Eve that God has no interest in the other animals. In giving Eve this information it appears that Adam makes two mistakes: first, he misunderstands the importance of self-consciousness in the human make-up; second, he ignores the interest that God takes in animals through human stewardship. Eve is, therefore, given a crucially misleading account of the difference between herself and other animals.

In Book VIII Raphael has also warned Adam about the dangers of sex:

> But if the sense of touch whereby mankind
> Is propagated seem such dear delight
> Beyond all other, think the same vouchsafed
> To cattle and each beast; which would not be
> To them made common and divulged, if aught
> Therein enjoyed were worthy to subdue
> The soul of man, or passion in him move.
> What higher in her society thou find'st
> Attractive, human, rational, love still;[29]

Again, a common ground between man and animals is admitted, but this common ground, based as it is in physical sensation – for Milton animals were not machines – is far inferior to the higher senses of reason and the 'human' which is tantalisingly undefined though plainly separated in some way from the purely rational. When Adam gives the half-accurate information to Eve it is in an explicitly post-coital moment when the rational dimension is, according to Raphael, likely to be at its weakest. Interestingly enough, Adam and Eve have sex again just after this conversation and this event gives rise to Milton's apostrophisation of married love:

> By thee, adulterous lust was driven from men
> Among the bestial herds to range, by thee,
> Founded in reason, loyal, just and pure,
> Relations dear, and all the charities
> Of father, son, and brother first were known.[30]

Once again pure sex is seen as an essential characteristic of the non-human while sex within marriage is specifically human because of its foundation in reason and individualised relationships. So in the meta-narrative of the poem we see another definition struggling to the fore: men are different from animals because they enter into personal relationships. This view is not taken up by God, Adam or Raphael at any other time but, as we shall see, it is crucial to our understanding of the importance of the debate on the non-human in the poem. It is also worth adding that Milton points out that Adam and Eve's marriage is:

> sole propriety
> In Paradise of all things common else.[31]

In other words, the only property relationship in the garden of Eden is that implied by the marital bond of Adam with Eve. This also contributes to the subtly developed debate on the differences between humans and non-humans that Milton is conducting. It appears that, for him, the human body was an alienable property whereas the animal (or indeed vegetable) body could be neither possessed nor alienated except in as much as it is complete and perfect in itself and of itself.

When Eve leaves Adam to go to work on her own and falls prey to the guile of the serpent she is not in a position fully to understand the difference between herself and the animal form and, therefore, unable to distinguish the flaws in his argument. Indeed in her opening address to the snake Eve shows a disturbing, although attractive, tendency to devalue the distinction between humans and non-humans:

> What may this mean? Language of man pronounced
> By tongue of brute, and human sense expressed?
> The first at least of these I thought denied
> To beasts, whom God, on their creation-day
> Created mute to all articulate sound;
> The latter I demur, for in their looks
> Much reason, and in their actions oft appears.[32]

Eve's wonder at the serpent's acquisition of speech is equalled by her amazement that he is:

> To me so friendly grown above the rest
> Of brutal kind[33]

This is important as the ability to form personal relationships as a specific defining characteristic of humanity is not mentioned in the poem except by the narratorial voice of the poet which, by definition, is available to the reader but not to characters in the text. Eve is thus doubly vulnerable. On the one hand, her insufficient education on the differences between humans and non-humans causes her to be too innocent in her encounter with the serpent. On the other hand, she has never been informed that animals cannot have friendly relationships of the kind she is now experiencing.

The serpent immediately picks up on her uncertainty and weighs in with its own account of what it is to be an animal:

> I was at first like other beasts that graze
> The trodden herb, of abject thoughts and low,
> As was my food, nor aught but food discerned
> Or sex, and apprehended nothing high.[34]

This is all very sound doctrine as the serpent describes a life bounded entirely by physical sensation and without self-consciousness. The eating of the forbidden fruit offers the snake (he claims) both language and the ability to speculate. Thus it turns him into a 'brute human'.[35] The difficulty with this claim is that if it is true that animals have no self-consciousness then the knowledge which comes with the eating of the fruit could only allow a self-consciousness of the nature of the snake's being from that moment onward and not a retrospective appreciation of what the life of an animal is like. Because Eve has never been told that animals do not have self-consciousness, only that they do not work, she is unable to see the flaw in Satan's argument and is, therefore, vulnerable to fall.

The consequences of the Fall are interesting as Eve's immediate thoughts after eating the fruit are of Adam and Adam's are of Eve. In the immediate aftermath of the completion of the Fall Adam and Eve have sexual intercourse which is described as being 'of their mutual guilt the seal'.[36] The strictures about sex with which Raphael admonished Adam in Book VII are now coming to light and it is clear that

one consequence of the Fall is to be the loss of that part of reason which moderates the sexual drive and thus differentiates man from animal. The Fall is thus imaged not only as a falling away from God, but also as a falling away from a pure humanity. This is stressed later when Michael is showing Adam the vision of mankind's future. This is Adam's response to the Tower of Babel:

> He gave us only over beast, fish, fowl
> Dominion absolute; that right we hold
> By his donation; but man over men
> He made not lord; such title to himself
> Reserving, human left from human free.[37]

Michael answers:

> Justly thou abhorr'st
> That son, who on the quiet state of men
> Such trouble brought, affecting to subdue
> Rational liberty; yet know withal,
> Since thy original lapse, true liberty
> Is lost, which always within right reason dwells
> Twinned, and from her hath no dividual being:
> Reason in man obscured or not obeyed,
> Immediately inordinate desires
> And upstart passions catch the government
> Form reason, and to servitude reduce
> Man till then free.[38]

This introduces another ground for distinction between men and animals. Animals are not free while men are answerable only to God Himself. Interestingly enough, the grounds of this freedom are expressed biblically in *Paradise Lost* XII, 111 when Milton alludes to Deuteronomy in referring to the Jews as a 'peculiar people'. The word peculiar has an etymological ground in a complex of words meaning 'flocks of sheep' so in identifying the distinction between humans and non-humans the poem (and its scriptural sources) also remind us of the less than clear distinctions between men and animals. Indeed, the service for the making of catechumens in the Orthodox Church reminds the faithful that, through baptism (i.e. by means of a sacrament designed to reverse the effects of the fall) they become 'rational sheep in God's flock'.[39]

It would thus appear that the major English poem of the seventeenth century turns on, in one dimension at least, a subtle debate about the relationship between humans and non-humans. In falling, Adam and Eve lose their humanity but they do not become animals as they are that already. The loss of humanity is a much more complex thing as it involves a diminution of the reason and a consequent reduction of the ability to control the sexual drives. In addition there is a loss of freedom in as much as humans can now become the prey of non-humans as well as the victims of their own kind. This dehumanisation is stressed in God's rebuke to Adam after the Fall:

> and thou shalt eat the herb of the field,
> In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread[40]

This reminds us of the diet with which the serpent was content before he claimed to have tasted the forbidden fruit. Similarly the life of toil with which God punishes Adam is an echo of Adam's own opinion, as expressed to Eve, that the difference between men and animals is that men work. Thus mankind is dehumanised both through diet and through a new regime. However, as we shall see in the vision of the future and the end of the world, there is a redemptive capacity in labour (both in the sense of work and in the newly painful and troublesome act of childbirth). So what is initially a curse and punishment also offers mankind the chance to retrieve its human state.

*

This somewhat oblique reading of *Paradise Lost* shows how texts begin to take on new significance when the question of the relationship between humans and non-humans and the nature of the representation of the animal is placed at the centre of critical inquiry. A very nearly contemporary text is Izaak Walton's *The Compleat Angler* (1653). Jonquil Bevan has well shown how this text provides a guide to the lifestyle of the Royalist sympathiser during the Protectorate and how it offers a model for particular kinds of convivial friendship.[41] It is also a book about fishing and how to catch, kill and eat fish. As such it offers itself very readily to the kind of reading in which I am engaged not least because while from the human point of view its warm world of ale, singing and jolly outings into the country is extraordinarily attractive, from the non-human perspective it describes Armageddon.

This is a very simple insight but it is an important one as it opens up another facet of the question of representation. In *The Compleat Angler,* fish are represented in three ways:

- as part of a discourse which seeks to establish a harmony between man and nature which is articulated through the act of fishing;
- as part of a utilitarian discourse which describes the features of particular species of fish and the best ways of catching and eating them;
- as a set of pictures so that different types of fish may be readily identified.

The layering of these different modes of representation establishes the fish as a presence which is both external to the human, as potential prey or food, and also internal, as part of a dialectical relationship which structures an idealised image of country life. The significance of this is that what we see in *The Compleat Angler* is an ambivalence. Are fish simply animals to be killed or are they, in some sense, partners of the angler? The angler does have clear rules for the taking of fish and hates the fish's natural predators although, curiously, he is loath to kill them:

> I am not of a cruel nature, I love to kill nothing but fish.[42]

The claim of the work is that fishing is a recreation which develops a particular kind of human being who is characterised by his simplicity and virtue.

When the hunter and the fowler opine that fishing is a dull business the angler adopts an interesting defence: he quotes Montaigne on cats (see above). Why does he do this? What he appears to be arguing is that, just as Montaigne could not know whether he was playing with his cat or his cat with him, so people who are not fisherman, or who have not experienced the pleasures of fishing, have simply failed to understand the language of angling and therefore cannot understand angling itself. This is a strange argument not least because it depends on the equation of the non-angler with an animal. Is the text implying, therefore, that the act of fishing is, in some sense, an act by which we become fully human? I believe that, within certain limits, this is indeed what Walton is arguing. Specifically, the text seeks to find in the authority of both classical antiquity and the Bible justification for fishing and, on two occasions, explicitly links the simplicity with which anglers are blessed with that which graced the primitive Christian Church. Thus, fishing does complete humanity in that it

brings the individual closer to a harmonious relationship with God. The book ends with a valedictory blessing which is redolent of a church service:

> So when I would beget *content*, and increase confidence in the *Power*, and *Wisdom*, and *Providence* of Almighty God, I will walk the *Meadows* by some gliding stream, and there contemplate the *Lillies* that take no care, and those very many other various little living *creatures*, that are not only created but fed (man knows not how) by the goodness of the God of *Nature*, and therefore trust in him. This is my purpose: and so, *Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord*. And let the blessing of *St Peters* Master be with mine.
>
> *Piscator*. And upon all that are lovers of *Vertue*; and dare trust in his *providence*, and be *quiet*, and go a *Angling*.
>
> *Study to be quiet*, 1 Thess. 4. 11.[43]

The Compleat Angler does not have much to say about the relationship between humans and non-humans which goes beyond the arguments I have sketched out above. However, in this passage, something new is happening and Walton's account of what it is to be non-human contrasts with that which we found in *Paradise Lost*. Here Venator (the first speaker) certainly shares the view that animals do not have to work although it is notable that he also is careful to stress how God provides for them none the less. Men, on the other hand, have to work for their sustenance and this is, as we have seen a consequence of the Fall. Angling appears to offer a way out of this opposition in that it offers a way of feeding both the inner and outer man that requires a minimum of physical effort. To fish is, therefore, explicitly to trust to a providential God. In this respect fishing is truly humanising as it nurtures the higher faculties, but it also puts man on a par with the blessed state of the animal creation which 'takes no care'.

Thus both Walton and Milton see the relationship between man and God as mediable by the relationship between humans and non-humans. In both *The Compleat Angler* and *Paradise Lost* the question of the representation of animals becomes a question of the reproduction of men. Thus what appear to be rather different kinds of book appear surprisingly cognate in that they both are concerned to show how a new kind of man may be articulated and use the representation of the non-human as a trope to achieve this. In addition, both Walton and Milton were writing within specific political codes in a time of revolutionary doubt. Walton employs the darkly coded pastoral of the cava-

lier winter, Milton an apocalyptically scriptural rhetoric of republicanism. However, when we look at the underlying structures of their language as these appear in their representation of animals we find surprising similarities. In fact, we find that the very disparate politics which mark the surface discourse of their texts as they deal with the relationships between humans come together in a single mode of representing the non-human relationship with the human.

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Whales are, of course, not fish but writing about Walton leads me to think about Herman Melville's *Moby Dick* (which was first published in 1851 under the title *The Whale*). This vast and wonderful novel is a sustained exploration of the symbolism of the non-human marked by a Miltonic scripturalism (lines from *Paradise Lost* appear on the title-page) and an eclectic transcendentalism. The novel is a world in itself and constitutes a balenocentric vision by which everything relates back to the master symbol of the white whale. I wish to concentrate on just three chapters:

55. Of the monstrous pictures of whales
56. Of the less erroneous pictures of whales, and the true pictures of whaling scenes
57. Of whales in paint; in teeth; in stone; in mountains; in stars

These three chapters show the text as it folds in on itself (much as a whale when it curves its great body into a dive) and deals, almost as a *mise en abîme*, with the nature of the representation of whales. This disquisition is not, I think, a Shandyan digression, within this gigantic whale of a text. Rather it is an epic simile that both displays the tropes used to represent whaleness and acts as a comparator for the massive representation of whales which is going on in the novel as a whole. *Moby Dick* is, of course, also a novel about men and the way in which their life is structured by their relationship, whether it be industrial, emotional or demonic, with whales. But what Melville achieves, by setting the novel in the oceanic wilderness, is to place whales and men together within a vast natural framework.

The first two of the three chapters deal very simply with paintings, drawings and engravings of whales and whaling and provide a critical account of various images and modes of representation. Although Melville distinguishes between accurate and inaccurate pictures, the thing that holds all these images together is that they were not produced by whaling men. What does this mean? Well, what Melville will

argue in chapter 57 is that the only true images of whales are those produced by men who hunt them, what Melville calls 'whalemen'. This locution gives us a hint as to the transformational power of the whale that both maims the body (as in the loss of legs suffered both by Captain Ahab and an unknown 'crippled beggar' on Tower Hill) and reorganises the nature of humanness. Melville points out that:

> Long exile from Christendom and civilisation inevitably restores a man to that condition in which God placed him, i.e. what is called savagery. Your true whale hunter is as much a savage as an Iroquois.[44]

But what is a savage and what are his attributes? Melville obligingly tells us:

> Now, one of the peculiar characteristics of the savage in his domestic hours, is his wonderful patience of industry. An ancient Hawaiian war-club or spear-paddle, in its full multiplicity and elaboration of carving, is as great a trophy of human perseverance as a Latin lexicon.[45]

Savages are human. Indeed they are very purely human in their peculiar (note that word again) aesthetic ability. Melville himself is a savage not only through his narrator Ishmael, but also in his own activity as a writer. The aesthetic act is an act of savagery and, therefore, an act of primitive and fundamental humanity. To represent a whale is, therefore, to reproduce one's own status as a human. To carve or paint a whale is to be a non-whale even though you have to be a whaleman to do it properly.

More interestingly, the act of representation can also be an act of perception. Melville writes of:

> images of the petrified form of Leviathan partly merged in grass, which of a windy day breaks against them in a surf of green surges … in mountainous countries … passing glimpses of the profiles of whales defined along the undulating ridges … great whales in the starry heavens[46]

He adds, though, that 'you must be a thorough whaleman to see these sights'.[47] A whaleman is, therefore, someone who can both represent whales and perceive the representation of whales in natural forms. He is also, of course, someone who has become a hybrid through the

name given to his trade. Ishmael says that he has 'chased Leviathan round and round the Pole with the revolutions of the bright points that first defined him to me'.[48] This is a significant sentence as it shows very clearly that a whale is externally present to a whaleman and not a part of him. The whale is defined to the man who, in turn, is defined by his ability to perceive the whale. Thus, knowledge of the whale becomes a self-knowledge and expressive representation of the whale becomes a reproduction of the self. The non-human becomes a vehicle, albeit a marvellous one, for the human to express his or her humanity.

In this chapter a small number of various texts have been discussed in order to demonstrate the nature of the representational process of the non-human where the animal is given a predominantly symbolic role. The symbol is, perhaps, the most common form of representation and depends on a common language of interpretation if it is to operate effectively as a bearer of meaning. It will have been seen that although the symbolic presence of animals in the aesthetic texts may be varied, the significance of this presence is both explained and limited by a language predicated on the binary opposition of the terms human and non-human. These terms appear relatively fixed in their meanings and although the politics of representation may vary considerably between texts the deep linguistic structures on which that representation situates itself are surprisingly irreducible.

6
Anthropomorphism: The Non-Human as Human

This chapter addresses the issue of anthropomorphism. For the purposes of my argument I will treat this as signifying the representation of animals as if they were human. From the perspective of reproduction this means that anthropomorphism, or narratives that are based on the anthropomorphic, occupy a very particular space. To portray non-humans as if they were humans is to bring them into a discursive realm in which it is possible to give the illusion that their experience is being reproduced. This is achieved by the device of providing them with human characteristics and even human form, and by this means it becomes possible to speak of them as if they were human. The question thus arises as to whether or not anthropomorphic representation is always deeply penetrated by speciesism, as it could well be argued that however benevolent the intention of anthropomorphic narrative the result is always entirely to obliterate the non-human experience and to replace it entirely by the human. In this reading anthropomorphism and anthropocentrism become inevitably connected in a speciesist equation.

Need this be so? Against the grain of much thinking on animal rights I am going to argue that it need not be. I hope later to demonstrate that texts that adopt various forms of anthropomorphic representation can offer extremely powerful statements about the condition of non-humanity. It is also the case that the division between humans and non-humans is not necessarily (at least where the higher animals are concerned) as great as a rigorous avoidance and condemnation of all anthropomorphism would suggest. In fact, as Jeffrey Moussaieff Masson has persuasively argued in three books, the non-human experience can be made accessible by an anthropomorphism which operates through the assumption that similar kinds of behaviour when exhibited in both humans and non-humans are the result of a shared set of

J. Simons, *Animal Rights and the Politics of Literary Representation*

emotional responses.[1] For example, when a human who has lived with a dog for ten years dies and the dog mopes, refuses to eat and even sits on the human's grave it is not fantastically obtuse nor wickedly speciesist to suggest that the dog has lost a loved one and is in mourning just as a human might be in the same circumstances. At least, there is surely no good reason for assuming that this is any less likely to be the case than to argue that the dog is simply disoriented by a change in its routine.[2] Anyway, even if we did assume that prosaic explanation, why should we not equally assume that this is also a way of understanding our own grief?

I suppose some people might assume that. But surely most of us would prefer to see some higher function of emotion or even spiritual consciousness at work in our grief. Why should we seek to deny this to dogs which, after all, have been companions to human beings for a very very long time? One might even adapt the theories of Rupert Sheldrake to identify a shared quasi-morphogenetic field in which humans and dogs partake of similar responses.[3] As Masson sensibly and, I think, accurately points out, people who live with animals all the time are rarely, if ever, in doubt that they possess an emotional range which is similar to that of humans and can be understood by using our own experience as an analogy.[4] This seems to me a very appropriate use of anthropomorphism both as a habit of thought and as a representational tool. We cannot, of course, ever know the full range of animal emotions: for example, a dog may commonly experience a feeling that is somewhere between what humans experience as fear and joy. What if it experiences memory as a smell or fear as a sound?[5] This kind of speculation does encourage thought and contemplation of the non-human, but it would not be possible to represent these things, or to know about them in any meaningful sense, except as an explicit act of imaginative reconstruction.

Even if it were not the case that we could assert that we do share sufficient things in common with many animals to make anthropomorphic representations permissible, we might also argue another position. This would claim that even if anthropomorphic images do tend to discount the distinctiveness of the non-human by making it simply a vehicle for the human, the effect of portraying the non-human in such a way as to make it interesting and worthy of human sympathy is, overall, worthwhile in that it may encourage people to think more carefully about their relationships with animals. I realise that this will be seen as a naïve and, possibly, dangerous claim but narratives are powerful and persuasive and we can surely assume that they

can influence the way in which people behave. The militant animal rights campaigner Juliet Gellatley has acknowledged the strengths of anthropomorphism in a way which I find helpful in the explication of my own position:

> To me it is self-evident that their [i.e. animals'] lives are equally as important to them as ours are to us.[6]

This book will keep away from writing for children in which anthropomorphic representation is common if not dominant. It will also keep away from folk narrative as it seems to me that the shores of common sense soon dip below the horizon when academic discourse embarks on speculation about folk belief. However, it is perhaps worth pointing to the role of anthropomorphic narrative in the establishment of the totemic relationships that underpin much of western pre-history. To put it crudely King Arthur was an anthropomorphised totemic bear. So was Beowulf, so was Bothvar Bjarki of the Norse saga of King Hrolfr Kraki. Arthur is related to the Welsh word *arth*, a bear. Beowulf is a composite which means bee-enemy (i.e stealer of honey, i.e. bear). Indeed the totemic power of bears has actually robbed Russian of its word for them and replaced it with the circumlocution *medved* (honey eater). Bothvar is shadowed by a giant bear that appears and fights whenever he is asleep. Forget Theodore Roosevelt: our houses are stuffed with teddy bears because there is a part of us all which still lives in the Germano-Celto-Slavonic forest and propitiates the scary power of the big mammals which live there. We try to partake of their strength by means of taking on their identity or by representing them in such a way as to enable us to contain their overwhelming presence.

Anthropomorphic narrative is, then, a representation and as such carries with it all the difficulties that were identified in a preceding chapter. However, its prevalence as a representational device and the extraordinary way in which certain narratives do give us the ability to imagine not so much the non-human view of the world as to see ourselves as animals and animals as ourselves means that, more than most narrative forms, it offers a way of seeing that is peculiarly powerful. If we assume that the anthropomorphic offers us a generic category we can subdivide it as follows:

- fable;
- trivial anthropomorphism;
- strong anthropomorphism.

In this chapter I will be solely concerned with strong anthropomorphism, but I will attempt a brief definition of the other two categories.

*

Fables are moral stories that seek to explain human behaviour and to point a moral by treating animals precisely as if they were human. The *locus classicus* for the fable is, of course, to be found in the series of tales attributed to Aesop. This extraordinary set of narratives has exercised a continued fascination on the western mind and translations can be found in all periods of medieval and post-medieval history. Although the fable is a narrative which operates entirely via the representational strategy of anthropomorphism, there is no stage at which at reader can doubt, or is invited to doubt, that what he or she is being offered is a tale which explores the human condition. Thus, the role of animals in the fable is almost irrelevant. They are merely vehicles for the human and are not, in any way, presented as having physical or psychological existence in their own right. Or, rather, in as much as they do exist, they exist in precisely the ways in which humans exist. From the point of view of this study, therefore, the fable has little to offer and can teach us nothing about the deeper relationships between the human and the non-human and the ways in which these relationships are subject to the various functions of reproduction and representation.

*

By trivial anthropomorphism I mean texts which treat animals as if they were people but do not seek to use this strategy to point any moral or teach any example. Much writing for children, and the work of Beatrix Potter might stand as an example for all, falls into the category of the trivially anthropomorphic. This mode of anthropomorphic representation is, like the fable, of minimal interest here as it does not press against and force us to question the reality, or otherwise, of the boundary of the human and the non-human. Even so, the trivial anthropomorphic narrative should not, I think, be the object of scorn and blanket dismissal. If, as a result of seeing the human experience played out in animal guise, any person has had cause to change his or her behaviour towards animals or his or her conception of what it might be to live as a non-human then such narratives play a useful role in the promotion of a better way in the treatment of animals.

This is where I tend to part company with certain orthodoxies in animal rights thinking. It is true that trivial anthropomorphism may, in the final analysis, inhibit a full analysis of the problem of the non-

human. However, this is surely a counsel of perfection. Why should it be necessary that we all share the same levels of understanding? Is it not more important that large numbers of people come to treat animals decently and that the representations of animals that are commonly available to them help to foster this tendency? Like most of us I was brought up on a diet of trivial anthropomorphism in my earliest reading. Why should I assume that this had not, in some way, determined the life-choices I subsequently made, one of which was to write this book? There is surely a certain arrogance here. Is it not wrong to discount the experience and well-meaning intentions of the majority of people who would, normally, wish to see animals treated with consideration even if they do not share fully developed positions on animal rights? Although I disapprove of meat eating I certainly do not condemn anyone who eats meat. Nor do I see an irreconcilable contradiction between eating meat and wishing to see a general improvement in the lot of animals. There is one, of course, but it is asking too much to expect the great majority to overthrow several thousand years of cultural expectation simply because of a set of ideas, however much those ideas may be rooted in evidence as to the cruelty of most agricultural practice. As I suggested earlier, there seems to be a sea-change in Anglo-American attitudes to diet and, therefore, the treatment of animals at the moment. Proponents of animal rights should foster this, not criticise it because of the insufficient rigour of its theoretical underpinnings. King Cnut found that he could not hold back the sea. Nor could he have made it come in any faster.

*

Strong anthropomorphism is a category of representation which deals with animals as if they were humans but does it in such a way as either to show how the non-human experience differs from the human or to create profound questions in the reader's mind as to the extent to which humans and non-humans are really different. These two modes of strong anthropomorphism are different but they both work towards a single representational strategy in that they begin to challenge the distinction not only between animals and people, but also between representation and reproduction. Perhaps the best way of explaining the nature of strong anthropomorphism will be to go straight to two examples.

The first is taken from Kenneth Grahame's *The Wind in the Willows* (1908). This might seem a surprising choice as, on first sight, this work would appear to be an almost paradigmatic of the kind of weak anthro-

pomorphic representation that I discounted as being worthy of study above. Broadly speaking this is the case and the depiction of the idylls of the perpetual Edwardian summer in which Mr Toad and his friends disport themselves tells us very little about the nature of the non-human. Indeed, the explicit discussion of class antagonism with which a good deal of the book is concerned is only of relevance to those who are looking to understand what it was like to be a certain kind of human being at the turn of last century. Nevertheless there is a moment in *The Wind in the Willows* when the text takes on a new level of genuine profundity and its weakly anthropomorphic frame narrative is suddenly subverted by a different kind of narrative.

I am referring to the chapter entitled 'The Piper at the Gates of Dawn'. In this section of the text Rat learns that the baby otter, Portly, has gone missing and he and Mole set out to look for him. As they search they become aware of a strange atmosphere on the riverbank and Rat begins to hear a distant piping. They row on and come upon young Portly nestled between the hooves of the god Pan. This vision causes them to fall down and worship. When it has faded they are left in a curious, quasi-hallucinatory state somewhere between doubt and hope and, although they feel strangely exhausted, they take up Portly and carry him back to his home. This brief synopsis does not do justice to the power of the text at this point and to the strangeness of this chapter in *The Wind in the Willows* as it has thus far developed and will subsequently develop. What is happening is, I think, that the mundane charms of the novel have given way to a tougher and, potentially, more frightening set of possibilities. Although Rat and Mole have hitherto been portrayed as members of the Edwardian leisure class (not unlike the protagonists of Jerome K. Jerome's *Three Men in a Boat*) and, as such, as humans in animal guise, the text suddenly begins to explore an entirely different dimension of their experience and this dimension appears entirely related to their being as non-humans.

The narrative at this point is very typically 1890s and the god Pan himself, described as 'the Friend and Helper', sits, for all the world, like a vignette from *The Yellow Book*.[7] It might be felt then that what we are encountering here is not a form of strong anthropomorphisation but a typically *fin de siècle* excursion into aesthetic paganism such as might be found, for example, in Arthur Machen's *The Hill of Dreams* (1907) where the protagonist, Lucian, has an encounter which is depicted in similar, if darker terms, to those used by Grahame. Here is Mole approaching the moment of vision:

> Then suddenly the Mole felt a great Awe fall upon him, an awe that turned his muscles to water, bowed his head, and rooted his feet to the ground. It was no panic terror – indeed he felt wonderfully at peace and happy – but it was an awe that smote and held him and, without seeing, he knew that some august Presence was very, very near. With difficulty he turned to look for his friend, and saw him at his side cowed, stricken and trembling violently….But Mole stood still for a moment, held in thought. As one wakened suddenly from some beautiful dream, and struggles to recall it, and can recapture nothing but a dim sense of the beauty of it …[8]

Here is the contrasting passage from Machen:

> Suddenly he knew that he was alone. Not merely solitary; that he had often been amongst the woods and deep in the lanes; but now it was wholly different and a very strange sensation … And then he began to dream … Quick flames now quivered in the substance of his nerves, hints of mysteries, secrets of life passed trembling through his brain, unknown desires stung him … . Then, while he stood indecisive, hesitating, his brain a whirl of puzzled thought, his body trembling, his hands shaking; as with electric heat sudden remembrance possessed him … And then panic fear rushed through his heart, and he ran blindly dashing through the wood.[9]

In both novels the characters encounter Pan, but while in Machen the encounter is dark, terrifying and leaves a life-destroying scar of memory, in Grahame the animals are awestruck rather than terrified and can live in the state of 'panic' in a way which Lucian cannot. Grahame specifically tells us that:

> This is the last best gift that the kindly demigod is careful to bestow on those to whom he has revealed himself in their helping: the gift of forgetfulness. Lest the awful remembrance should remain and grow, and overshadow mirth and pleasure, and the great haunting memory should spoil all the after-lives of little animals helped out of difficulties, in order that they should be happy and light-hearted as before.[10]

I find it difficult to think that Grahame did not know Machen's work (Machen was, after all, somewhat better known in 1907 than he is now), but even if he did not it is the case that both writers were

working within a culture in which a decorative neo-paganism offered an attractive new set of values and images and, not least, a revalorised recuperation of neo-classicism.

In this regard we can see how Grahame's work can be read as strongly anthropomorphic. The human (as we know from classical myth) cannot survive the panic and lives with life blighted by memory. The non-human, on the other hand, is resiliently oblivious to the force of Pan and can continue after the dreadful encounter with the god. What this means is that in *The Wind in the Willows* there is, at this point, a representation of the non-human which seeks to explore those facets of its experience which are distinct from the human and perhaps we do not need to invoke Machen to argue this with conviction. In spite of the fact that Rat and Mole are dressed in striped blazers and flannels, Grahame is not letting the reader forget that they are representations of the non-human and that, at a fundamental level their experience is, therefore, distinct.

Some philosophical context for this argument may be found in Nietzsche's account of the struggle between the Dionysian and Appolonian impulses that, in his account, led to the development of Greek tragedy. The satyr (Pan) becomes for Nietzsche part of an 'intermediary world' and the encounter with Dionysus from which springs the tragic moment becomes an experience of loss triggered by the destructive memory of the lost extasy of union with the divine:

> Conscious of the truth he has once seen, man now sees everywhere only the horror or absurdity of existence; now he understands what is symbolic in Ophelia's fate; now he understands the wisdom of the sylvan god, Silenus: he is nauseated.[11]

However, while Machen's protagonist Lucian is then forced to live out his life among the existential horrors with which his encounter has burdened him and to become, like a member of Nietzsche's dithyrambic chorus, lost to an unredeemable tragic sense, Rat and Mole, being non-human, are able to escape the Nietzschean curse and return to 'before'. For Grahame, therefore, it would appear that the distinction between the human and the non-human experience inheres very precisely in the ability of animals to escape the inevitability of tragedy; to be 'happy and light-hearted'.[12]

Yet this reinforcement of the fact that humans and non-humans are different may also be seen, in the context of the generally weak anthropomorphism of *The Wind in the Willows*, as a challenge to this difference. Throughout the book the animals are unproblematically depicted

as behaving like humans and sharing the same social problems. However, as 'The Piper at the Gates of Dawn' seems to show us, the existential and spiritual condition of the non-human is quite distinct. This collocation of similarity and difference is problematic only in so far as we choose to allow the two modes of strong and weak anthropomorphism to work entirely separately. But we cannot do this if and when they are part of the same narrative. We are therefore forced into finding ways of reconciling them and to exploring just how one mode influences and affects another. In the context of this book I would wish to argue that 'The Piper at the Gates of Dawn' exerts an effect across the entire work.

In other words when we, at any time, consider the fictive life of the riverbank we have to consider it not just in the terms offered to us by the images of animals who live in houses and row boats but in terms of non-humans who inhabit a specific spiritual realm. As humans are animals who live in houses we can also see an implication that they may share a similar spiritual condition which, for some reason, they have lost. *The Wind in the Willows* may, therefore, be read as a text that challenges the distinction between humans and non-humans by offering only the capacity to forget as a point of difference. Thus, as we saw in Burns, humans exist as they do simply because of the cultural accretions which have created memory as a repository of that which is lost, as a force which overpowers experience as an apprehension of that which is present. If this difference is merely cultural, then it is capable of being reversed and humans are capable of living in a present which is also, in Grahame's word, a 'before'. The reader is, through this passage, brought to a point at which the lives of little animals are seen as distinct, but not irredeemably distinct, from his or her own. This leads to an apprehension that while the differences between humans and non-humans may not be bridged by whimsical dressing-up games, there is, none the less, an uncomfortable possibility that they are capable of being bridged.

This reading of one chapter of *The Wind in the Willows* offers an account of one type of strong anthropomorphism, that which stresses the distinctions between the human and the non-human. I have argued that Grahame also allows this distinction to be challenged. However, the other type concerns itself wholly with a challenge to the distinction and is best exemplified in the work of Jonathan Swift and in the next section I shall briefly deal with *A Modest Proposal* (1729) before going on to a longer account of *Gulliver's Travels* (1726).

*

In *A Modest Proposal*, Swift argues the proposition that the best and most efficient way to deal with the problem of indigent poverty in Ireland is to farm the children of the poor as a source of food and income. The detail with which this scheme is worked out, complete with careful economic calculations, offers a vision so horrifically credible that my own experience of teaching this book as a set text on a course in eighteenth-century satire was a series of vivid nightmares where babies crawled around barbed-wire enclosures. What Swift accomplishes in *A Modest Proposal* is a form of strong anthropomorphism that goes beyond the limits of definition which I have suggested for this mode. He does not speak of animals as if they were humans but of humans as if they were non-humans. In other words, Swift's strategy is to reverse the norms of anthropomorphisation so completely that all sense of the distinction between humans and non-humans is lost. If any distinction between the human and the non-human is allowed at all it is a distinction founded solely on property and wealth and not on any distinctive physiological or psychological state.

Swift begins by setting out the basis of his scheme and by reminding us that one of its advantages will be to:

> prevent those voluntary abortions, and that horrid practice of women of murdering their bastard children, alas, too frequent among us, sacrificing the poor innocent babes, I doubt, more to avoid the expense than the shame, which would move tears and pity in the most savage and inhuman breast.[13]

That use of 'inhuman' is interesting as it implies another sort of distinction: that between the human and the inhuman. In what does this distinction reside? In the fictive world of *A Modest Proposal* it appears to be related, again, to the question of wealth and power. But this is not consistent and deliberately so. The term 'most inhuman' is an absolute statement that implies that anyone who is inhuman would still be moved to pity by these murders. There cannot be anyone who is more inhuman than the most inhuman. The person who, therefore, proposes or takes seriously the idea of killing and eating the children of the Irish poor must either be human (i.e. not inhuman) or exist in a category beyond the human or, for that matter, the inhuman.

The contorted logic of Swift's arguments here takes our sense that we can fix the meaning of key discursive terms such as human and inhuman to the very limit of stability and, probably, beyond it. In attacking the fundamental terms of rational discourse and causing the reader constantly to fold his or her sense both of morality and semantics back upon itself, Swift confronts us with a double problem. On the one hand we are forced to reconcile the difficulties of bringing together logical and rational argument with morality – and this is a problem which faces all of us as a condition of post-Enlightenment thought, perhaps most daringly exploited by the Marquis de Sade. On the other, we are forced into a consideration of the profound difficulty of distinguishing between the human and the non-human when a utilitarian calculus of need (here the necessity of feeding the population) is presented as an overriding hermeneutic framework. In many ways Swift here anticipates most, if not all, of the arguments put forward by a host of animal rights campaigners since the nineteenth century and also alerts us to the dangers of the position adopted by Peter Singer that was analysed above. In reading *A Modest Proposal* we are forced to acknowledge the fallacy (unless of course we agree with the Proposal) of a morality which seeks to elevate the human to a special moral and ontological status in the created world while, at the same time, acknowledging the common features of the human and the non-human as being of more than trivial import.

In Swift's world, therefore, the 'inhuman' becomes distinct from the non-human as it occupies a particularly savage moral ground by taking on rational thought processes which cannot be shared by the non-rational animal. The effect of this position is another paradox. Only humans can be inhuman and the Reason which conventionally denotes humanity as being superior to the animal world becomes a marker of this inhumanity. At this point the anthropomorphic reversal is complete as the human animal is now defined away from the non-human by the introduction of a third term (inhuman) which only the human animal possesses. The difficulties of thinking this position through (requiring as it does a violation of received semantic notions of the human) also demonstrate the problem of anthropomorphism as a representational strategy as it requires assumptions based on a two-term opposition (human/animal) which, as Swift suggests by his introduction of a third term, is not sufficient to support the weight of the difficulties entailed. Alternatively, we could argue that the problem is caused precisely because the two-term opposition is not a true opposition and the ontological distinction between its terms that is required

if anthropomorphism is to work is simply not existentially present. In presenting us with what at first appears to be a reversal of conventional anthropomorphic discourse Swift subversively leads us to a doubt in the impossibility of such a discourse at all or, at the very least, to an anxious recognition that the terms which make the discourse operational may be inadequate or just plain wrong.

*

In *A Modest Proposal* Swift leads us into a doubt which is worked out in far greater detail in his *Gulliver's Travels*. But before moving to an analysis of parts of that particularly complex text it will be valuable to clarify the arguments by showing how strong anthropomorphism and its reversal has worked in the service of a political vision a good deal less genial than that implied by Swift. Let's start with a quotation from a short story by Isaac Bashevis Singer:

> In his thoughts, Herman spoke a eulogy for the mouse who had shared a portion of her life with him and who, because of him, had left this earth. 'What do they know – all these scholars and philosophers, all the leaders of the world – about such as you? They have convinced themselves that man, the worst transgressor of all species, is the crown of creation. All other creatures were created merely to provide him with food, pelts, to be tormented, exterminated. In relation to them, all people are Nazis; for the animals it is an eternal Treblinka.[14]

Notice how Bashevis Singer here takes on the destructive conclusions of Swift by allowing no separation between man and the animals but rather arguing that all are part of a continuum of species between which there are assymetrical power relationships.

But this is not the most important feature of the passage. Bashevis Singer, a Jew who wrote in Yiddish, also has no embarrassment in equating the persecution and treatment of animals with the destruction of European Jewry by the Nazis. This position was fully explored in the celebrated graphic novel *Maus*.[15] It is, of course, a highly controversial view as many Jews feel that this kind of equation denigrates the suffering of all who fell into the clutches of the Nazis and discourages proper reflection on the enormity of their crimes. This position is well expressed by the character Abraham Stern in John Coetzee's short novel *The Lives of Animals*. He refuses to eat with a lecturer on animal rights who has made the same point as Singer:

> You took over for your own purposes the familiar comparison between the murdered Jews of Europe and slaughtered cattle. The Jews died like cattle, therefore cattle die like Jews, you say. That is a trick with words which I will not accept. You misunderstand the nature of likenesses; I would even say you misunderstand wilfully, to the point of blasphemy. Man is made in the likeness of God but God does not have the likeness of man. If Jews were treated like cattle, it does not follow that cattle are treated like Jews, The inversion insults the memory of the dead. It also trades on the horrors of the camps in a cheap way.[16]

It is difficult to argue with the logic of this objection and, I suspect, objectionable to do so if one has any experience of the poetry of pogroms such as this by Eliezer bar Judah of Worms writing in 1197:

> Let me tell you the story of my eldest daughter Bellet: She was thirteen years old, and as chaste as a bride. She had learnt all the prayers and songs from her mother, who was modest and kind, sweet and wise. The girl took after her beautiful mother and every night she would would make my bed and take off my shoes. She did her housework quickly, and always spoke the truth. She worshipped her maker, she weaved and sewed and embroidered [in His Honour], she was filled with reverence and pure love for her Creator. For the sake of Heaven, she sat down by me to hear my teaching. And that is when she and her mother and her sister were killed, on the night of the twenty-second of *Kislev*, as I was sitting peacefully at my table. Two wicked men broke in and killed them before my eyes; they also wounded me, and my students, and my son.
>
> Now let me tell you the story of my younger daughter [Hannah]: every day she would recite the first portion of the *Shema*. She was six years old, and she knew how to weave and sew and embroider, and to delight me with her singing.
>
> O my lovely wife! O my sons and daughters! I weep for them. I put my trust in the Judge who decreed my sentence; He has crushed me for my crimes. O Lord, the right is on Your side, the shame belongs to me. No matter how You treat me, I shall bless You and sing in Your honour; and I shall bow down before you.[17]

How can one argue with or about this great statement of human grief and dignity? How can one ever again read a text of banal anti-Semitism such as Chaucer's *Prioress's Tale* when one has looked

through this window into the world of medieval Jewry? The point to note here is that the poet does not in any way compare his experience or the experiences of his family with those of slaughtered animals. Indeed when we go back to Chaucer's Prioress we may note two things: first that her characterisation in the *General Prologue* specifically points out her highly emotive attachment to small animals; second, that her blood-curdling tale of massacre is drenched with a cloying sweetness. Is it possible that in her zeal to care for animals she has lost her feeling for humanity?

I think that this last possibility is precisely the one that is being addressed by Coetzee's character Abraham Stern. But it is not one that is addressed by Bashevis Singer who, elsewhere in his work, has observed that 'in their behaviour towards creatures, all men were Nazis'.[18] He seems to be suggesting that there is a connection between cruelty to animals (or rather total disregard of their lives) and the dehumanising protocols of Nazism. There is, however, no necessary reversal of this position: it is notoriously the case, for example, that the Nazi regime outlawed vivisection while gleefully conducting medical experiments on its captives.

The history of oppression has always been marked by arguments that the oppressed are not worthy of consideration because they do not possess fully human characteristics or, to put it baldly, are more like animals than humans. As Steven Wise has pointed out in his analysis of the connections between the development of animal welfare legislation and the battle to outlaw slavery one of the cornerstones of the pro-slavery lobby was that Africans were not fully human and could therefore be owned and traded 'like monkeys'.[19] Similarly, the second-class status of women was justified by some on the grounds that they too were not fully human. The Quaker George Fox reported that he had met people who thought that women had 'no souls, no more than a goose'.[20]

These strategies of oppression are based on a misappropriation of the representational position of anthropomorphism. But it is not a strict reversal as the position is predicated on the view that the oppressed group is not human in the first place. It is designed to shake the confidence of those who do not share the oppressor's belief and, crucially, to exploit the oppressor's hunch that those who do not share his or her belief about the oppressed will certainly share a discourse and, probably, a moral position, on the way in which animals may be treated. This is why Coetzee's Abraham Stern is not strictly accurate in his account of the rhetoric by which Jews are made analogous to cattle.

He starts from the position that Jews are human and, therefore, is quite right to reject the analogy. However, the lecturer with whom he is engaging also starts from this position. But the difference is that she, unlike Stern, does not have confidence that the distinction between men and animals can be rigourously maintained and that, I think, is also the position taken by Bashevis Singer's characters.

To reinforce the ways in which the reversal of strong anthropomorphism can be used as a representational strategy designed to justify oppression let us consider some of the works of T. S. Eliot. I do not propose here to run over again the well-known arguments which seek to show a sustained anti-Semitism at work in some of Eliot's writing. I doubt if anyone would now deny that there are unambiguously anti-Semitic attitudes here and that the defence that these are merely the expressions of poetic personae does not hold water as they are also to be found in Eliot's prose (where, presumably, he was not speaking through a mask) and, indeed, in attempts to conceal them in the way that Eliot's writing has been edited and published. Here are a couple of images:

> The rats are underneath the piles
> The Jew is underneath the lot

> Rachel née Rabinovitch tears at the grapes with murderous paws.[21]

These examples could be expanded with other well-known lines but they will suffice to make the point here. In the first the Jew is imagined as being at the bottom of the social morass, beneath even the rats. In the second the Jew is imaged as an animal: Rachel has paws not hands. Here we can see a reprise of the very same rhetoric used by the SS man who unleashed an Alsatian onto his prisoners with the cry:

> Man, get those dogs![22]

This troping of the Jews, unloaded from their cattle trucks (and it is no surely accident that they were cattle trucks just as it was no accident that French soldiers on their way to Verdun would bleat like sheep as they approached the abattoir) as lower than the dog which is, here, humanised is precisely identical with the representational strategy at work in Eliot.

Both the Nazi and the Nobel Prize-winning poet are here imagining a group of humans as outside the fold of human concern and, conversely, elevating the non-human to human or quasi-human status. So

although the reference to animal slaughter may well demean the actual and real suffering of all who met their death at the hands of the Nazis, we should not forget how both those who wish to stress this suffering (i.e. Bashevis Singer) and those who wish to justify it (i.e. the anonymous SS man) are working within an identical field of rhetoric. Any difference is not, however, to be found in the rhetoric but in the starting point. In Bashevis Singer's case an overwhelmingly humanitarian urge seeks not to demean the suffering of the Jews but rather to elevate the suffering of animals. In Eliot's case, a pathological lack of concern for the nature of human experience leads to a refusal even to accept the Jew as a human at all and, therefore, a malign twist to the Swiftian challenge to the fundamental categories of reason and language. Swift did not imagine that the Irish children would really be killed and eaten; Eliot had every reason to know what the effect of his kind of politics was likely to be on the lives and bodies of the European Jews and had already been.

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This digression serves to introduce *Gulliver's Travels* and the further development of the strong anthropomorphic position. In this novel Gulliver ends his days in a profound state of confusion as to his own and his immediate family's nature. He has returned from the land of the Houyhnhms, who are, endowed with all manner of reason though they may be, undeniably horses. His admiration for these creatures is tempered only by his disgust for the human Yahoos whom they rule, or rather, treat as animals. At one level the Voyage to the Houyhnhms may be seen as a kind of elaborate joke which works on the same basis as the dark humour of *A Modest Proposal*. For example, in the land of the Houyhnhms horses travel about in carriages pulled by the Yahoos and birds are caught using Yahoo-hair traps. When faced with the intelligent Gulliver, the Houyhnhms 'looked upon it as a prodigy that a brute animal should discover the marks of a rational creature'.[23] This simple strategy of reversal, complicated by the pun on 'human' which is submerged in the word 'Houyhnhm', creates a fictive world in which the reader is challenged to rethink the conventional wisdom on the differences between man and animal.

However, the effect of this within the fictive world, its effect on Gulliver, is dramatic as he loses all sense of his humanity and becomes divorced from easy conversation with other men. Humanity becomes, for Gulliver 'Yahoo-kind' and the human beings among whom he lives

on his return become little more than a collection of animal vices and instincts. In other words, *Gulliver's Travels* is a novel in which the human/non-human distinction is erased and the human narrator is permitted, indeed, constrained to understand that whatever distinctions may or may not exist between men and horses they are both animals. In his deification of the Houyhnhms Gulliver shows how the common ground between humans and non-humans disables any attempt to pursue a rational programme based on single factor distinctions (e.g. the possession of reason). The Houyhnhms exist almost as a third term in a set men/animal/Houyhnhm as if the idea of being human were transcendent of the idea of being a human animal. This linguistic consideration is precisely that to which Swift would return with greater simplicity and explicitness in *A Modest Proposal* some three years later.

So *Gulliver's Travels* ends as a book with a narrator who is an animal, albeit a human one. What are the effects of this final discovery? Gulliver has developed a sensitivity to the smell of the human body and a fear of the teeth and claws of his neighbouring Yahoos. However, he has also developed other insights. For example, his encounter with the refinements of Houyhnhm society has led him to abjure voyages of discovery where these are, essentially, exercises in colonisation. Indeed, he believes that the Houyhnhms should send delegates to civilise Europe.

In fact, Gulliver offers an ironic blast at the nature and intention of colonisation that is worth attending to in the context of the debate about animals. Imperialism is, in Gulliver's account, an exercise in acquisition and violence carried out by 'an execrable crew of butchers'.[24] This metaphor for colonists brings us straight back to the question of humanity as butchers are normally employed in the slaughter and dismemberment of animals. We should not be surprised to find this here as we know that the colonial impulse in Europe was, from the earliest times of the great westward and eastward maritime expansion, legitimised by the view that the indigenous peoples of the future had only a dubious claim to humanity and, therefore, could be treated as animals. This is an important point: it is not that they were animals but that they could be treated like animals. It is also worth remembering, as Alfred Crosby has demonstrated so well, that the victims of imperialism were not only the human inhabitants of the new colonies but also the animals.[25] These were often hunted into extinction or replaced by non-indigenous creatures. These either drove the local fauna from their habitats or necessitated a modification of the ecosystem which had a fatal effect.

Gulliver has stumbled upon a land populated by animals – although they rule over a race of humans. These animals have a culture which he comes to see as far superior to anything he has seen in Europe (or elsewhere on his travels) and this leads the reader to a reflection about the claims to humanity (or lack of it) which were made concerning the native populations of the European Empires. If we take this point literally we might paraphrase thus: they may be animals but they are superior to us. The strong anthropomorphism at work in *Gulliver's Travels* leads us to subversive reflection on the very foundations of the rational project and the economic superstructure that drove and enabled imperialism. In his relentless teasing out of the logic of empire Swift is thus demonstrating a case for a different view of the animal world. In allowing his human narrator to become aware both of his own animal nature and of the animal nature in others Swift asks the readers to redefine their own position and to see themselves as animal. One of Gulliver's challenges is to learn 'to behold my own figure often in a glass, and thus if possible habituate myself by time to tolerate the sight of a human creature'.[26] In *Gulliver's Travels* Swift is holding up a mirror to each of us and reflecting an image of the 'human creature' which does not readily conform to the traditional norms of the human/animal distinction.

The form of anthropomorphism developed in *Gulliver's Travels* is strong in that it unsettles the differences on which rational discourse is founded and thus provides a representation of the human experience which necessitates a revaluation of the non-human experience. The world of the Houyhnhms is, of course, in itself deeply ironic as their own view of the Yahoos is scarcely better than the normal human view of animals. What is especially interesting about the Houyhnhm world in the context of this argument is the section on lying or what Gulliver also calls 'false representation'.[27] Doubting and lying are not known to the Houyhnhms and they find it difficult to understand them since in their society their language is seen as entirely transparent and used only for the clear communication of facts. When Gulliver tries to explain a different model of language (which he comes to see as dishonourable) his Houyhnhm master can understand only it as saying 'the thing that is not'.[28]

Is the question of representation (or false representation) also at the heart of Swift's interrogation of the human/non-human distinction? I suggested in an earlier chapter that there was a crucial distinction to be made between reproduction and representation and that the representation of animals in a range of texts could be explored in order to demonstrate wider issues concerned with the nature of the non-human

experience. In placing some stress on competing language models Swift is bringing to the fore a very common distinction that is often used to separate the human from the non-human: humans have language, non-humans do not. However, Swift suggests that the problem is not as simple as that, since language cannot be reduced to a single term. Indeed, the precise rationalism of the Houyhnhm model is seen within *Gulliver's Travels* as being far superior, both functionally and morally, to the slippery and duplicitous languages of humans. So another totem is cut down. Literally, Swift suggests that it may well be that the communicative systems of animals are not only languages but also superior ones. More importantly, he leads us to think about the question of false representation and whether human language can ever escape this as its dominant mode.

Leaving aside the question of ideology that is raised by the notion of false representation we should surely assume that what we are encountering here is a universalising of the practice of lying so that it becomes a model for all human language systems. This puts Gulliver in an awkward position of course, but it also gets him off the hook as his espousal of Houyhnhm values also guarantees that he will only tell the truth. I doubt if an animal can lie and I also don't think that lying is the basis of human interaction. However, what we find in this debate between Gulliver and the Houyhnhm is a valuable commentary on the way in which the act of representation is also an act of transformation and that therefore we cannot trust to find a unitary relationship between any description and the thing which it describes. We also find (as Gulliver's diatribe against colonialism shows us) that linguistic representation is determined by a number of factors mostly concerned with the self-interest of those who are speaking. And this, of course, is central to the argument of the present book. When we represent animals (who cannot represent themselves) we construct models that are determined by our interests not by theirs. This is plainly a truth that was apprehended by Swift and in his strong anthropomorphic representation of Gulliver he may be seen to strive towards a wrenching of representation out of this aporia. Gulliver is a man, therefore he can speak for himself. But if a man is also an animal, what does that say about his own account of the non-human experience?

To conclude this chapter I will look at two popular manifestations of anthropomorphic representation. These are Eleanor Atkinson's novel *Greyfriar's Bobby* (1912) and the film *Babe* (1995).[29] Both these texts approach the issue of anthropomorphism somewhat differently and both elude the problem of trivialising the animal experience.

*

Greyfriar's Bobby may nowadays be thought of as a children's story but it was written with an adult reader in mind. The novel recounts the well-known tale of the faithful terrier Bobby who, on the death of his impoverished master, Auld Jock, takes up station on his grave in the Greyfriar's Kirk in Edinburgh. The story is based on fact and a statue erected to this dog may still be seen on the site. Indeed, as Marjorie Garber and Jeffrey Moussaief Masson have shown, the story of Greyfriar's Bobby is by no means unique and several dogs have behaved in the same way. For example, there is a statue of a faithful akita, Hachiko, outside the Shibuyo subway station in Tokyo to celebrate a creature who behaved much as Bobby did.[30] It is also instructive to compare the preservation of the statue of Bobby with the fate of the one set up in 1906 to commemorate the Old Brown Dog who was the victim of vivisection and the subject of a number of riots and a celebrated libel trial. This eventually disappeared after a number of attacks but was replaced with a new one as late as 1985. This too caused controversy and after being removed was eventually re-sited in 1994.[31]

The contrasting fates of these two statues is instructive when considering the representational strategies embodied in *Greyfriar's Bobby*. The Edinburgh statue is a monument to 'the affectionate fidelity' of Bobby. The Brown Dog monument had an allegedly libellous inscription which spoke of the fact that the terrier concerned had been 'Done to Death in the Laboratories of University College London' and concluded with an impassioned plea to end vivisection. The new monument has the same inscription with a rather wordy codicil that informs us that 'Animal experimentation is one of the greatest moral issues of our time and should have no place in a civilised society'.[32] The new statue also generated considerable controversy and also opposition from the medical profession which, once again, alleged libel – though as the dog was vivisected and was killed in the laboratories of UCL it is hard to see in what the libel resides.

What is notable about these inoffensive and charming little statues is that the one celebrates the life of a dog who had exhibited a quality that is to be admired in humans, while the other remembers the victim of 'medical' cruelty and a process of experimentation that still creates public anxiety. The statue of Bobby is, therefore, a statue of a dog, while the statue of the Old Brown Dog is really a statue of an idea. The hostility shown to the latter image may thus be seen as concerning not the rights and wrongs of an individual incident, but rather a more

general issue concerning the use of animals by humans. This may be obvious, but it is important to make it clear as it enables us to show that the statue of the Old Brown Dog is actually an example of a fable-like anthropomorphism. The activists who originally raised the monument might equally well have depicted a vivisectionist as, in the way of fables, the image is designed to point a moral about human life through the representation of an animal. The statue is, in other words, a visual metonym.

In Bobby's statue however we see an image of fidelity which is not subject to any troping and must be read for its literal content, just as Ruskin read Landseer's painting *The Old Shepherd's Chief Mourner*,which was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1837:

> One of the most perfect poems or pictures (I use the words as synonymous) which modern times have seen.[33]

However, despite the importance of content to a High Victorian reader of his statue, the slightly later novel, *Greyfriar's Bobby*, adopts an entirely different representational strategy. At first sight it could appear that all that we have in this text is a one-dimensional depiction of fidelity. This is designed to encourage us to consider both the ways in which a dog can show qualities that are superior to those we normally encounter in humans (this is Bobby as Houyhnhm) and, more generally, the good qualities of dogs. However, although Bobby is given many human traits, the reader is never allowed to forget that he is a dog and that his life is a precarious negotiation between his canine instincts and the accommodations he needs constantly to make in order to survive in a world dominated by humans. The text is, in fact, concerned in some detail with the question of the tax on dog ownership and the extreme dependence which dogs consequently have on the ability of their owners to pay it. The text is clear that dogs must be owned. In other words, *Greyfriar's Bobby* is as much concerned with the development of a legal status for dogs and their consequent inclusion within the social hierarchy as it is with Bobby's qualities. When Pope wrote:

> I am His Highness' Dog at Kew,
> Pray tell me, Sir, whose Dog are you?[34]

he was also showing how the status of a dog depends (or can be seen to depend) on the status of the humans with which it associates. Atkinson takes this one stage further with a surprisingly detailed

account of the various social classes which made up Scottish society in the middle of the nineteenth century.

In this respect we see a double anthropomorphism at work in the novel. Bobby's moral qualities are analysed to show how dogs can be like humans and even superior to them. He is also anthropomorphised by being turned into a little canine proletarian. Bobby is a victim of rural poverty and urban deprivation. It is not just his associations that give him social position but his independent existence as a dog. As Atkinson points out:

> Instinctively any dog struggles to escape the fate of the outcast. By every art he possesses he ingratiates himself with men. One that has his usefulness in the human scheme of things is often able to make his own terms with life, to win the niche of his choice.[35]

The dog is here imaged in precisely the position of the deprived or alienated human. However, notice that the interaction between the species is not all one-way. It is true that the human has overwhelming mastery and power, but the dog can discover the interstices of this power and, by so doing, find his own space within it. This seems to me a classic piece of dialectical reasoning where the synthesis resides in the recuperation of those canine qualities that are sublated in the initial antithetical engagement with the status quo.

The representation of Bobby demonstrates how an apparently trivial piece of anthropomorphism becomes strong when we move beyond the simple story of fidelity into the realm of inter-species relationships. What the novel leads us to question is whether the social conditions of capitalism are solely felt in their effects on humans. Bobby is quite clearly not merely a possession but is reified by the interactions of the law and his position in the class structure. In this analysis the difference between dogs (and other animals) and humans is called into question as the very same social pressures are shown to play on both. In contemplating Bobby we are forced to contemplate the lives of all those who come into contact with him.

But Bobby is not a revolutionary figure although he is fiercely independent. The values enshrined in his behaviour are rewarded, but they are rewarded through a recognition of their worth within and not against things as they are. However, we are never allowed to forget that, for Bobby, what is really important is to live in the kirkyard and guard the grave. He remains a dog but his representation leads us into a complex political realm where both dogs and humans struggle not only

with their own personal crises but also with the problem of finding a place within a society from which they are increasingly alienated.

*

In the film *Babe* we enter a world of talking animals and inter-species communication. The film tells of a pig who becomes part of the family of a New Zealand sheep-farmer and is discovered to have a talent for herding the flock. In the climax of the film Babe wins a sheep-dog trial for his owner. This life-enhancing film is deeply sentimental and depends on a weak form of anthropomorphism for some of its effects. At the same time it does not neglect to show the terrible conditions of industrial agricultural with its opening shots of the factory pig pen and the forcible removal of the small pig, still enjoying an idyllic life with its mother, to a farm. Babe's joy at Christmas (he actually sits and sings a carol) is vitiated when he discovers that what is a happy time for humans is a time of destruction and death for animals.

Although the film shows the animals talking to each other across the species divide they do not speak to the humans. However, it seems that the animals can understand much of what the humans do and say while their world remains mysterious to the farmer and his wife. The setting of the film seeks to recreate a fable-like atmosphere with an idealised landscape and a farm that could have come from a Rackham illustration. But the animals do not behave as animals in fables. They have real sufferings and always have to define themselves in relation to their human owners.

Babe and the other animals are, therefore, anthropomorphised only in so far as they can speak to each other. In this sense, the animal world is presented as a parallel to the world of humans with which it coexists. Nevertheless, in spite of these parallels, we also see significant differences. Humans are not, for example, subject to arbitrary kidnap or to slaughter for food. Humans, crucially, cannot communicate fully across the inter-species barrier. However, *Babe* does prompt us to ask just how fixed that barrier is and how much the common ground between all animals (human and non-human) requires us to revalue what in other ways appears to be a relationship where all power resides on one side. Babe himself is able to take on the role of a dog and herd sheep. He does this by learning the secret language of sheep while real sheep dogs do it by the threat of real violence. What he therefore shows is a possible circumvention of conventional inter-species relationships and a different way of enabling mutual interactions.

Now, I am not claiming here that *Babe* is a film about talking to the animals although it is a film about talking animals. Rather the anthropomorphic representation of the animals is not solely concerned with showing them as people dressed in skins, furs and fleeces. Babe is also a Houyhnhm although this characteristic is available only to the viewers of the film and not the humans within the film. In this respect the audience is allowed to adopt a superior position to the farmer and his wife, who remain excluded from the articulate bustle of the farmyards and stock pens. The significance of this is that the audience must come to see the humans in the film as on precisely the same representational level as the animals, able to communicate only with each other. This is important as by this strategy the film reduces the differences between humans and non-humans by confining them each to their own representational field. *Babe* is a film about animals but it is a film about animals in the most general and inclusive sense. The audience is placed in the position of Gulliver on his return from the land of the Houyhnhms and is offered a disturbing, if ultimately positively resolved, image of the ways in which species interact. This is achieved by an anthropomorphism that goes beyond the fabular or the crudely symbolic.

In this chapter I have attempted to defend anthropomorphism by showing how it can work as a representational strategy which helps both to define and to challenge our perceptions of non-humans. I have suggested that it is not merely a way of making animals into humans. At the same time, it should not be thought that anthropomorphism can necessarily take us any closer to a true understanding of the nature of the non-human experience. As I have suggested in a previous chapter, that must remain beyond us. On the other hand, anthropomorphism (and even weak anthropomorphism) does alert us to those shared characteristics that appear to bind the species together. In this regard, it is perhaps the most powerful, important and multifaceted representational tool for the development of a discourse which might enable literature to develop as speciesism becomes an increasingly unacceptable model for the world within which literature is generated and which it reflects.

7
Transformation: the Human as Non-Human and Vice Versa

In the two previous chapters symbols and anthropomorphism were explored as strategies designed to represent the non-human experience in various ways. It is clear that the more closely identified with the non-human the fictive world becomes, then the more its representational strategies will tend towards the blurring or challenging of the boundary between the human and the non-human. Indeed, it might be said that in texts where this boundary is allowed to become porous there is a striving towards the impossible task of actually reproducing what it is to be an animal. In this chapter a different strategy, the strategy of transformation, will be examined and this will demonstrate the ways in which the human/non-human divide and the mysterious difference between the two worlds may be crossed.

Some of the very earliest texts of western culture have concerned themselves with the question of change and transformation. In Ovid, for example, a series of metamorphoses of various kinds (by no means always from human/god into animal) are placed together in order to provide a mythic underpinning both for the natural world and for the human order which has to exist within it. In the art of the High Renaissance the Ovidian ethos becomes a dominant mode that plays through and across an enormous number of texts of various kinds. In this adoption of a complex of classical material we also find a homogenisation of high culture with the folk cultures which persisted across Europe and which maintained a dialogue, often marked by intense dispute and controversy, between social groups. In this respect the question of inter-species transformation offers a model by which a vision of social cohesion could periodically emerge as well as a validation of the possibility of change and mobility as a naturally occurring phenomenon which does not demand radical social alterations.

J. Simons, *Animal Rights and the Politics of Literary Representation*

At the same time the notion of transformation could also present a threatening picture where violence and subversion threatened the most fundamentally held principles of order. This can easily be seen at the end of Book II of Edmund Spenser's *The Faerie Queene*. Here the hero Guyon arrives at the wicked enchantress Acrasia's bower and finds it populated by animals which initially try to attack him. He asks the virtuous palmer what they are:

> Said he, These seeming beasts are men indeed,
> Whom this Enchauntresse hath transformed thus,
> Whylome her lovers, which her lusts did feed,
> Now turned into figures hideous,
> According to their mindes like monstruous.
> Sad end (quoth he) of life intemperate,
> And mournefull meed of ioyes delicious:
> But Palmer, if it mote thee so aggrate,
> Let them returned be unto their former state.
>
> Streight way he with his vertuous staffe them strooke,
> And streight of beasts they comely men became;
> Yet being men they did unmanly looke,
> And stared ghastly, some for inward shame,
> And some for wrath to see their captive dame:[1]

At this point two things become clear. The first is that the non-human condition is seen as inferior to that enjoyed by humans and one in which the instincts ('lusts' as Spenser would have called them) are entirely predominant. The second is that each of Acrasia's captives has been given an animal form that best suits his own basest inclination.

This is a development from the account of Circe's enchantment which is to be found in Homer's *Odyssey*. In this text the enchantress's victims are turned to pigs but are able to recall their human state and to think like men:

> And they had the heads, and voice, and bristles, and shape of swine, but their minds remained unchanged even as before. So they were penned there weeping, and before them Circe flung mast and acorns and the fruit of the cornel tree, to eat, such things as wallowing swine are wont to feed upon.[2]

The change in attitude to the animal-men between Homer and Spenser is not, I think, solely a function of the differing role of this episode in

their poems. Nor, I would argue, is it necessarily a function of a change in attitude towards animals which had taken place in the centuries which separate Archaic Greece from Early Modern England – although attitudes were different. More important than either of these things is Spenser's sense that the animal forms adopted by these hapless men in some way reflects, and is determined by, an inner quality which is present even when the human form is retained. In other words, the transformation from human to non-human serves to reinforce rather than weaken the similarities between the two states of being. In this passage from *The Faerie Queene* we are presented with a model of humanity in which the human and the non-human are in constant struggle in which the human predominates not because of a natural superiority but because of the conscious exercise of the intellect to suppress instinct.

This is made clear by the subsequent verses:

> But one above the rest in speciall,
> That had an hog beene late, hight *Grille* by name,
> Repined greatly, and did him miscall,
> That had from hoggish forme him brought to naturall.
>
> Said *Guyon*, See the mind of beastly man,
> That hath so soone forgot the excellence
> Of his creation, when he life began,
> That now he chooseth, with vile difference,
> To be a beast, and lacke intelligence.
> To whom the Palmer thus, The donghill kind
> Delights in filth and foule incontinence:
> Let *Grill* be *Grill* and have his hoggish mind,
> But let us hence depart, whilest wether serves and wind.[3]

Here we see a man who has come to prefer the state of non-humanity and life as a pig. It is noteworthy, though, that here we see Spenser being quite explicit about the 'beastly' mind of man and its transcendence of the animal state through a conscious act of will embodied in memory. If the neo-Platonist Pico della Mirandola was able to proclaim the superiority of man by virtue of the reason which protects him from the brutish allurements of the senses, his contemporary Marsilio Ficino was, perhaps, more honest in looking at the root of humanity in memory:

> In fact I believe the human race would be less happy than any beast if it were deprived of the worship of God. I leave out of account its involved and ceaseless obsession with the helpless feeble and con-

> tinually ailing body. But if hope for the divine be removed, rational enquiry, the very activity which seems to make us superior to beasts, undoubtedly renders us more miserable than beasts through regret for the past, dread of the future, anxiety over the present, knowledge of evils and insatiable desire for innumerable pleasures.
>
> Blessed are the heavenly beings who know all things in light. Free of care are the beasts who understand nothing. Anxious and unhappy are men who between the two grope, stumble, and jostle in cloud.[4]

Here Ficino sums up the dilemma of Grill and also the dilemma of Guyon and the Palmer in trying to account for his behaviour.

In his translation of *The Odyssey*, Alexander Pope rendered the plight of Circe's victims thus:

> No more was seen the human form divine,
> Head, face and members bristle into swine:
> Still curst with sense, their mind remains alone,
> And their own voice affrights them when they groan.[5]

This version points up very clearly the difficulties in dealing with the question of transformation as it is adumbrated by Ficino. The human form may be god-like but it is also animal-like and dependent on the animal body. For Ficino and Pope alike reason does distinguish the human from the non-human but, as Grill shows, it is a tenuous distinction, which can be a curse. In both Spenser and Ficino we can also see clearly how the notion of being human depends on a set of choices (a performance to reflect my own position) and not necessarily on an inevitable 'difference' which is eternally contained within the human state.

The question is then one of stability. If it is accepted that the human state is capable of transformation, we may ask whether this transformatory potential is Protean or Procrustean. Proteus was a sea-god who was capable of adopting any shape and Renaissance neo-Platonists saw him as a model of the human potential to become whatever the individual willed. However, Procrustes was an ogre who invited travellers to sleep in his bed. If they were too short he stretched them, if they were too long he cut them to fit. We see in Spenser and Ficino the debate between Proteus and Procrustes. To be Proteus involves responsibility and will. If this is not exercised and developed we fall into the hands of Procrustes. And, of course, this could quite literally be true. Much has been made of the habit of pre-industrial societies of conducting

animal trials where creatures who had, for example, caused a death were tried and executed as if they were human. Perhaps less has been made of the literal meaning of the rack and the strappado, the most common torture instruments of the dungeons found in the strongholds of most, if not all, Renaissance rulers. By these too, heretics and others were, literally, stretched to fit the model of reason favoured by their captor and therefore brought within the fold of humanity.

In the somewhat safer 1690s the English Platonist Henry More tied up the argument with customary pith:

> To be always bent down to the desire of the body and wordly delights, that motion is Bestial: To be always reaching at higher things that's Diabolical: To be disengaged from a mans self, and stand indifferent to what ere the Will of God is, that's Angelical or Divine.[6]

Here we see the same concerns as those explored by the Renaissance poets and philosophers clarified into a tripartite division that sets the beast at the bottom with the angel at the top. The blundering intermediary, identified by Ficino as man, has here been subsumed into the category of the devilish precisely because, it appears, of the constant voluntaristic activity required to propel the beastly body towards the higher state. Thus the paradox with which Spenser and his near-contemporaries were wrestling (and the same paradox was identified in the earlier treatment of a sonnet by Sir Philip Sidney) is resolved through the abolition of the category of human. The angelic man has no will and so escapes both the bestial urges of the body and the demonic promptings of the mind. Reason, so generally seen as the distinguishing mark, the border, between the human and the non-human becomes a term in a very different hierarchy that seems to accept as a given the identity between human and non-human and tries to supersede it entirely.

What this disquisition on modes of early modern neo-Platonism is intended to demonstrate is that the model of human/animal existence which the western world inherited from classical antiquity was one in which the distinction between the human and the non-human was problematic in so far as it was insufficiently demarcated. Just as gods could assume any shape, so man could easily adopt animal form while, paradoxically, retaining human shape. The figuration of the prisoners in Acrasia's Bower of Bliss is designed to demonstrate just that and Grill is the model example. In the Middle Ages the imagination became filled with all manner of human–animal hybrids: harpies, sphinxes, sirens, satyrs, centaurs, melusines and manticores, to name but a few. What

these creatures, who for the most part derive from classical sources, are designed to demonstrate is usually a single obsessive quality and a transgressive breach of a natural distinction. But this distinction need not be the distinction between human and non-human. Rather it is the elemental chemistry which, as David Williams has argued, provided 'boundaries to establish the distinct identities of bird, beast and fish by isolating them one from the other' that is broken down.[7]

The human–animal hybrids show what happens when the natural fabric is disturbed but then are recuperated into a signifying system that is just as 'naturally' referent as that deployed in the *Bestiary* for more conventional creatures such as horses and lions. In this respect there is nothing unnatural about human–animal hybrids: they are made of the same material as the rest of nature and they can be brought into the same fold of signification. As the *Bestiary* says:

> Adam, as the first man, gave to all living beings a designation, calling each by a name which corresponded to the present order and according to their name and function.[8]

What this thinking leads to is an essentially etymological explanation of the differences between species, a bringing together of the animal, its name and its characteristics. In this world man achieves superiority because of a priority in speech. Man is not created first but he speaks first and his difference is valorised because of this special gift. But no animal exists outside of the signifying field set up by Adam through the gift of God and Adam himself. Thus, the differences between the human and non-human come down to a placement within a discursive space activated by a creational language that is not a human characteristic but something divine. Or rather it is a supplementary condition which sets one animal apart from all the others. Once again the textualisation of the distinction between human and non-human is not one which demonstrates a fixed or overwhelmingly deep gulf between the two. Rather there is some fluidity that is regulated solely by nomenclature.

*

When Pope Leo X acquired his pet elephant, Hanno:

> It danced with such grace and such love
> That a man could hardly have danced better.
> And then with its trumpeting so much noise
> It made, the entire place was deafened; it then
> Turned reverently to the Pope, and his entourage.[9]

Here the elephant is not anthropomorphised as it is quite clearly stated that its accomplishments are not of the same standard as those of a man. However, the elephant is in a process of transformation and is able to participate in the very human life of the Papal court. Whether this is because of its innate qualities or of the influence of the splendour it sees around it is open to some doubt, but what is clear is that poet is showing how the elephant can be made to fit into its new environment, and this is done by reducing the distinction between its natural animal behaviour and the rituals expected of the court. Hanno behaves as a trained elephant but, fortuitously, that mode of being precisely suits him to his life as a Papal courtier.

This early modern transformation of the elephant into courtier may be contrasted with the attitude of the court of Charles X of France to the giraffe Zarafa who arrived in Paris in 1827. In keeping with the greater scientific interests of the time the giraffe is feted but we are never allowed to forget that she is an animal:

> His Majesty wished to see this singular quadruped walk and even to run; the entire court was present and her gaits, especially running, appeared completely extraordinary. For more than half an hour, the King interrogated the learned academician.[10]

Here the animal remains a being that is placed quite beyond the normal run of human affairs. She requires interpretation by a 'learned academician' (Étienne Sainte-Hilaire) and is never seen as being human or in a process of transformation towards humanity. Here the twin discourses of science and imperialism (Zarafa is a gift from Mohammed Ali of Egypt who was trying to buy off the French king) combine to demonstrate the separateness of the human and the non-human experience. The confidence that both such discourses require if they are to retain credibility in the superiority of mankind is thus subject to mutual reinforcement. In the court of Leo X, this confidence is maintained not by an appeal to knowledge but, ideally at least, by an appeal to faith as human superiority is obtained, as we saw in the other examples cited above, by means of a contingent gift from God and, moreover, one that can be rejected or diminished through specific behavioural choices.

This contrast shows the ways in which the question of difference between the human and non-human experience and the representational strategies which are required to figure it can be seen to be subject to historical determination and, therefore, arbitrary. In both

the early modern period and the early nineteenth century the non-human is constructed as term in a figurative discourse designed to model a totalised picture of species interaction. The question of transformation is important here as it demonstrates not the potential of the animal as a foil to enhance understanding of what it is to be human, but rather a debate on the implications of the close association between the worlds and experiences of humans and non-humans.

This book is not designed solely to suggest that a different view of animals would automatically result in a differently organised literary canon. Although I do believe that this would be one of the effects of a general reshaping of common perceptions. None the less one effect of developing an argument about the fictional representation of animals and the political positions that underpin those representations is to bring off the shelves some texts which have not been the subject of much critical debate and to suggest some ways in which contemporary texts may demonstrate that a gradual shift in attitudes is beginning to make itself felt in literary culture. The next section of this chapter will deal with a range of twentieth-century works which have the question of transformation as a central concern.

*

I want to start with two short novels by David Garnett. These are *Lady into Fox* (1922) and *A Man in the Zoo* (1924).[11] Garnett was a key member of the Bloomsbury Group and is less well known now than his modest but impressive output of fiction and autobiography deserves. In treating Bloomsbury and animals it might seem more obvious to explore Virginia Woolf's *Flush* (1933), a 'biography' of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's pet spaniel or Sigrid Nunez's *Mitz* (1998), a touching account of the marmoset which was acquired by the Woolfs and shared their lives from 1934 to 1939.[12] However, neither of these novels represents part of a systematic programme to explore the life of an animal, any more than does Francis Coventry's spoof biography of a lap dog, *The History of Pompey the Little* (1751). In his two closely related novels Garnett does appear to be working at the relationships between humans and non-humans and exploring the representational strategy of transformation as a vehicle for doing this.

In *Lady into Fox*, Mrs Tebrick, an upper-middle-class woman, who has a mild distaste for hunting, is turned into a fox. While she is out

walking with her husband they hear a hunt and then the transformation takes place:

> *Where his wife had been the moment before was a small fox, of a very bright red*. It looked at him very beseechingly, advanced towards him a pace or two, and he saw at once that his wife was looking at him from the animal's eyes. You may well think if he was aghast: and so maybe was his lady at finding herself in that shape, so they did nothing for nearly half-an-hour but stare at each other, he bewildered, she asking him with her eyes as if indeed she spoke to him: 'What am I now become? Have pity on me, husband, have pity on me for I am your wife.'[13]

This moment of transformation is quite unmotivated except for the fact that there is a hunt in the vicinity and we already know that Mrs Tebrick disapproves of hunting. We are also told that Mrs Tebrick's maiden name was fox but that there was 'nothing at all foxy or vixenish in her appearance'. Garnett explicitly tells us that the transformation was a miracle and offers nothing but coincidental motivations for its occurrence.

It is also instantaneous:

> What adds to the difficulty to my mind is that the metamorphosis occurred when Mrs Tebrick was a full-grown woman, and that it happened suddenly in so short a space of time. The sprouting of a tail, the gradual extension of hair all over the body, the slow change of the whole anatomy by a process of growth, though it would have been monstrous, would not have been so difficult to reconcile to our ordinary conceptions, particularly had it happened in a young child.[14]

The lady becomes a fox much as Circe's captives bristle into pigs, and she appears initially to retain a knowledge of herself as human. Mr Tebrick's initial encounter with his fox-wife is couched in the terms adopted by Juliet Gellatley when encountering a pig on one of her visits to a factory farm:

> It seemed to me that I saw in those sad, intelligent, penetrating eyes a plea, a question to which I had no answer: 'Why are you doing this to me?'[15]

There is, of course, a gap between a late twentieth-century activist and a Bloomsbury Group novelist constructing a pleasant little fable. However in both texts we see an encounter with intelligence that is

constructed as an encounter with transformation. Gellatley has a moment of insight in which her meeting with the pig is no less a meeting with a human than Guyon's with Acrasia's prisoners. Although *Lady into Fox* is a slight and humorous work, it does capture a moment of recognition, one that abolishes the barriers between the human and animal world in a peculiarly effective manner.

Mr Tebrick at first treats his wife as if she were still human. He dresses her, he plays piquet and cribbage with her and he entertains her by holding a stereoscope up to her muzzle. Gradually, though, she slips more and more into the life of a fox and eventually goes to live in the woods where she mates and has a litter. Eventually she becomes wholly fox and dies when a pack of hounds pursues her into her husband's arms:

> His vixen had at once sprung up into Mr Tebrick's arms, and before he could turn back the hounds were upon them and had pulled them down. Then at that moment there was a scream of despair heard by all the field that had come up, which they declared afterwards was more like a woman's voice than a man's. But yet there was no clear proof whether it was Mr Tebrick or his wife who had suddenly regained her voice.[16]

Lady into Fox is not a book written in condemnation of blood sports, although it could be read as such at one level. Nor is it a book about foxes. It is a book about a woman who turns into a fox and about the difficulties of trying to accommodate this change into a more or less normal life. In turning a human into a non-human the novel explores the areas of compromise between the two modes of existence. Mrs Tebrick appears first to remember what it is to be human but gradually this falls away. Similarly, Mr Tebrick begins by treating her as a human but eventually allows her to drift into the wholly unregulated life of a wild animal.

Just as Spenser's prisoners stare 'ghastly' when they are returned to human form so Mr Tebrick is 'aghast' at the sight of the transformation. These words have much stronger meanings than their general colloquial usage suggests. Both place the subject in terror and in the presence of death and torment. The transformation from human to animal then implies a loosening of the life force and an inner terror. But in what does this terror consist? I have previously explored the notion of panic as an encounter with a god and the differing relationship that this god may be said to have with humans and animals. Animals can bear the encounter because they can forget it, precisely as

Ficino suggested, in another context, humans cannot forget. However it may also be that the terror which strikes the human in the presence of transformation may be read as the terror of the contemplation of the animal experience as one of butchery and pursuit. In this respect, *Lady into Fox* offers a valuable insight into the way we read the non-human. It is a state of misery imposed by humans and when a miraculous transformation takes place in the near presence of a hunt the realities of this misery become horribly apparent.

In *A Man in the Zoo* the idea of transformation is handled very differently. Indeed, at the physical level there is no actual transformation. In this novel a man called John Cromartie volunteers to be kept in a zoo as a part of the collection of apes. In much the same way as *Lady Into Fox*, *A Man in the Zoo* is a comedy of manners which brings into focus an interesting viewpoint on the nature of the distinctions between humans and animals. The whole institution of the zoological garden has an ambiguity which is worth pausing on before continuing with a brief analysis of Garnett's novel. Zoos are, often notoriously, sites within which animals drag out miserable and 'unnatural' lives deprived of the space and social groups they need and made into a spectacle for visiting humans. On the other hand, they can also function as vital opportunities for animals which face extinction in the wild to be bred back to some kind of viability or, at least, preserved. It is also the case that zoos offer people who have no other chance to encounter large fierce or exotic animals to see them and, it is to be hoped, to ponder on them and their welfare. I am not opposed to certain kinds of zoos for much the same reason that I am not opposed to the strategy of anthropomorphisation. Both serve to bring animals to people's attention and without them there might be no reason to consider the non-human at all.

A Man in the Zoo picks up this ambiguity and also the curiosity that a zoo is a place in which all animals except one may be displayed. As Cromartie says in his letter to London Zoo:

> I admit that human beings are seen frequently enough walking about in the Gardens, but I believe that there are convincing reasons why the Society should have a specimen of the human race on exhibition.
>
> Firstly, it would complete the collection, and, secondly, it would impress upon the mind of the visitor a comparison which he is not always quick to make for himself.[17]

This is a fairly obvious rationale but we should consider why it is that Cromartie has made this extraordinary proposal. He has been turned down by his would-be fiancée, Miss Lackett, on a range of grounds, not least that she does not see him as possessing sufficient feeling, sufficient love, to be her husband. She tells him:

> 'I might as well have a baboon or a bear. You are Tarzan of the Apes; you ought to be shut up in the zoo … . You do think that mankind is your enemy'.[18]

Miss Lackett identifies Cromartie as an animal because he lacks certain feelings. In contemplating his incarceration Cromartie compares his own emotional state with those of animals:

> And then he reflected that it was harder for some animals that it would be for himself. The tigers were prouder than he was, they loved their liberty more than he did his, they had no amusements or resources, and the climate did not suit them.[19]

Cromartie here makes the comparison between himself and the zoo animals partly on the grounds of their emotional range and partly on the grounds of their material needs. The crucial thing is that he seeks no transcendant distinction between himself and the creatures he proposes to join in captivity. Rather, he starts from the position that the human and non-human worlds are part of a continuum of animal experience.

This sense is reinforced when he begins to share his cage with a caracal. Cromartie treats the little cat as an equal and a friend and does not lose sight of their shared animal existence:

> In all their relations the man never attempted to exercise any authority over the beast; if the Caracal wandered away he did not call him back, nor did he try to tempt him with any tit-bits from his table, nor by rewards of any sort train him to new tricks. Indeed, to look at them both together it would seem as if they were unaware of each other's presence, or that nothing but a total indifference existed between them.[20]

However, when Cromartie and Miss Lackett argue through the bars of the cage and Cromartie is distressed, the caracal offers some consolation:

> … there was only his Caracal staring at him and asking him as plain as words:
>
> 'What is the matter, my dear friend? Are you all right now? Is it over? I am sorry for you, although I am a Caracal and you are a man. Indeed, I do love you very tenderly.'[21]

Here the distinction that Miss Lackett had drawn between humans and animals breaks down and the non-human is shown to have a range of feelings which is quite as broad as those of the human. But, as the previously quoted passage demonstrates, the continuum of experience is not one that is, necessarily, unified by any interactions between species. Cromartie and the caracal display their shared nature by their very indifference to each other and their lack of any urgent need to engage in social behaviour.

At the end of the novel Miss Lackett agrees to marry Cromartie and he is released from the ape-house. The zoo is imaged as paradisiacal space and the final paragraph is redolent of the closing moments of Milton's *Paradise Lost*:

> Hand in hand Josephine and John hurried through the Gardens. They did not stop to look at dogs or foxes, or wolves or tigers, they raced past the lion house and the cattle sheds, and without glancing at the pheasants or a lonely peacock, slipped through the turnstile into Regent's Park. There, still hand in hand, they passed unnoticed into the crowd. Nobody looked at them, nobody recognised them. The crowd was chiefly composed of couples like themselves.[22]

The difference between Garnett's vision and Milton's, however, is that in their expulsion from Eden Adam and Eve are solitary while John and Josephine join a crowd. This conclusion reinforces Cromartie's notion that experience is a continuum. The couples in Regent's Park are indifferent to each other just as Cromartie and his caracal were indifferent. Although Cromartie has left what has intertextually been figured as an Eden he does not enter a fallen world, but rather one that is thronged with vibrant being. Redemption has come for both Garnett's characters because Cromartie's transformation of himself into an animal has clarified for both of them what it is to be human.

It is also important to note that Cromartie has never actually been an animal. Rather, he has adopted the place of a non-human in human society. This shows that for the purposes of this novel at least, the distinction between human and non-human is solely to be seen in terms

of discursive placement and not as an overriding physiological or intellectual distinction. The Zoo decides to keep a negro in the cage beside Cromartie and then Miss Lackett also volunteers to live in what has become the Man House. In fact, Cromartie is never cured of his alleged misanthropy. It is his lack of patience with his new neighbour, Joe Tennison, that begins the process of leaving the zoo, but this does not matter as it has been established that the presence or absence of feelings does not constitute any basis on which to distinguish between humans and non-humans. The strategy of transformation has, in *A Man in the Zoo*, completely abolished the human/non-human distinction. In Will Self's *Great Apes* (1997), a different kind of transformation operates to achieve related but distinct ends and it is to this novel that I shall now turn.[23]

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If we return to a premise concerning the distinctions between humans and non-humans that I set out earlier it will be noted that in, *A Man in the Zoo*, John Cromartie chooses to reverse the performative norm and to perform as a non-human. There is an irony here as the act of being a human is, as I suggest, one that is profoundly performative. So for Cromartie to perform as an animal is, perversely, perhaps not a performative act at all. All he is doing is to allow his animal nature to be displayed. Yet the non-human in Garnett's novel is constructed within the performance space of the zoo, a space in which, paradoxically, humans go to see creatures who are not performing but are perceived as if they are doing so. In *Great Apes* we are introduced to a world in which primates take on the roles and attributes of human beings and human beings are perceived as apes. If Garnett provides us with an interlinking set of reversals based on transformation and performance. Self adopts a much more literal strategy by representing a direct transformation, the 'primatomorphisation' of the human species, and the construction of a fictive universe based on a human, Simon Dykes, who finds himself an ape and is diagnosed by chimpanzee doctors as suffering from a psychotic delusion.

Typically of Self's novels, *Great Apes* depends, to a very large degree, on linguistic exuberance, literary in-jokes and conceited devices for its effects.[24] But for the purposes of the arguments being developed here it is a novel that offers another perspective on the question of the representation of the non-human. Unlike the vintage science fiction series *Planet of the Apes*, Self's novel does not offer a vision of inter-species conflict but rather one in which this conflict is long gone and the winners (i.e. the

chimpanzees) are now writing the history. The book ends, for example, with a visit to a human reserve in Africa to observe the wild humans. They are observed in the jungle and the resident anthropologist interprets the cries from the jungle ("Fuuuuuuckooooofffff-Fuuuuuuuckooooofff") for the visitors as 'the human nesting vocalisation'.[25] It is pointed out to Simon that:

> your conviction that you were human and that the evolutionary successful primate was the human was more in the manner of a satirical trope 'huuu'?[26]

This observation locates the novel squarely in the realm explored by Swift in his account of Gulliver's voyage to the Houhnhyms. But it does not satisfactorily account, other than in a purely self-reflexive gesture to the fiction of which it is a part, for the significance of the transformation more generally.

When Simon responds to this comment he remarks, 'It's an image'.[27] It is difficult to know how to relate this to the idea that his belief that he is a human is a satirical trope. Plainly, both ideas locate the problem set by the novel within the world of fictionality and distance the reader from any attempt to read *Great Apes* simply as an engaging piece of fabulation. However, there is a difference between a trope and an image. The one exists within a text as a predetermined and pre-existent rhetorical category which is selected, paradigmatically, from within the set of other tropes. It is then made part of a syntactically organised macro-structure that enables (and compels) a reader to move within the text down carefully controlled paths. The other is more difficult to define as it does not depend on a predetermined lexis or syntax but rather on an extensional perception of an outside world that is to be contrasted with the fictional universe of the text.

In choosing to let his protagonist describe his experience as 'an image' Self disables his own device and allows his readers to associate the elements of the novel not only with themselves and each other but also with the beliefs and perceptions that they bring to the activity of reading from their general experience. This means that Simon's transformation into a chimpanzee can also be understood as constituting a commentary on relationships between specific groups of species. If Simon sees his imagined humanity as an image, then, conversely, we can understand the same of the imagined apes who throng the novel. The question is 'an image of what?'

At one level, the answer is obvious. The novel leads us down a surprisingly didactic path into a consideration of relationship between

humans and apes. We are shown the follies and injustices inherent in our understanding of that relationship and, by extension, are invited to consider how that relationship stands as a pattern for relationships between different groups of humans. This is a simple kind of image and it is also a satirical trope that leads us back into a purely intensional world of fictive self-referentiality. However, there is also a more complex process of imaging at work. In this the image of the man and the ape is presented as part of a more general process of representation. In transforming one to another and in enshrining a fictional representation of that transformation within the primary transformation Self is constructing a language of representation that challenges the extensional perceptions of his now liberated readers. The text works from the assumption that the reader will assume an *a priori* difference between humans and apes which will continue to exist however complex and fine the distinctions which need to be made and however compelling the information about the sophisticated lives of the great apes becomes.

An image is not solely a reflection. It is also a mark of identity. The implied difference between species brought to the text by the reader is here abolished by a word that proclaims not distinction but sameness. Ultimately, it does not matter whether Simon's transformation is a psychotic delusion or a trope. In fact, it has not happened at all, either in the world of *Great Apes* or in the world of the reader. What the novel offers us is a representational position that denies its own power to represent. In its final moments the text offers us the suggestion that it is, in fact, impossible to represent the world of humans and apes as distinct in anything but the superficial matters of mundane detail. This is not to say that Self reproduces a primate world. Of course, he does no such thing and cannot do so in a novel in which trope and image represent opposing discursive poles between which a dialogue concerning the nature of representation is played out. What is offered, though, is an opportunity to understand the non-human experience as an image rather than a trope. This understanding means that, to an extent, the text refuses to commit itself to a representational strategy by which the non-human is subordinated and offers the reader a far more liberating vision.

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To see how this operates we might compare two far less sophisticated works: Marie Darrieussecq's *Pig Tales* (1997) and William Kotzwinkle's *The Bear Went over the Mountain* (1997).[28] Both texts also depend upon a strategy of transformation. In *Pig Tales*, a novel that would win,

hands down, any prize for the triumph of style over substance, a woman gradually changes into a pig. And that is that. The transformation is nothing but a vehicle for a smart little fable that adds little or nothing to the question of the representation of the non-human or, indeed, the question of human/non-human relationships. What *Pig Tales* demonstrates is that just because a certain fictive or representational device is used this does not mean that a text would necessarily figure in any canon of writing which was constructed so as to facilitate a debate about the question of the non-human. Sometimes a cigar is just a cigar.

The Bear Went over the Mountain is more interesting and certainly more genial and entertaining. It is not Kotzwinkle's first foray into writing from a non-human perspective or with a non-human protagonist. His early novel, *Dr Rat*, is narrated by a laboratory rat who thinks that he is one of the vivisectionists. Unfortunately, I find its descriptions of experiments on live animals so distressing that I have never been able to complete it, so have not included it as a text for analysis here. In *The Bear Went over the Mountain* the ursine central character finds a novel in the woods and, by a series of ludicrous misadventures, is lionised by the New York literary establishment as a new Hemingway. The bear is not transformed, but he is perceived as a human by most people who encounter him. He settles down to urban life with a good deal of contentment:

> The bear took his time furnishing his apartment because he wanted it to be in perfect taste. Light came from bubbling Lava lamps. A painting on velvet, of a trout, hung on the wall. The walls themselves were covered with a bright nursery paper depicting teddy bears playing with balloons.[29]

Throughout the novel the bear (who works under the name of Hal Jam) is alternately enchanted and puzzled by the challenges of the human world and the immense accommodations that humans make to maintain their belief that he is a best-selling author. In this respect what we see in Kotzwinkle's work is a weak version of *Great Apes* as Hal is, essentially, a satirical trope to enable the text to comment on the silliness of the literary world. While Self manages this by setting parts of his novel in Regent's Park Road, the London home of, among others, the late Sir Kingsley Amis, Kotzwinkle works in a much less subtle way and uses much broader humour.

Once again, a novel which ostensibly could be pressed into service as a canonical text for the representation of animals becomes only an

exercise, albeit an immensely entertaining exercise, in a particular kind of satirical humour. However, the end of the novel hints at another possibility. Hal, who by this time is desperate to find a way of maintaining his status, is invited to a party at the White House. Here he meets an old philosopher who has spent thirty years in a Cuban jail and has secretly written a novel. He dies at the party and Hal is able to purloin his briefcase. This, of course, contains what will become Hal's next bestseller. In so far as the old man is capable of making any sense he tells Hal about his relationship with a rat, Ratty, with whom he shared his cell. The old man has entirely lost all sense of reality as far as interaction with humans is concerned and has made Ratty the centre of his memory and the subject of all his affections. He can certainly see no difference between his experience and that of Ratty just as in Lord Byron's *The Prisoner of Chillon* the prisoner comes to make common cause with the vermin in his cell:

> With spiders I had friendship made,
> And watch'd them in their sullen trade,
> Had seen the mice by moonlight play,
> And why should I feel less than they?
> We were all inmates of one place,
> And I, the monarch of each race,
> Had power to kill – yet, strange to tell!
> In quiet we had learn'd to dwell:
> My very chains and I grew friends,
> So much a long communion tends
> To make us what we are:[30]

Both Byron's and Kotzwinkle's prisoners have come to a realisation that there is no essential difference between the human and the non-human. Although the prisoner of Chillon at first feels he is king of all species this gradually changes just as Kotzwinkle's philosopher thinks that 'Ratty was the philosophical one. Now there was a brilliant mind.'[31]

At these points in both texts a transformation occurs. But it is not a transformation of human into non-human or vice versa but rather a complete reorganisation of the received hierarchy of being. The prisoners are deprived of the right to liberty and, by this gesture, they are deprived of the ability to perform as humans just as Cromartie abandons this right when he enters the zoo. Byron's prisoner observes that he is made what he is and this is an important step beyond essentialist models of the human condition. So in Kotzwinkle the old philosopher's memories of Ratty take the text beyond the simple satire of the

tale of Hal Jam and into a world which enables a more profound reflection on the question of animals. Thus, *The Bear Went over the Mountain* opens a small door into a different representational strategy. But while Self offers the debate between image and trope as a kind of internal poetics by which to reread the novel (or to reinterpret having read it) Kotzwinkle leaves the story of Ratty as a kind of pendant. It is the novel which is not written and just as Hal finds his new story at the very end of the book so Kotzwinkle leaves us with an alternative vision of the kinds of relationships that humans can have with animals (and with each other) and this, as in Self, sets up a dialogue with the text as it has thus far unfolded. However, in Kotzwinkle, the commitment to the satirical trope is overwhelming and so the resonances of Ratty's tale do not disturb Hal Jam's which remains a comedy of (hu)manners.

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Perhaps the classic text of transformation, in both senses of the word 'classic', is *The Golden Ass* of Lucius Apuleius (*c*. 197). This was translated into English by William Adlington in 1566.[32] The story tells of a young man, Lucius, who is transformed into an ass as a result of his dabbling in witchcraft. He has seen some witches turn themselves into birds and attempts the same with disastrous results. The text has a number of transformations in addition to Lucius's and proceeds by way of a number of interlocking stories. Of course, stories of transformation are a staple of classical literature whether we look to the mythic events of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* or the moral events of Aesop's *Fables*, but we also note that in the more realistic world of the early novel human/non-human transformation is an acceptable narrative strategy. For example, there is a story about a werewolf in the *Satyricon* of Petronius.

What is interesting about Apuleius is the fact that the novel addresses the issue of cruelty to animals from the point of view of an ass and also that it reflects on the significance of inter-species sexual encounters. In this regard it is more than just a fable and provides a useful bridge to more modern texts that explore the same difficult terrain. In the address to the reader that prefaces his translation Adlington shows a sophisticated sense of the issues involved in transformation:

> Verily under the warp of transformation is taxed the life of mortall men, when as we suffer our mindes so to be drowned in the sensuall lusts of the flesh, and the violent pleasures there of (which

> aptly may be called the confection of Witches) that wee lose wholly the use of reason and vertue, which properly should be in man, and play the part of brute and savage beasts. By like occasion we reade, how divers of the companions of Vlysses were turned by the marvellous power of Circe into swine. And finde we not in Scripture, that Nabuchadnezzar the ninth King of Babylon, by reason of his great dominions and realms, fell into such exceeding pride, that he was suddenly transformed of Almighty God into an horrible monster, having the head of an Oxe, the feet of a Beare, and the taile of Lion, and did eat hay as a Beast. But as Lucius Apuleius was changed into humane shape by a Rose, the companions of Vlysses by great intercession, and Nabuchadnezzar by the continual prayers of Daniel, wherby they knew themselves, and lived after a good and vertuous life: so can we never bee restored to the right figure of ourselves, except we taste the and eat the sweet Rose of reason and vertue, which the rather by the mediation of praier we may assuredly attaine. Againe, may not the meaning of this worke be altered and turned in this sorte: A man desirous to apply his minde to some excellent art, or given to the study of any of the sciences, at the first appeareth to himselfe an asse without wit, without knowledge, and not much unlike a brute beast, till such time as by much paine and travell he hath atchieved to the perfectnesse of the same, and tasting the sweet floure and fruit of his studies, doth thinke himselfe well brought to the right and very shape of a man. Finally, the metamorphosie of Lucius Apuleius may be resembled to a youth without discretion, and his reduction to age possessed with wisedome and vertue.[33]

This passage is quoted at some length because it demonstrates the peculiar power of transformation to offer multiple significance. Underlying Adlington's reading is the neo-Platonic view analysed above by which the distinction between humans and non-humans is to be found in reason and the virtue that follows from reason. It is clear, however, that Adlington is also reading the text as a kind of allegory. This approach is interesting as it requires that the physical nature of the transformation is discounted so that the moral significance alone shines through. But when we do this we also abolish the distinction between the man and the ass no less certainly than we do when we admit, following the neo-Platonic line, that the membrane that separates humans from non-humans is perilously thin and certainly porous.

For Adlington, the transformation of Lucius becomes a narrative of self-fashioning and restoration. One might compare an episode in Henry Chettle's novel *Piers Plainness* (1595) to see how this works.[34] The Prince Rhegius, a virtuous and wise man, becomes erotically and incestuously obsessed with his niece Queen Aeliana and determines to rape her. However, he cannot do this in his own figure and instead adopts the costume of a wild man, half-human, half-animal. This is not merely a strategy of disguise but one of transformation through which Rhegius is able to take on the qualities of lust and violence that are otherwise suppressed by his role as Prince. For Chettle, as for Adlington, the outer form of the non-human is a sign of far more than a set of animal qualities. It is also representative of the crucial importance of appearance in determining the nature of the beast. Rhegius is able to choose to perform as an animal just as in Adlington's allegorical reading of Apuleius, Lucius's transformation is also a mark of performance.

The account of Lucius's life as an ass is one of unremitting misery. He is beaten mercilessly by almost all his owners and is never allowed any respite. He is also threatened with death and, on one occasion, is marked down for cooking. He is put to work to turn a mill. At this point the text begins to compare the lives of animals with those of human slaves:

> O good Lord what a sort of poore slaves there were; some had their skinne blacke and blew, some had their backes striped with lashes, some were covered with rugged sackes, some had their members onely hidden: some wore such ragged clouts, that you might perceive all their naked bodies, some were marked and burned in the heads with hot yrons, some had their haire halfe clipped, some had lockes on their legges, some very ugly and ill favoured that they could scarce see, their eyes and face were so blacke and dimme with smoake, like those that fight in in the sands, and know not where to strike by reason of dust; And some had their faces all mealy. But how should I speake of the horses my companions, how they being old and weake, thrust their heads into the manger: they had their neckes all wounded and worne away: they rated their nosethrilles with a continual cough, their sides were bare with their harnesse and great travell, their ribbes were broken with beating, their hooves were battered broad with incessant labour, and their skinne rugged by meanes of their lancknesse.[35]

It appears that at this point there is very little difference between the humans and the horses. The slavery under which both suffer destroys

their bodies. But it also transforms them. This is a reversal of some conventional ideas about the nature of humanity. One way of describing the distinctions between humans and non-humans is to argue that humans transform their environment by means of various acts of creativity and by labour. In this model the body is not changed, only the raw materials of nature on which it operates. The human being is thus seen to be in some way separate from the environment, which becomes an infinite source of recreation enabled through human agency.

In Apuleius, however, it is work that transforms the body. Labour becomes an agency in itself and the body is reified as its object. There is a double paradox here as Lucius is already transformed and the work of humans on his body has further transformed him through injury and scarring. If it were to be claimed that work is what separates men from beasts then Lucius's view of the mill certainly contradicts this. In the middle of the next century Milton was to make the same point in *Samson Agonistes*. The blinded Samson is set to work:

> Put to the labour of a beast, debased
> Lower than bond-slave! Promise was that I
> Should Israel from Philistian yoke deliver;
> Ask for this great deliver now, and find him
> Eyeless in Gaza at the mill with slaves.[36]

Samson's image of himself as transformed into a beast is mirrored in his notion that the entire Jewish people have been transformed into animals through the labour imposed on them by the Philistines. He is, no less than Lucius, a non-human but has become so through the agency of that most human of activities, work. At the same time Samson's ability to resist, such as it is, is directly related to his decision that:

> … they shall not trail me through their streets
> Like a wild beast[37]

For both Lucius and Samson there is a direct connection between work and the non-human world and labour is a mechanism by which the human is transformed into the non-human. Ironically, it is at the feast of Dagon, a human–animal hybrid ('upward man and downward fish', as Milton trenchantly put it in *Paradise Lost*) that Samson finally regains his humanity by destroying the Philistines.[38] The irony here is more than a passing one as what we see is a direct reprisal on a culture which celebrates and fears the possibility of an identity between the

human and the non-human. It celebrates it through propitiation of its fearsome gods and fears it through the transformation of its prisoners into animals. The same may be said about the world in which Lucius moves. Animals are cruelly treated wherever they are found but, at the same time, their form is sought through magic in order to gain power and advantage.

Samson may, of course, be seen to be responsible for his own downfall. He is uxorious and, therefore, has become animal-like by his (ironic) blindness to reason and devotion to sensuality. When he clashes with his wife Dalila it is no accident that he calls her a 'hyaena'.[39] This is an animal proverbial in the classical world and, hence, the Renaissance, for the deceptive trickery it enacts by means of its ability to imitate the human voice. Samson is thus accusing his wife of being non-human but, if this is the case, he is also guilty of a transgressive inter-species sexual relationship. His passion is not the only thing that has diminished his claim to be distinct from the non-human world: he has directly entered this realm through his congress with his animal wife. In Apuleius, Lucius is accused of enticing a boy to have sex with him, but although he escapes punishment for this, he cannot escape the wiles of 'a faire Matron' into whose hands he falls and who forces him to have sex with her. This comes to the notice of his owner who decides to make some money out of Lucius by putting him on display. It is therefore arranged that he should have sex, in public, with a murderess who has been condemned to be eaten by wild beasts and, as he reasonably deduces, it is probable that the beasts in question are unlikely to stop at eating the murderess.

Lucius manages to escape and to find a way of transforming himself back into human shape but this issue of inter-species sex bulks large in his story. In all these episodes the ass reflects on the shame and immorality of the actions he is required to perform. Yet, as an animal he ought, if the conventional wisdom on the distinction between humans and non-humans is to be believed, to have no sense that he doing anything wrong and should be given over to pleasure. However, it is the humans who behave in this way and, by doing so, it is they who are transformed. It is perhaps no accident that Milton referred to unhappy marriage in the following terms:

> to grind in the mill of an undelighted and servil copulation, must be the only forc't work of a Christian marriage, oft times with such a yokefellow, from whom both love and peace, both nature and Religion mourns to be separated.[40]

Once again the image of mill and the yoke conjoin to disable the strong distinction that might otherwise be made between humans and non-humans. The sexual slavery to which Lucius is put may be seen, through the image deployed by Milton, as no different in kind from the other kinds of labour to which both he and his fellow slaves, both human and non-human, are subjected.

Just as Samson becomes non-human through his marriage to Dalila so Milton's unhappy marriage becomes a theatre of sexual slavery and drudgery. Yet Lucius finds in such slavery not only a reinforcement of his miserable state as an ass but also a strengthened sense of his humanity which enables him, at least in reflection, to stand aloof from the degradation he sees all around him. Lucius is finally able to recover human form precisely by avoiding intimate sexual contact with humans in the theatre of cruelty that is the arena. He thus reasserts, even though he is an ass, the notion that a fixed barrier should exist between humans and non-humans. *The Golden Asse* is shot through with all manner of irony and humour, but it demonstrates that the representational strategy of transformation is not a simple one. Lucius never truly becomes an ass but, from within his asinine body, he observes the bestial behaviour of the human world and thus leaves us with a good deal of discomfort as to the solidity of the human/non-human divide.

*

Sexual interaction is the most direct way of breaching the species divide and is seen as taboo in most, but by no means all, human societies. The topic has been explored at some length by the Dutch biologist Midas Dekkers who argues that 'Every sexual encounter is a breaking of bounds, an intrusion into an alien realm, every sexual encounter retains a whiff of bestiality.'[41] If we set aside this rhetoric and actually look at what is being said and thought here it can be argued that Dekkers is correct in that traditional models of the barriers between the species and, especially, between humans and non-humans have depended on an assumption that the physical passions are, somehow, peculiar to the animal world and that only the human has the power to transcend them. Sex in any form is, therefore, a matter of becoming an animal as the Anglican prayer book appears to remind us when it speaks of the satisfaction of carnal lusts 'like brute beastes that have no understanding'.[42] However, it seems to me that Dekkers overstates the case as it clear that although a sexual encounter may involve the taking on of the animal by the human there is a very great differ-

ence between sex between two humans (however animal) and sex between a human and a non-human.

Sex is a transformational act as it not only blends the bodies of the participants but also, if fertilisation is involved, transforms the body through pregnancy. In looking at animals as sexual objects we are, therefore, in one sense creating a condition in which transformation becomes a double possibility. In the next section of this chapter I do not propose to look at accounts of sex between humans and non-humans but rather to look at three texts in which an emotional attachment to animals is enacted as a representational strategy of transformation. The three texts I will be considering are Peter Hoeg's *The Woman and the Ape* (1996), Anne Haverty's *One Day as a Tiger* (1997) and John Coetzee's *Disgrace* (1999).[43]

*

In Hoeg's novel the new Director of London Zoo, Adam Burden, takes possession of a new kind of ultra-intelligent ape. His discontented wife, Madalene, forms an emotional, and eventually sexual, relationship with the creature and they escape and set off together across London. The novel is shot through with images of humans as non-humans. Madalene, for example, is described as a 'she-animal' and Adam as a 'lion'.[44] When Erasmus (the ape) wonders if Madalene might be pregnant by him she considers her attitude towards children:

> She had seen how children evoked the animal in people. She had perceived – still with Adam's eyes – that children are themselves animals. Cubs is what they are, ungainly, attention grabbing, bumptious, raw creatures of instinct.
>
> And they turned their parents into animals too. These parents were, she observed, they were in a state of animal exhaustion. They could not have cared less about themselves or their appearance, they were colourless, as though the children had sucked out all of their human energy surplus.[45]

For Madalene humans partake of the non-human when they enter the reproductive chain.[46] This somehow disrupts their ability to perform as humans by causing them to neglect their appearance. Children start as animals but adults have, through the performative strategy of adornment, turned into humans. The contact with the child-animals drags them back into the realm of the non-human that is seen as a realm of lack, a world in which labour (both as parturition and work) has taken away all surplus energy.

In her Edenic life with Erasmus, Madalene enters a new world of wholeness in which she discovers that love is a unifying rather than a fragmenting experience. She loses the sense of herself as human but gains a more holistic sense of her nature. Yet Erasmus does not live in a world where the boundaries between people and animals are any less necessary than in London. She asks Erasmus what he calls his own species:

> '"People",' it said, 'We call ourselves "people".'
> 'And us? What do you call us?'
> '"Animals",' said the ape, 'is what we call you.'[47]

Yet by the end of the book when Erasmus breaks into Adam's inaugural lecture and leads away twelve other apes who have been living disguised as humans he reminds his audience:

> that is hard to tell, in each one of us, where the part that you call human ends and the part that you call animal begins.[48]

Hoeg's novel is a parable. For example, Madalene's and Erasmus's love affair blossoms in a garden which is explicitly figured as a paradise and it is probably not coincidental that the number of disguised apes who join Erasmus in his address at Adam's inauguration is twelve. Similarly Adam is set up to reconfigure the Zoological Garden and hopes, through Erasmus, to replicate, through naming, the taxonomy of the animals that fall to his charge. However, the book is also a straightforward love story.

The barrier between the human and the non-human worlds is explored by Hoeg but it is breached not by argument or analysis but by the transcendant power of love. In Anne Haverty's *One Day as a Tiger* the rebellious and immature Marty returns to his parents' farm in rural Ireland which he has jointly inherited with his much more practical brother Pierce. Marty becomes deeply attached to a lamb, Missy, and the novel recounts the disastrous effect this has on his life and the lives of those around him. Missy is genetically engineered using human genes so within her physiological make up the border between humans and non-humans has already been crossed. She is, as Marty puts it, from a flock of 'Sheep that were not sheep. Human sheep.'[49]

Missy is 'a dud' and is sickly and Marty sees in her 'a look such as I had seen in no lamb's eyes before'.[50] He buys her:

> Not for any farmer's purpose, not for meat or to breed from, but to watch and understand.[51]

Marty's brother sees his affection for Missy as both silly and immature but, at the same time, he recognises it as a sentimental gesture deserving of some consideration. However, his boyhood acquaintance, Young Delaney, who has a more cynical and pragmatic view of nature, thinks it is ludicrous and that the lamb should be slaughtered. At this point the novel is simply playing out some highly conventional narrative possibilities which set the wise and practical countrymen against the dreamy city boy who has lost his roots. The men who are ruled by common sense are showing their contempt for the failed academic who cannot even tell a good lamb from a bad one.

Haverty's novel then takes a more interesting turn. As Marty becomes more and more involved with Missy he retreats into a narrative world in which he constructs a life for Missy's genes and tells her stories about her human family. This story telling becomes a mode of communication:

> I am convinced that Missy understood the words and their significance. And when I grew careless and absorbed in my own affairs and left her more and more alone, that she mulled over my tales and found joy and solace in dreams about Harold, her mythic father.[52]

In fact, Haverty never suggests that Missy responds in anything but a predictably 'animal' way to anything that Marty does. She is a sickly lamb and no more than that and it is clear that Marty's emotional disarray is the main driver behind his obsession with Missy.

This refusal to allow an anthropomorphising tendency into the text – and Marty does not anthropomorphise Missy in a trivial sense either – complicates our understanding of the nature of the relationship that is being set up between the man and the sheep. Eventually, Marty and his brother's wife Etti hatch a deluded plan to take Missy to France in order to give her to Brigitte Bardot's animal sanctuary. They do go to France but spend their time at the races in Deauville while Missy sickens in their hotel room. Pierce dies coming to fetch Etti and they return having poisoned Missy with sleeping pills. As these snatches of plot summary may suggest, *One Day as a Tiger* is a difficult book that explores some obscure emotional territory. Missy is given no emotional life other than what is projected onto her in Marty's attempts to understand her needs. But even these needs account for no more than the need for food, warmth and some affection. In this respect they are no different from the needs that any animal might be expected to have whatever its genetic make-up.

Marty is transformed by his encounter with Missy. His emotional blocks are knocked away by her helplessness and capacity for suffering. Missy is not transformed by her encounter with Marty however. She remains, tenaciously, a sickly lamb and is not touched by the incursion of the human world into her own. However, is this strictly true? Missy is the product of a border-crossing technology. She is an animal but she is also an organic artefact. Missy has already been transformed and so there is no need within the text to add another layer of transformation by which she becomes, in some way, competent to interact in a quasi-human fashion. In Haverty's novel the human/non-human border is treated as a biological space that is not hermetically sealed.

However, the product of transformation which results from the crossing of the border remains impervious to further transformational actions through any cross-species relationship. Missy is constructed as human twice: once by the scientists who created her genes and once by Marty who tries to understand her. Missy is also trebly objectified: she is a creature of science; she is an economic token in the system of sheep farming; she is represented as something more than a sheep by Marty. This final act of representation by which, for all his good intentions, Marty uses Missy as a tool for his own emotional catharsis stands as an example of the problems inherent in the representation of animals which were explored at an earlier point in this book. Missy becomes a site of cathexis and her lamb nature is quite irrelevant to the needs of her human owner.

In considering this we might compare Blake's aphoristic 'An Answer to the Parson':

> Why of the sheep do you not learn peace?
> Because I don't want you to shear my fleece.[53]

Here the experience of sheep is used as a vehicle for comment on social exploitation, but the exploitation of sheep by humans is put on par with the exploitation of men by men. Missy is not used in this way. Rather, Marty derives a transformative impulse from his own impressions of her and not from a contemplation of what it is to be a genetically engineered and chronically sickly lamb. In spite of the apparent interactions between the world of humans and that of sheep no interchange really happens. At the same time an encounter between the two worlds is seen to have a transformative power and, as such, the novel does exemplify a modification of a particular kind of representative strategy albeit one that offers the most oblique of views on the non-human world.

In *One Day as a Tiger*, love is shown as the product of an intense relationship with an animal, just as it is in *The Woman and the Ape*. The same is true of Coetzee's *Disgrace*. In this book Professor David Lurie loses his academic position as a result of an inappropriate and callously exploitative sexual encounter with a student. He goes to stay with his daughter in rural South Africa when they are the victim of a savage assault and she is viciously raped. Lurie's wrecked life begins to take some shape when he begins to work as a volunteer in a clinic that tries to provide some basic animal welfare for a deprived community. Often this amounts to little more than the painless destruction of dogs and other unwanted pets. But this activity has enormous transformative power:

> He has learned by now, from her, to concentrate all his attention on the animal they are killing, giving it what he no longer has difficulty in calling by its proper name: love.[54]

This difficult text does not need much attention here. Its message, as far as non-humans are concerned at any rate, is quite simple: animals can release love in human beings and thus transform them. However, in learning to love the animals Lurie does not become a misanthropist. If anything he was that before he discovered the power of the non-human. In this he may be contrasted with a character such as the hero of Radclyffe Hall's novel *Adam's Breed* (1926). He is a waiter and his mounting disgust with the humans he serves leads him to withdraw from eating and to die among the ponies in the New Forest. But Lurie is motivated not by disgust but by disgrace. He has loved too little and can expiate his crimes and those of his fellow humans by learning to enter into the mute life of helpless animals. The dogs he destroys are not given personalities, nor does he impose character upon them. Rather he comes to appreciate life as an experience that is shared across the species barrier and in coming to this appreciation he is transformed into a fuller human being.

In *Disgrace* a human is transformed. He becomes more human because more capable of love. This is almost a return to very traditional notions of the difference between humans and non-humans. When Lurie is unable to see beyond his own selfish needs for sexual gratification he behaves in a less than human fashion, but this is not necessarily the same as being an animal. We see from his daughter Lucy's decision to accept the protection of her neighbour from the marauding gang of rapists (one of whom is his brother-in-law) by giving him her farm and marrying him as his third wife. She gives up everything but sees the resulting powerlessness as becoming 'Like a

dog'.[55] Her identity with the animal is not, however, one of hopelessness. On the contrary it is the beginning of a new acceptance of the realities of life and a resignation to the power of being in the world. The non-human is, therefore, given a special status within the novel. Its world is harsh and unforgiving but contains the naked directness of an encounter with feeling and experience that is felt as a lack in humans. In becoming emotionally and morally transformed Lurie paradoxically becomes both a better human and more like an animal.

In these three novels a relationship with the non-human world releases love as a transforming experience. Although love is not necessarily part of the non-human world it is capable of acting as a catalyst for an understanding of that world and the way in which humans should respond to it. In *The Idiot*, *The Brothers Karamazov* and *Crime and Punishment*, Dostoevsky used the same terrifying image of a horse being cruelly beaten to figure a transforming moment in his characters' lives and we should remember the similar, non-fictional, incident that led to Nietzsche's loss of reason and language.[56] In all these case, as in the three novels briefly discussed in the preceding pages, the encounter with the brutal fact of non-human suffering, the acid test of Benthamite concern, transforms the human into something enlarged and enriched. It also demonstrates the flexibility of transformation as a representative strategy that goes beyond the simple substitution of one kind of being for another and operates in an almost dialogic fashion.

*

One final aspect of transformation needs to be recognised. So far I have looked mainly at narrative strategies by which the boundary between humans and non-humans is challenged by means of some form of change. The human takes on non-human characteristics or a non-human is taken for a human. Texts may also achieve this by giving themselves over to the view of a non-human character. Tolstoy famously wrote a story from the point of view of a horse and in *Anna Karenin* the hunting scene is at one point described by one of Levin's dogs. This is not anthropomorphisation in that the animals are not considered as humanlike. Rather there is an attempt to create an alternative view of the world which sets out to depict a universe, fictive or otherwise, in which a greater variety of possibilities is inherent than that adumbrated by the human presence.

We have seen this in Burns's depictions of the natural world where the commonwealth of nature is used to symbolise an alternative and preferable social organisation. In the Polish national epic *Pan Tadeusz*,

Adam Mickiewicz attempts a similar thing in his description of the primeval forest:

> They say the beasts in this metropolis
> Do rule themselves and thence good order is;
> No civilising human custom spoils
> No law of property their world embroils;
> They know no duels nor in battles strive.
> In their ancestral paradise they live,
> The wild beast with the tame lives as a brother,
> Nor either ever bites or butts the other.
> E'en though a man should go there all unarmed,
> He would pass through the midst of them unharmed,
> And they would see him with such admiration
> As on the last sixth day of creation,
> Their fathers that in Eden first did dwell,
> On Adam looked ere strife with him befell.[57]

Ostensibly this passage is replicating the ideas that we found in Burns. However, something else is at work here. The gentle lives of the animals in the primeval landscape (and, for Mickiewicz, this still exists in early nineteenth-century Poland) also have a power to transform. The human who could penetrate this landscape would discover a prelapsarian social organisation that could be the vehicle of a turning back to the Edenic state when, it will be noted, humans did not exploit animals.

This idea of the primeval is taken up by Radclyffe Hall in *The Well of Loneliness*. At two points in this novel the narrative is taken up by the perceptions of the horse Raftery. In the first incident the protagonist Stephen is trying to explain to the horse why it is important that she should be educated:

> Never mind that old corn-bin, stop rolling your eye round – it's very important to develop the brain because that gives you an advantage over people, it makes you more able to do as you like in this world, to conquer conditions, Raftery.
>
> And Raftery, who was not really thinking of the corn-bin, but rolling his eye in an effort to answer, would want to say something too big for his language, which at best must consist of small sounds and small movements; would want to say something about a strong feeling he had that Stephen was missing the truth. But how could

> he hope to make her understand the age-old wisdom of all the dumb creatures? The wisdom of plains and primeval forests, the wisdom come down from the youth of the world.[58]

Raftery is transformed into a new consciousness which is otherwise lacking in the novel. His wisdom and his attempts to communicate both diminish the barrier between himself and his human mistress and open up an entirely different space for the fictive world, one which will disturb the certainties of the readers and not only their own sense of being on one side of a barrier from the non-humans with whom they share the planet, but also their sense of the sufficiency and completeness of the human world view. In 'The Darkling Thrush', Hardy offers a similar moment of revelation:

> That I could think there trembled through
> His happy good-night air
> Some blessed Hope, whereof he knew
> And I was unaware.[59]

In this type of representational strategy the non-human becomes the repository of a different kind of understanding. It is lost to the postlapsarian human but redeemable through his or her contemplation of the animal world.

In *The Well of Loneliness* Stephen is forced to kill the injured Raftery and as she stands over him with her service revolver 'it seemed to Stephen that he had spoken, that Raftery had said: "Since to me you are God, what have I to forgive you, Stephen?",[60] The limitations of Hall's technique as a writer of fiction means that this exchange becomes sunk into a relatively well-worn track of chivalric cliché. However, this passage is important in the exemplification of my arguments about transformation as a representational strategy. In Raftery's response to his imminent death we see two kinds of transformation at work. First, Raftery is given human characteristics with which to express Hall's notion of a non-human worldview. Second, and more importantly, this passage, and the other passage in which Raftery's consciousness is introduced into the novel, operates to transform the entire fictive world: it is no longer anthropocentric.

It is this possibility that lies at the heart of all moments of transformation. It is not only characters that are transformed but also the very world of the text. As we shift from a fictive world entirely organised around human perspectives to one in which non-human perspectives

also have their place, we also shift in our ability to account for literary language and the strategies through which it structures our perceptions by offering a representational matrix which is, potentially, at least complete in itself. The non-human presence in the text emphasises that same presence's absence from the language that articulates the text. And as there is nothing outside that language as far as the world of the text is concerned, we encounter a paradox as we are clearly able to locate representations of the non-human as a category within aesthetic discourse. The non-human then forces us to think outside the textual language and offers a transgressive route not only across species boundaries, but also between the closed formal universe of the linguistic artefact and into the material world in which it exists.

While writing these pages I saw an image from the rioting in the occupied territories of Palestine. A donkey obviously in great distress and daubed with the Star of David was picking its way past two Israeli soldiers who were pointing their rifles at the Palestinian crowd whence the animal had come. What the donkey was intended to convey was not clear. Nor was what it must have suffered before being sent on its way by the mob. What was patently obvious was that the Palestinians had transformed the donkey into a message. It was not just the bearer of a message: it was the message. Its body had become the site on which the grief and anger of the crowd had been played out just as in Spain the bodies of donkeys are used as the site for the expression of exuberance and religious superstition. The point of saying these things is to emphasise the fact that when we explore the representational strategies of literary texts we cannot disengage these strategies from the world in which they are embedded. Non-humans are transformed in texts. They are also transformed in the world outside of the text. It is crucial if the study of literature and culture is to be of any value that this is never forgotten.

8
Towards a Conclusion and a Way Forward

In Aristophanes's comedy *The Birds* there is at one point a long list of the creatures which make up the chorus. One of the birds on this list is called a *phlexis*. No one now knows exactly what a *phlexis* is or was. Is it a bird that is still with us but has a different name? Is it a bird that is now extinct? Is it just one of Aristophanes's made-up words? The probability is that it is either extinct or that we still see it but call it something else. It is unlikely that we will ever know the answer to this minor but engaging conundrum. Whatever the truth of the matter the *phlexis* does still have an existence of a kind in Aristophanes's play and thus, if only as a textual mark or as an exotic costume in performance, we are still able to contemplate the *phlexis*.

However, is this sufficient? If the *phlexis* is extinct then its appearance in Aristophanes is one of the few traces that it ever existed. We might wish to take Derrida's notion that every text is like a will quite literally in the case of *The Birds* and find it the bequest of the memory of the *phlexis* from classical antiquity to postmodern times. The *phlexis* remains an enigma to us. But in what ways is it really different from the other animals which have been the subjects of my critical contemplation in the previous three chapters? William Blake memorably asked:

> How do you know but ev'ry Bird that cuts the airy way
> Is an immense world of delight, clos'd by your senses five?[1]

In reducing the bird to the sum of its capacity for textualisation or the sum of its capacity to be the object of human perception we are, in some way, carrying out an act of limitation. Blake's bird, every bird, every non-human, is when we represent it placed into the same enigmatic category as the *phlexis*. We know of it and yet we do not know it.

J. Simons, *Animal Rights and the Politics of Literary Representation*

Can we recover the *phlexis*? Can we answer Blake with any more conviction than a shrug of the shoulders? When Derrida claimed that there was nothing outside the text he was drawing our attention to that act of limitation which is implied in Blake's question and which seems to be an inevitable and paradoxical corollary to any act of imaginative creation. But that is how creation always must be. The bringing to being of another subject (or object) in such a way that it becomes part of the continuum of what already is must, of necessity, limit that new being at the very same time as it gives it a chance to be what it will. In this sense, the state of things as they are can be said to be like language which has the curious property of being capable of infinite expansion while, at the same time, being, at any given moment, complete in itself.

But any creative act, maybe any thinking, is also a striving to abolish limitation. To augment things as they are is surely to push against their boundaries even if it is not to penetrate them. The neo-Platonists who have come and gone as exemplars in various parts of this book as it has unfolded were doing just that. They were appealing (or trying to construct) a new set of categories which would take the human beyond the mapped-out experience prepared in advance by a linguistically predetermined social order and beyond a model of the human which had become enmeshed in a resignation to accept one thing rather than another. Non-humans, in their resolute living out of a life which we can see but never understand, offer the great challenge that Blake recognised as underlying everything that we might think or do. In analysing the ways that texts represent the non-human we are, in a modest way, seeking to slip over the border and into the realm of the other thing. This is what Pietro Bembo is striving towards in Castiglione's *Book of the Courtier* when he has to be held down by his cloak to prevent him from floating away in to the heavens:

> When Bembo had hetherto spoken with such vehemencie that a man would have thought him (as it were) ravished and beside himselfe, hee stood still without once moving, holding his eyes towarde heaven as astonied: when the Ladie Emilia, which together with the rest gave most diligent eare to this talke, tooke him by the plaite of his garment, and plucking him a little said.
>
> Take heede (maister Peter) that these thoughts make not your Soule also to forsake the bodie.[2]

The ravishment of Bembo's discourse is precisely that which we meet when we contemplate the non-human. To think beyond the human

leads us into the realm which promises the ends of those limits that both define and frustrate our creativity.

Marlowe's Dr Faustus puts it another way:

> Sweet *Analitikes*, tis thou hast ravisht me,
> *Bene disserere est finis logices*.
> Is to dispute well Logickes chiefest end?
> Affoords this Art no greater miracle?[3]

For Faustus magic will be the medium by which he transcends the human limitation set out in the study of Aristotle even when this is carried to its utmost extreme. Necromancy will enable him to punch through the discursive web that binds him to earth and to the human condition as he finds it. His servant Wagner, however, has other ideas. His own experiments with magic have the same end but his intention is not knowledge, wealth and power but to teach his colleague Robin:

> to turne thy selfe to a Dog, or a Cat, or a Mouse,
> or a Rat, or any thing.[4]

For Wagner, then, magic's transcendant power is coextensive with its ability to effect transformation. To enter the realm of the non-human is equivalent here with Faustus's ideal of going beyond the realm of the human. In Goethe's version of the same story Faust breaks away from his dance with a young witch when he perceives her spirit/soul:

> … there sprang
> A red mouse from her mouth[5]

Here again the force which exists beyond the human (for neo-Platonists it is heavenly, for Faust it is infernal) finds a concrete existence in the non-human. What Faustus is looking for Wagner finds easily. When Faust loses the black poodle he acquires earlier in the poem, he is unaware that it will show up again as a red mouse and that his encounter with the apes who live with the witch he visits at first will resonate beyond their trivial and teasing songs.

These representations of the non-human as a parallel state with the beyond human – like the third category we also met in Swift – are deployed here to take the argument in two different but complementary directions. First, I want to reiterate the possibility that a critical

approach to texts is capable of creating something like a coherent picture of the non-human experience as this exists in its relationship with the human experience. Second, I want to move into an entirely different area. I propose to show by the deployment of a range of statistical information that social life in the United Kingdom is currently undergoing a very significant change and that this may be measured by attention to dietary choice. In doing this I want to suggest first of all that there is something outside the text and; second, that there is a large community which deserves to see that the academic world is trying to respond to its decisions about animals by looking a literary texts in a different way.

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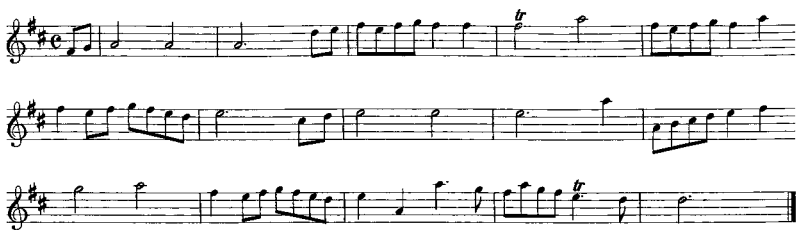
In an earlier chapter I looked at the ways in which textuality might be seen to be either reproductive or representational. I then suggested that representation could be shown to operate (as far as animals are concerned, at least) by means of the three textual strategies of symbolism, transformation and anthropomorphism. These textual strategies were then treated as tropes that were shown in operation in a wide range of literary texts and across long historical periods. In approaching the issue of the representation of animals in this way I sought to show that conventional protocols of periodisation are not relevant to the issue and, secondly, that any theorisation of the distinction between the human and the non-human does not necessarily imply any particular critical method. I was concerned instead to show that method, if any, develops out of commitment to a worldview and that the idea of critical theory depends crucially on an acknowledgement that it grows out of a variety of positions about the nature of things. It thus follows that any concrete approach to texts which develops from it will depend on an acknowledgement of those positions prior to any particular critical exercise.

The examples so far drawn upon for this book have been almost exclusively drawn from literature. Before progressing I want to look at two other sets of examples. The first is musical, the second visual. In *The Birth of Tragedy* Nietzsche argued that: 'It is only as an aesthetic phenomenon that existence and the world are eternally justified.'[6] In exploring the phenomenon of the non-human as it appears in aesthetic form I have been trying to suggest, more modestly it must be said, that it is through representational strategies that the human defines itself against the non-human but that, simultaneously, the human is building a bridge into a different mode of being that may

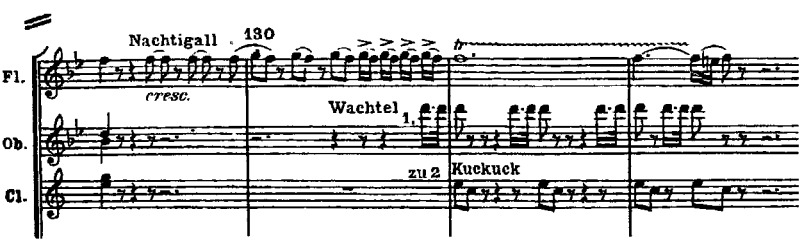
offer a way out of the linguistic aporia that constitutes textuality. Music may be the least representational of the arts but, in his own forays into composition, Nietzsche, it seems, strove to use sound-patterns to conjure up representational images in his listener's mind.

In 1717 a collection of music for the flageolet, entitled *The Bird Fancyer's Delight*, appeared.[7] This consisted of tunes that were designed to be played to caged birds. The idea was that the birds, such as throstles, bullfinches, woodlarks, canaries and nightingales, would learn the tunes and imitate them – a process that was, incidentally, used by Locke to demonstrate the existence of memory in animals.[8] Here is one for the bullfinch:



This tune is not designed to imitate the bullfinch's natural song but to train it to produce a melody provided by a human. This melody is thus an improvement on nature and seeks to bring the bird into the human world by teaching it to share and then reproduce an arbitrary language with its human owner.

In training birds in this way, eighteenth-century fanciers were engaging with the debate on the nature of the non-human by finding in an artform a way of degrading the fixed separation between themselves and their captive creatures. The birds here are being trained to replicate a fragment of the human world and, in doing so, to abdicate a fragment of their own non-humanity. When Beethoven chose to represent bird songs in the second movement of his sixth symphony:



he was doing something entirely different. Here the effort is for the human musician to replicate the sounds made by birds in order to paint a sound picture of a pastoral landscape. Beethoven is thus drawing nature back into the human realm and reversing the strategy of the *Bird Fancyer's Delight* where the taming, or control, of nature is configured as a humanising of its non-human inhabitants.

However, there are also similarities between these two musical examples. In both a triangle is formed whereby the human and the non-human are linked by the performance on an instrument of a passage of musical notation. The passage of energy around the triangle may be different in each case, but the structural configuration of the enterprise considered as a representational strategy is identical. In the case of the bird fancier a human plays a tune to a bird, which then sings it back. In the case of Beethoven a human plays a tune to another human who receives it as if a bird had produced it. Thus while in the one case the bird takes on a human characteristic, in the other, Beethoven's woodwind section is asked to become avian.

But is this the end of the matter? In fact, neither the bird fancier's bullfinch nor Beethoven's musician is being transformed in this way. What is happening instead is that a stream of sound is being designated as standing for human or bird activity. The aesthetic production of the melody is thus, in itself, the location of representation and not the producer, whether that producer be man or bird. In this respect the exchange between the human and the non-human is entirely subsumed into a musical text which can exist entirely independent of any actual encounter between the two. Indeed, I doubt if the tunes from the *Bird Fancyer's Delight* have been used in the way that they were intended for a very long time.

In Wagner's opera *Siegfried* there is, perhaps predictably, an entirely different approach to the problem of the representation of bird song. Siegfried has just killed the dragon Fafner and its blood gives him the ability to understand birdsong. Before this moment Siegfried has been enthralled by the bird's singing and tries to replicate it on a pipe which he cuts from a tree:

> Your song I will echo,
> mimic your warbling;

while your tune I am piping,
perhaps I will learn what you say![9]

However, his efforts are in vain and he is left only with the horn that he has played, hoping it

might find me a friend:
though no one heard me
but wolf and bear[10]

But when Siegfried has tasted Fafner's blood he understands the bird's language, which is now communicated to the audience not as pure sound but as a part of the libretto itself. Here the audience is able to enter into Siegfried's world and also into the world of the forest bird. We can understand its speech, but only when we have gone through the same intermediary process as Siegfried himself. Human music has, paradoxically, been shown to be inadequate in the face of the natural music of the bird's song. The representation of the bird thus transcends its own medium and requires a supplementary action that propels it out of pure sound and back into the highly mimetic realm of operatic language. The bird is drawn into the realm of the human and meets the human as it moves towards the realm of the bird through the mediation of a complex of representative techniques none of which are, in themselves, adequate to account for the difference between the human and the bird.

What these examples show is that the textualisation of the non-human can, in different ways, achieve a quasi-reproductive dimension if this textualisation remains at the level of single attributes. The songs are not, in themselves, reproductive of the human/non-human interchange, but they are accounts of an aspect of it. This morcellatory assault on nature is, however, a recreational address to a nature that is already fragmented. The bird is perceived as its song, just as the human can be intruded into the avian by means of a melody. If the music itself is reproductive of a fragmentation which resolves itself in the cathected imaging of an attribute it nevertheless exists as a representation of a non-human/human relationship. This relationship is defined by and depends on a constant correlation and reassembly of the parts that constitute that relationship when it is considered holistically.

To approach literary criticism, or literary texts, from the point of view of the representation of animals is, then, to engage in a reconstructive act. At least, it is if we assume that any aesthetic endeavour is bound to be, in both senses of the word, partial. The prison house of

language becomes, in this model, a space of limitation not because of the inherent instability of its claim to produce significance but, rather, a painfully inadequate miniaturisation of a world that grows, as Blake suggested, far beyond the borders of that normalised experience which it articulates. Our desire for the non-human fragments our perception of the world in which the non-human exists and our representation of the non-human is a record of that act of destruction.

In a literal sense our desire for the non-human is a destructive one as the bodies of animals are physically fragmented for our consumption and comfort. If we look at paintings produced before the advent of aniline pigments and acrylics we are, quite literally, looking at the smashed and plundered bodies of animals. The use of their bodily fluids in media, their soft tissue in pigment and their hair in brushes cause us to see the old canvasses as tapestries of blood. I suggested above that literary theory as I see it is radically speciesist. It now seems that the act of representation itself can be physically dependent on the speciesist appropriation of the animal body for human pleasure.

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I want to look at two contemporary images. The one is a photograph by Cindy Sherman that shows her sporting a pig's nose.[11] The other is an image from a campaign leaflet produced by Viva! This shows a young British slaughterman who has carved the snout and ears from one of his porcine victims and is wearing them as a mask. The one is art, the other, in so far as it is designed to shock people into opposition to the horrors of British abattoirs, is propaganda. As such it would usual to treat these images in different ways. The first would be analysed as an aesthetic production and its formal dimension would be the initial point of critical contact. The second would normally be seen in the terms of the message it is perceived as conveying. The image itself, as image, would be of little significance.

Now, I am aware that in making this distinction I am grossly simplifying the potential of the analytical process as it would operate in these cases. However, I think it is true to say, first, that they would be treated differently and, second, that the main guide to how to look at them would be found in the context by which they came to us. We recognise Sherman's as a work of art because we find it in a gallery or a book about contemporary image-making. We recognise the Viva! image as propaganda because it comes to us on a leaflet. If these contexts were stripped away we would probably still wish to make a formal distinction

between the two because of the obviously different process of composition and production which has gone into the Sherman image and which marks it out as art in distinction to the much more informally produced Viva! photograph. We would thus use two tests to separate art from propaganda. One would be a formal test referring to technique, the other a more social test referring to context and presentation.

But there are similarities between the two images. In order to make both a pig has died (or it is to be imagined that a pig has died). In both, a human is using the broken body of a pig in order to do something or become something. Both depend on the speciesist assumption that the pig's body is there for us to use and its life is there for us to take. If we were pigs would we make the kind of distinctions between the pictures that we do as humans? Obviously this is a foolish question as pigs, presumably, don't have the cultural apparatus to make such judgements. However, they do know what is like to be herded into a pen and made to wait while they watch the pigs in front of them having their heads smashed and their throats cut. So I suspect that if a pig could make anything of these photographs at all, what it would see would be the death of a pig.

Perhaps that is what we should see too. After all it is the fundamental similarity between the images and we should ask ourselves why, in normal critical practice, we would wish to keep this brutal fact at bay. We certainly would keep it at a distance in thinking about Sherman's image even though we may not in our liberal outrage at the callous gesture of the British slaughterman. In other words, I think it almost certainly likely to be the case, that the same person could be shocked by the Viva! image, perhaps to the point of contributing money to a Viva! campaign, but ravished by Sherman's photograph. The aesthetic dimension seems thus to act as a densensitising force that causes us to suspend our everyday humanity and the judgements that flow from it.

In this example, art and its formally arranged patterns block recognition of the speciesism that makes it and many other human activities possible. The ravishment of aesthetics is thus a rape (a violent robbery of feeling) and we are forced by it into a Faustian pact with our own desire to overcome the non-human both within and without ourselves. What makes this so difficult to comprehend is precisely the way in which the use of the animal is insinuated into the fabric of our everyday life. If Sherman's picture causes us to abandon our everyday humanity it also reasserts it as that everyday humanity is predicated on

a similarly everyday speciesism. Both Sherman and the anonymous slaughterman figure themselves, knowingly or not, as the captives of Circe. But they are like the captives we discussed earlier in that they are both driven by an overwhelming lust – in the Spenserian sense – that destroys their humanity and turns them into animals. But as that lust is made possible by specieisism it also constitutes it. Both images therefore show another overwhelming desire. The desire to be an animal. In the Renaissance this was fearful, in the Third Reich it was kept at bay by dehumanising the Jews and the Gypsies. It may be the case that the deeply engrained fear of this transformation is precisely what requires revaluation if we are to salve the discontents of our civilisation and its philosophy. We may do this when we learn to see in the face of the animal not savagery, not a fearsome mockery of what we ourselves are, but instead an overwhelming decency. If we could see that then, *mutatis mutandis*, we might also see it in the faces of other humans. And if that happened, Nietzsche's words concerning justification would surely have come true.

So would a non-speciesist critical practice consist of reading as if one were a pig? It would not, as reading as a pig is not possible. But does that mean, then, that a non-specieisist critical practice is impossible? To some extent it must do, as I do not think it is possible for anyone, however well meaning, to disentangle themselves from the self-fashioning discursive web of specieisist practice and assumption. What we can do, however, is seek to connect different aspects of human activity with the contemplation of the non-human and progressively to disempower speciesism by entangling it in another web, this time of our own conscious construction.

The critics and thinkers who have drawn the most consistent praise in this book have been feminists such as Carol Adams and Val Plumwood. Their achievement consists not in reducing the phenomena of culture and society to a single factor explanation configured as an engagement with patriarchy but rather to show how oppression operates as a system of intersecting practices and that the specific gender issues with which they engage are produced as a result of this intersection. Thus meat-eating, lack of care for the planet, racism, violence are all practices which are shown to be constitutive of gendering and, in Adams's work in particular, this manifests itself at some points in the treatment of animals. I think that Donna Haraway is pursuing a similar line when she claims that primatology is a genre of feminist theory:

> My contention is that the intersection – coupled with other aspects of the 'decolonization of nature' that have restructured the dis-

> courses of biology and anthropology, as well as other practices of international politics – destabilizes the narrative fields that gave rise both to primatology and feminism, thereby generating the possibility of new stories not strangled by the same logics of appropriation and domination, but also not innocent of the workings of power and desire, including new exclusions.[12]

In approaching literary texts through an engagement with speciesism I have been trying to show how new stories can be generated.

I have deliberately and, I hope, not irresponsibly, played with the idea of ravishment and its ambiguities at various points in this chapter. If Andrea Dworkin is right to argue that rape is the terminal manifestation of male power then what can we do with this message when we see the ravishing power of aesthetics? If there is an indissoluble bond between sexism and speciesism, and we think that speciesism is constituent of our idea of the human itself (both in theory and practice), how can we break out of yet another discursive trap? A trap which, this time, appears to implicate any move we make against it with the very practices we want to abolish?

Previously I have suggested that one problem that we face is the polarisation of the intellectual process and the consequent downgrading of ideas such a feeling and faith. I am not suggesting that a faith-based approach or a feeling-based approach (even if I knew what these would be like) is necessarily an answer to the difficulties in which we find ourselves. Adams, however, offers a way forward and I am pleased to repeat her magnificent aphorism here:

> Eat Rice, Have Faith in Women. Our dietary choices reinforce our cosmology, our politics. It is as though we could say, 'Eating rice *is* faith in women.'[13]

In the *Sexual Politics of Meat* she proposes an amalgamation of action with activity that starts to get us beyond the realm of the irreducibly discursive. When Goethe's Faust rewrites the beginning of St John's Gospel he replaces the idea of an originary Logos with the idea of an originary Deed (*die Tat*).[14] Perhaps Adams is taking us in the same direction. Perhaps if we consider our work on animals as a deed rather than a word we can begin to break out into the world beyond the text.

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I have suggested at a number of points that there is a deep historic connection between a genial attitude towards the non-human and feminism. Conversely, there seems to be a deep connection between

models of the masculine and brutality towards animals. In Roger Scruton's work sentimentality is ultimately the thought-destroying vice which he identifies at work in the proponents of animal rights, and this idea is often connected with the feminine and also the infantile. I want now, briefly, to conduct a defence of the sentimental as a powerful emotional nexus that was perfectly acceptable to intelligent people in, for example, the nineteenth century but has now been rejected as coarse, vulgar and, probably, proletarian.

In his essay 'Self-indulgence, Childishness and Puritanism', Digby Anderson attacks what he calls 'the sentimentalisation of civilised eating' in direct and uncompromising terms.[15] For Anderson there are many things to lament in the contemporary attitude towards food. But two of the worst are what he calls 'environmental sentimentalism' and 'animal sentimentalism'. The first is 'an unthought-out, feelings-led belief', the other is most often espoused, in Anderson's view, by people who know nothing about animals or the country.[16] What is interesting about Anderson's attack is that he chooses as his notional proponent of these ideas a young woman called Kelly and, in his mind, her sentimental attitude is linked to the growth of infantile pickiness and squeamishness about food.

Let us pause on Anderson's rhetoric and observe two things. The first is that a feelings-led belief is for him a bad thing in itself. The second is that he associates Kelly's vegetarianism with her ignorance about animals and the country. Leaving aside the point about feelings, I am concerned with this notion that the Kellys of this world are likely to be ignorant. Why should this be? Assuming that Kelly is a reader of the campaign literature of organisations like the WWF, The Vegetarian Society or Viva! (and why should we assume she is not, unless we assume that all young women are ignorant), she is likely to be very well-versed in methods of farming animals for slaughter. If she has read Peter Singer or Juliet Gellatley she will be similarly enlightened. She will also know that ideas about the country have very little to do with ideals about animals. In fact, it is Anderson who here exposes his ignorance of country matters. He imagines Kelly to have constructed a natural, pastoral image of England that she sets against what she sees as the unnatural, farmed one. But Anderson's own ideal is no less sentimental. It involves a dinner concerning, among other things, the 'only butcher selling fresh ox kidney', the 'trouble finding tomatoes with any taste to them', a salad 'from the garden'.[17] In fact, Anderson's thinking at this point is so slack and leads to such grossly inconsistent self-exposure that it is almost unfair to use him as a counter-example to my own position.

If Kelly is enmeshed in an unreal pastoral world what shall we say of Anderson's position? It seems to me that what we have in Anderson's essay is one sentimentalism placed against another. Anderson backs up his argument with a defence of the 'unnatural', but then retreats into an extraordinarily sentimentalised – in the pejorative sense – view of eating, which has no more basis in intellection than the one he attributes to Kelly (who is never allowed any credit for thinking or reading about what she believes in). What we see in Anderson's essay then is a good old-fashioned attack on sentimentalism which operates not by an analysis of the emotion in itself, but by an attack on those people (women and children) who are perceived to be most affected by it. The rational male author is, of course, quite beyond these things.

The attack on sentimentalism is too easily exposed as an attack on women and/or an infantilisation and feminisation of anyone who is sentimental. But let us recuperate the early meanings of the sentimental: these are characterised by reference to an attachment to elevated or refined feeling. If one is incapable of such refinement, then the best way of dealing with this is to attribute it as the mental capacity most commonly displayed by your social and sexual inferiors. Thus, sentimentality is denigrated. Not as a thing itself but by its association with women, children and, eventually (astonishingly one finds this in Anderson too), the working class. The assault on feeling as a way of finding one's route through difficult concepts and the uneven relationship between the smoothness of theory and the rough edges of the world is also an assault on the sentimental and this is an assault on women and the idea of the feminine.

In Ruth Ozeki's novel *My Year of Meat* a number of the ideas sketched out above come together.[18] The novel concerns Jane Takagi-Little, a Japanese-American TV presenter, who makes a series of programmes called *My American Wife!* in which American housewives are invited to share their favourite recipes. She discovers the terrible truth about the effect of hormone treatment of the beef herd and its devastating result for the bodies of young girls in particular. This story is intercut with the narrative of Tokyo housewife, Akiko Ueno, who begins by diligently trying to follow the recipes broadcast as part of the programmes but eventually comes to escape her brutal marriage and her oppressed life. This is a complex novel and Ozeki bring together two important themes. The first is the connection between the treatment of animals and the treatment of women. The second is the nexus by which the rationale of profit is a justification for the most nakedly specieisist exploitation of the planet and its inhabitants both human and non-

human. The themes are connected and brought together in the novel by the resolution of the personal relationships between Jane and her lover, and Akiko and her husband. Love, or the potential to love, enables both the protagonists to understand the meaning of the experiences they have both suffered and witnessed. It is not through intellection that the meat scandal is exposed, but through the direct response of the presenter as this is mediated through her own wrestling with the place of love in her private life. The novel operates almost as a paradigm of the links between feminism, animals and the environment that have been the subject of parts of this chapter so far. It also shows the link between feeling and action that will form the basis of discussion in the next section.

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A critical enterprise should not be carried out in isolation if it is to fulfil what ought to be the role of committed scholarship: to communicate different ways of seeing the world and differently combined information to society at large. In the case of the current work the relationship is more of a dialogue. I am striving towards finding an approach to texts that enables the representation of non-humans to be more fully understood. In that respect I am attempting to communicate to the world which is outside of the academic profession. However, I am also writing as a part of a society that is undergoing a profound change in its attitude towards animals and, in that respect, I am responding to that change by engaging in action as a scholar.

Throughout the 1990s the United Kingdom was unique in Europe in that large numbers of its citizens adopted a vegetarian diet. At the time of writing between 5 per cent and 10 per cent of the British population define themselves as vegetarian.[19] If we assume that the accurate count is between 6 per cent and 7 per cent that gives us a vegetarian community that is somewhat larger than the population of Denmark. In 1984 the figure was only 2.4 per cent so that gives some idea of how dramatic the increase has been, especially when we consider that the number of vegetarians registered with the Ministry of Food for rationing purposes in 1945 stood at roughly 0.2 per cent of the total registration.[20]

To see that this is a unique figure it is instructive to compare the United Kingdom with other European countries. In France the figure in 1995 was 0.9 per cent, in Germany 1.25 per cent, in Holland 4.4 per cent, in Poland 0.2 per cent and in Sweden 0.75 per cent (although

among Swedish school students the figure may be as high as 5 per cent).[21] In the United States the figure stands somewhere between 1 per cent and 2.5 per cent.[22] It therefore seems incontrovertible that a particular social change has taken place in the United Kingdom that has not happened to anything like the same degree in other countries of the developed world, and we may ask why this is so.

However, before we pursue this question it is interesting further to break down the British figures. These are skewed in a number of ways. In 1999, for example, Southerners were more likely to be vegetarian than people from the North (5.1 per cent) or the Midlands (3.9 per cent) while in Scotland (3.8 per cent) and Ulster (less than 1 per cent in 1990) vegetarians are still relatively scarce.[23] Social class also has an effect with the C1 group reporting 6.0 per cent vegetarianism as opposed to 4.9 per cent among the ABs, 4.1 among the C2s, and 5.2 per cent in the DE groups.[24] However the most dramatic variations come in the area of age and gender. In 1993 6.8 per cent of men between 25 and 34 years of age declared that they were vegetarian when the global male population showed a vegetarian group of 3.2 per cent.[25] In the same year the total number of women of defined themselves as vegetarian was 5.4 per cent of the population but among the 16–24 age group this level rose to 13.3 per cent.[26] In 1997, 23.6 per cent of all women said that they had given up red meat.[27] In 1998 25 per cent of the total population indicated that, in their opinion, meat was not 'safe and healthy' and, in the same year, 85 per cent of people indicated that they were reducing their intake of dairy products.[28] In 2000, 80 per cent of the population opined that animal welfare on farms should be improved.[29]

The reasons for offering this statistical diversion are threefold. First, I want to indicate that there is world outside the text and that in all manner of ways the kinds of concern that I am analysing here in a critical context are being shared and acted on across British society. Second, it is worthwhile making these figures available if only to demonstrate that the idea of the sentimental if, indeed, people who are concerned for animals are doing so out of an intellectually febrile sentimentalism, is worth paying serious attention beyond the simply prejudicial. Third, the figures demonstrate, yet again, a close tie between the position that women take in the world and the position of animals. In other words, the relationship between feminism (considered in its broadest possible meaning) and thinking about non-humans is not a purely theoretical one.

I have already looked briefly at the history of the animals issue in Britain and shown that the United Kingdom has a long tradition of public concern and activity in this area. It may be that this is, in itself, sufficient to account for the social changes that the statistics quoted above indicate are in train. Similarly, the broadly Protestant character of British religion may also account for a different attitude towards animals from that which obtains in the predominantly Roman Catholic areas of Europe. But it may be that more complex issues are determining the change of heart that so many British people appear to be undergoing. For example, I do not think we can separate the development of mass vegetarianism from popular protests against blood sports and against the export of live animals. Nor can we ignore in this context widespread and fierce consumer resistance to food produced from genetically modified crops or the process of food irradiation.

Now, I am not so naïve as not to realise that in the encounter between science and consumerism all sorts of loose thinking goes on. But even if the thinking is loose, might not the actual motivation be a commonly and properly held sense that something is going wrong with our food which needs to be challenged? This sense need not be denigrated as prejudice or superstition but should be respected. In any case, it can be shown to be rationally held. The Creuzfeld Jakob Disease crisis, for example, may result, to take the Government's worst case scenario, in 134,000 deaths. Yet the reassurances that GM foods are safe are coming from precisely the same direction as the voices that encouraged some of the young people who are now dead to believe that their beef was safe to eat. To give up meat in these circumstances and to be sceptical of the claims of the food industry and government is not sentimental folly but good common sense.

The growth in vegetarianism may also be associated with the enormous changes that took place in respect to consumerism during the 1980s and which rolled on through the 1990s. The broadly positive liberalisation of the British economy during that period offered large numbers of people unprecedented freedom of choice and opportunity so far as their role as consumers was concerned. One effect of this was the increasing ability to use consumer choice as a construction kit for life style. The growth of vegetarianism during this period must surely be seen as, at least in part, a response to this phenomenon.[30] As it became easier to choose how to present one's self it also became possible to use dietary choice as a life style statement which did not entail consigning oneself to the gloomy margins of an 'alternative society'.

However, I am not suggesting that the phenomenon of mass vegetarianism is purely to be explained by the opportunity to go shopping for Quorn (or indeed demonstrating against the Quorn).[31] A corollary of economic liberalisation was a withdrawal of government from other areas of public life (at least that was the theory) and an exhortation to the citizenry to take more responsibility for its own life and moral standing. I think it would be true to say that an unlooked for effect of this exhortation was a release of all kinds of issues-based political campaigns that did not sit easily within the normal, and paradoxical, consensus of bipartisan oppositional politics. As the figures cited above seem to demonstrate, the adoption of vegetarianism appears to reflect very different social alliances from those with which conventional politics are habituated to dealing. The make-up of crowds demonstrating against hunting with dogs, new roads, runways and live export of animals seem to bear this out as polychromatically coiffured post-punks and New Age piskies can often be seen marching with the tweedy and Barboured stalwarts of village England.[32]

What we see in the various political protests around the environment, food and animals is the coalescence of new social groupings and, possibly, a new model of citizenship. One thing which is at the heart of this model is a concern for the non-human realised in the most effective way that any can adopt to register this: giving up meat. We also see a graphic example of the way in which the moral concern of the state is enlarged not by government but by the words and deeds of concerned citizens. These citizens often find themselves acting against a centre where electoral anxiety will tend to overshadow attention to rapid shifts in popular opinion.

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So what is entailed by a new model of civic reponsibility? John Gray has suggested that the prospect of cultural recovery for a debilitated western tradition may lie in 'another mode of thinking – embodied in some poetry and mysticism, for example, [which] can assert itself against the domination of the forms of thought embodied by both science and philosophy in Western cultures'.[33] He sees such 'humiliated modes of thought' as offering the 'prospect of cultural recovery' and writes of the need for an 'openness to ultimate danger, to the contingency and mortality not only of human cultures and other living things, but also of the earth itself'.[34] David Selborne explicitly states that 'cruelty to animals is both a self-affliction and an affliction of the

civic order'.[35] He also points out that 'respect for the physical lives of others, and of other living creatures, is an expression of ethical self-identification with other living beings'.[36] Both thinkers, in their dense and complex consideration of the world as we now find it, clearly identify a space that is new to the philosophical and political traditions with which they engage and of which they are a part.

This is encouraging. Although neither Gray nor Selborne is writing in a popular mode they show a clear connection with the anxieties and fears of the societies in which they live. They also acknowledge the need for a more inclusive vision of the world and our place in it as citizens of particularly powerful cultures and highly complex organisations. Both are sentimental in that their work is shot through by an attachment to elevated feeling that manifests itself in tough argument. Now, I am not claiming either Gray or Selborne is an activist for animal rights. What I am suggesting is that two of the best examples of current writing on ethics and politics come to a position in which the anthropocentric position is, if not abandoned, at least enlarged. By this expansion the terrifying implications of continued blindness to our duty and to the ills of our culture are brought to light.

Up to this point I have tried to link together critical practice, the possibility of a new model of culture that would give the non-human a revalued place and the facts of pro-animal activity in my own society. In doing this I have attempted to connect what might more usually be seen as entirely separate things in order to create a discourse in which attention is paid both to the normal protocols of academic inquiry and to the world which ought to form the object of that inquiry. My fear is, as I have indicated in a number of different ways, that too often the gap between the inquiry and the object is too great and that the effect of this is to diminish the effect of what ought to be an enriching and valued commentary. There is something outside the text and it is the countless decisions of ordinary people to think about animals and to do something as a result of that thinking. This book is designed not to proselytise animal issues, but to contribute to the public debate.

If it is really true that global warming is under way and that various ecological catastrophes will follow, then we are already too late. It does not matter if the European Union or the US manages to limit carbon emissions by the next millennium (or whenever it is judged that the public will accept them and still elect the politicians who took the decision). We are probably already in the midst of a mass extinction

event that has probably been going on a long time, as anyone who reads Gilbert White's accounts of the numbers of birds he could observe in his garden and the surrounding woods and fields will acknowledge.[37] It is a sobering thought that in Virgil's *Aeneid* the lake at the mouth of the underworld is called Avernus (from a Greek word meaning birdless) and that Aeneas's guide points out to him how easy it is to descend into Hell. The problem comes when you want to return.[38] And we may find that the event ultimately includes the human race. This may be a self-inflicted wound or it may part of the long-term geoclimatic cycle of the planet. It won't matter if and when it happens. We will all go the way of the *phlexis*, except that there will be no one to read our stories.

So what can we do if we are already too late to save the world? I believe that we can, at the last, acknowledge our place and the place of our fellow creatures. We can use what time we have left in mending the breaches that we have made and in reconciling ourselves to our place in the order of things. We can be cheerful and we can be kind. In the Old Testament Balaam beat his ass when the creature was scared to pass an angel. The ass spoke and then Balaam saw the angel. If we can learn to listen to the voices of the animals we beat, then, like Balaam, we too could see angels.[39]

St John Chrysostom reminds us:

> Surely we ought to show them [animals] great kindness and gentleness for many reasons, but above all, because they are of the same origin as ourselves.[40]

I have tried throughout this book to represent this idea but, at the same time, to keep in view that, as humans, we do exist in a different sense from animals. The strategies of representation that I have analysed often serve to conceal the nature of that difference or to distort it, but there is a difference and this too must be acknowledged. We are in the privileged position of being stewards of the natural world and it may be that we have failed in our stewardship. The Greek word *tamias* means 'a steward' but it also carries the sense of someone who divides or distributes. We have exercised our stewardship in such a way as to have divided the things put in that charge unfairly and even, in the case of animals, to have divided the things themselves. If we are lords of creation then we might also think of the Old English sense of

lordship as being a guardian of bread. We have not kept to our duty in this sense either and from this dereliction flows our current predicament.[41] As Thomas Traherne wrote:

> You never enjoy the world aright, till the Sea itself floweth in your veins, till you are clothed with the heavens, and crowned with the stars: and perceive yourself to be the sole heir of the whole world.[42]

In considering the non-human and its representation in literary texts I have been constantly reminded of Traherne's words. We cannot always write in the elevated language of a Traherne because few of us feel with the intensity that he did. We can, however, take William Cowper's advice that:

> The heart is hard in nature, and unfit
> For human fellowship, as being void
> Of sympathy, and therefore dead alike
> To love and friendship both, that is not pleased
> With sight of animals enjoying life,[43]

If in surveying the representation of animals in texts and in exploring the politics of that representation I have conveyed some sense of that pleasure of which Cowper writes then I will have succeeded in at least one of the ambitions of this project.

Epilogue

In his stimulating book *Culture and Imperialism*, Edward Said invokes the spirits of the great scholars of the past, Auerbach and Spitzer, and later adds Curtius, in my opinion the greatest of them all, to the list:

> Out of this catholic tradition to which European (as opposed to national) scholars appealed in times of severe conflict, came the idea that the comparative study of literature could furnish a transnational, even transhuman perspective on literary performance.[1]

Said is right to point out that the training that these scholars had is not to be found in the modern world, but it is still possible to perceive oneself as being in the tradition in which they worked. Indeed, it is possible to perceive oneself as standing at the end of the tradition of scholarship that flows from the Fathers of the undivided Church, through the wandering scholars and into German and British philology in the Enlightenment and the nineteenth century.

This is a tradition that weighs heavy. It is also a gift and a privilege that ought not be lightly put away. In writing of ecological catastrophe I presume a possible end. But an end is an ambiguous thing: it is a finality but it is also a goal. We are not at the end of history in Francis Fukuyama's sense, nor in any other. The end of the western scholarly tradition may have been reached as the classical languages gather dust and the Middle Ages become more remote than pre-history. But, at the same time, another end may be in the process of accomplishment. If concern for the planet, for its inhabitants, both human and non-human, and for its fabric is the result of centuries of human meditation, then to speak of the end of tradition is an act of optimism rather than of pessimism.

It comes down to the stories that have been invoked at various points during this work. Haraway, Plumwood, Adams and Clark all, in different ways, invoke the model of narrative as a way of understanding how power operates and how we might strive against its pressures. Said too, especially in his much superior work, *Orientalism*, is telling us about the power of stories.[2] One of the themes of recent thought is drawn from Michael Foucault's deconstruction of the idea of the grand narrative. However, in my opinion, the identity between ideology,

discourse and narrative that needs to be held in place in order to offer coherence to Foucault's thought is not necessary if we are to use the possibility of the story as a hermeneutic tool or as a decoder of an imposed teleology.

I am not here reconstructing a grand narrative although I am proposing a model of the world, through stories, that offers a provisional teleology. The idea of a non-specieisist relationship between humans and non-humans is not a model of finality but it is an objective towards which to strive. In that sense it is an end. Surveying the story of the non-human is an activity that makes the past bleak and the future bleaker. It is also an activity that shows how change is possible and how we are not the prisoners of discursive structures nor in the thrall of ideology. We can see clearly, we can do good, we can learn to love. The grand narrative that could emerge from such a world is not monologic but the accumulated conversation of the narrative that we each want for ourselves.

Literary criticism is, ultimately, a peripheral activity but it is the combination of the peripheral that disturbs the centre. There is no reason to think that it is wrong to see value in human creativity and it is a matter of great sadness that such a position has been long dislodged. To think about stories (and literature is all stories) is to think about ourselves. To think about animals is to think about the nature of the human and to reclaim what has been lost to us in the brutality of the societies that we have slipped into. Reclaiming the value of the human is inevitably to reclaim the value of the animal. As we learn to value the creatures that share our world we will learn to value ourselves and, more importantly, each other. Perhaps this is the transhumanity that Said, surprisingly perhaps, found at work in his pantheon of dead white males.

The Feast of St Katherine the Great Martyr, AD 2000

Notes

Chapter 1

1. Joanne Stefanatos, *Animals and Man* (Mineapolis: Light and Life Publishing Co., 1992), p. 10.
2. Alan Bray, *Homosexuality in Renaissance England* (London: Gay Men's Press, 1982)), p. 114.
3. On this see, for example, Karl Jacoby, 'Slaves by Nature? Domestic Animals and Human Slaves', *Slavery and Abolition*, 15 (1994), 89–99. See also James Serpell, 'Pet-Keeping and Animal Domestication: A Reappraisal', in Juliet Clutton-Brock (ed.), *The Walking Larder* (London: Hyman Unwin, 1989), pp. 10–21.
4. Gerard Murphy, *Early Irish Lyrics* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1956), p. 3. Murphy also gives the Irish text. This lyric is perhaps the best known of the many produced by Irish monks, usually as marginalia in the manuscripts they copied. This one is part of a miscellany in the monastery of St Paul at Unterdrauburg in Austria.
5. In *The Ladder of Divine Ascent*, a standard handbook for monastic life, St John Climacus (*c.* 579–649) wrote:

   > The cat keeps hold of the mouse. The thought of the hesychast [a monk in profound contemplative prayer] keeps hold of his spiritual mouse. Do not mock the analogy. Indeed, if you do, it shows you do not understand the meaning of stillness.

   St John Climacus, *The Ladder of Divine Ascent*, translated by Colin Luibheid and Norman Russell, introduction by Bishop Kallistos [Timothy Ware] (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1982), p. 262.
6. Steve Baker, *Picturing the Beast* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993).
7. Karl Marx, *The Communist Manifesto*, in *Karl Marx: Selected Writings,*edited by David McLellan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), pp. 221–47, p. 222.
8. The term speciesism was first coined by Richard Ryder. See Richard Ryder, *Victims of Science* (London: Centaur Press, second edition, 1983), Richard Ryder, *Animal Revolution: Changing Atitudes towards Speciesism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1989) and Richard Ryder (ed.), *Animal Welfare and the Environment* (London: Duckworth, 1992). See also John Simons, 'The Longest Revolution: Cultural Studies after Speciesism', *Environmental Values*, VI (1997), pp. 483–97.
9. See Bernard Rollin, *The Unheeded Cry* (Oxford: Oxford University Press. 1990) and David deGrazia, *Taking Animals Seriously* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996). As Darwin noted: 'Having proved men and brutes bodies of one type: almost superfluous to consider minds.' Cited in Jeffrey Moussaief Masson, *The Emperor's Embrace* (London: Vintage, 2000), p. 21.
10. Most notably by Judith Butler in *Gender Trouble* (London: Routledge, 1990).

11. A rather different but complementary approach to my own is taken in the some of the essays edited by Jennifer Ham and Matthew Senior in *Animal Acts* (London: Routledge, 1997).
12. See, for example, Donna Haraway, *Primate Visions* (London: Routledge, 1989) for a critical account of this issue. Richard Wrangham and Dale Peterson, *Demonic Males* (London: Bloomsbury, 1997) is a primatological study designed very much to counter the pastoral narrative that often seems to surround the great apes.
13. For a brief account of the Aquinan position see Andrew Linzey, *Animal Theology* (London: SCM Press, 1994), pp. 12–19.

Chapter 2

1. Peter Singer, *Animal Liberation* (London: Pimlico, second edition, 1995).
2. *Animal Liberation*, p. xvi.
3. *Animal Liberation*, pp. xxi–xxiii.
4. *Animal Liberation*, p. xxii.
5. Keith Tester, *Animals and Society* (London: Routledge, 1991), p. 5.
6. *Animal Liberation*, p. xvi.
7. *Animal Liberation,* pp. 189–97.
8. *Animal Liberation,* p. xv.
9. *Animal Liberation*, p. 7. The quotation comes from Jeremy Bentham's *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation* (London, 1789). See Wilfred Harrison (ed.), *A Fragment on Government and An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1948), p. 412.
10. BBC, *Nine O'Clock News*, 28/1/99. The chimp's owner was found guilty of treating it cruelly.
11. William Blake, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, edited by Geoffrey Keynes (London: Oxford University Press, 1975), p. xxvii.
12. It might be tentatively suggested here that in the history of the United States the contrast between the ideas of Thomas Jefferson and Andrew Jackson could be analysed as residing in the relative importance given to equality and sameness.
13. Tom Regan, *The Case for Animal Rights* (London: Routledge, 1984).
14. *The Case for Animal Rights*, p. xiii.
15. *The Case for Animal Rights*, p. 33.
16. *The Case for Animal Rights*, p. 279.
17. *The Case for Animal Rights*, p. 280.
18. *The Case for Animal Rights*, p. 295.
19. *Taking Animals Seriously*, p. 5.
20. *The Case for Animal Rights*, p. 400.
21. Carol Adams, *The Sexual Politics of Meat* (New York: Continuum, 1990), Carol Adams, *Neither Man nor Beast* (New York: Continuum, 1994).
22. *The Sexual Politics of Meat*, p. 26.
23. Nick Fiddes, *Meat, A Natural Symbol* (London: Routledge, 1991), Juliet Gellatley, *The Silent Ark* (London: Thorsons, 1996).
24. *The Sexual Politics of Meat*, p. 190.
25. *The Sexual Politics of Meat*, p. 45.
26. *The Sexual Politics of Meat*, p. 168.

27. Coral Lansbury, *The Old Brown Dog* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985), Moira Ferguson, 'Breaking in Englishness', *Women: A Cultural Review*, 5 (1994), pp. 34–52.
28. *Neither Man nor Beast*, p. 18.
29. Mary Midgley, *Animals and Why They Matter* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1983).
30. Mary Midgely, *Beast and Man* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1979).
31. *Animals and Why They Matter*, p. 19.
32. *Animals and Why They Matter*, p. 21.
33. *Animal and Why They Matter*, p. 23.
34. *Animals and Why They Matter*, p. 27.
35. *Animals and Why They Matter*, p. 31.
36. Jeffrey Moussaief Masson and Susan McCarthy, *When Elephants Weep* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1994), Jeffrey Moussaief Masson, *Dogs Never Lie about Love* (London: Vintage, 1998), Jeffrey Moussaief Masson, *The Emperor's Embrace* (London: Vintage, 2000).
37. Marjorie Garber, *Dog Love* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1996).
38. James Rachels, *Created from Animals* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991).
39. Stephen Clark, *The Moral Status of Animals* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977), Stephen Clark, *The Nature of the Beast* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982).
40. Stephen Clark, *Animals and their Moral Standing* (London: Routledge, 1997), p. 14.
41. *Animals and Society*, p. 12.
42. *Animals and their Moral Standing*, p. 8.
43. *Animals and their Moral Standing*, p. 144.
44. Andrew Linzey, *Animal Theology* (London: SCM Press, 1994).
45. Tony Sargent, *Animal Rights and Wrongs* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1996).
46. Peter Carruthers, *The Animals Issue* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).
47. *The Animals Issue*, p. 194.
48. *The Animals Issue*, p. 194.
49. *The Animals Issue*, p. 195.
50. *The Animals Issue*, p. 195.
51. Roger Scruton, *Animal Rights and Wrongs* (London: Demos, 1996).
52. *Animal Rights and Wrongs*, p. 91.
53. *Animal Rights and Wrongs*, p. 99.
54. Maureen Duffy, *Men and Beasts* (London: Paladin, 1984). This is a polemical handbook that, among other things, promotes the activity of the Animal Liberation Front.

Chapter 3

1. It could be argued that the reason that Britain was so early in the field of animal welfare was a perception that British animals were in need of protection to a greater degree than those in other countries. Hilda Keen, *Animal Rights* (London: Reaktion Books, 1998) presents an excellent and comprehensive history of the development of animal welfare movements in Britain since 1800.

2. See John Simons, 'Vegetarianism and Citizenship: Some Thoughts on Modern Britain', in Tadeusz Slawek (ed.), *Nourishment and (In)Digestion in the Culture of Literacy* (Franfurt: Peter Lang, 2001).
3. Humphrey Primatt, *The Duty of Mercy and the Sin of Cruelty towards Brute Beasts*, edited by Richard Ryder (Fontwell: Centaur Press, 1992), gives an account of what little is known of Primatt's life on pp. 12–13.
4. *The Duty of Mercy*, p. 21.
5. *The Duty of Mercy*, p. 23.
6. James Rachels, *Created from Animals* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), p. 129. See also Rupert Sheldrake, *Dogs That Know When Their Owners Are Coming Home* (London: Hutchinson, 1999).
7. *The Duty of Mercy*, p. 22.
8. See Simon Schama, *Citizens* (London: Viking, 1989), p. 498, Katherine MacDonogh, 'Prison Pets in the French Revolution', *History Today* 46 (8) (1996), pp. 36–42. Kathleen Kete, *The Beast in the Boudoir* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1994) presents a detailed history of French attitudes to animal in the late eighteenth and nineteenth century. Schama (*Citizens*, pp. 322–4) points out how animals, as the symbol of the injustice of aristocratic rule, were also the victims of the Revolution. For another account of the way that animals were attacked as a gesture of political discontent see Robert Darnton, *The Great Cat Massacre* (Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1985).
9. *The Duty of Mercy*, p. 125.
10. *The Duty of Mercy*, p. 127.
11. *The Duty of Mercy*, p. 16.
12. The works by Nicholson, Oswald, Ritson and Shelley may be found, together with many other interesting texts, in Tim Morton (ed.), *Radical Food*, 3 volumes (London: Routledge, 2000).
13. Lewis Gompertz, *Moral Inquiries on the Situation of Man and of Brutes*, edited by Peter Singer (Fontwell: Centaur Press, 1992).
14. *Moral Inquiries*, p. 31.
15. *Moral Inquiries*, p. 31.
16. *Moral Inquiries*, p. 39.
17. *Moral Inquiries*, p. 65.
18. *Moral Inquiries*, p. 72.
19. *Moral Inquiries*, pp. 116–17. In the first edition of *Animal Liberation*, Peter Singer also included a number of vegetarian recipes.
20. *Moral Inquiries*, p. 85.
21. Richard D. Ryder, *Animal Revolution* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989), pp. 83–8.
22. *Moral Inquiries*, p. 106.
23. Henry Salt, *Animals' Rights Considered in Relation to Social Progress*, preface by Peter Singer (Clarks Summit, Penn.: Society for Animal Rights Inc., 1980).
24. On Carpenter, see John Simons, 'Edward Carpenter, Whitman and the Radical Aesthetic', in *Gender Roles and Sexuality in Victorian Literature*, edited by Christopher Parker (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1995), pp. 115–27.
25. George Hendrick and Willene Hendrick, *The Savour of Salt* (Fontwell: Centaur Press, 1989), p. 10.
26. I had thought that the section on millinery and the extensive use of bird feathers in hats was now obsolete. However, the controversy is still alive it

seems. On Sunday, 19 November 2000 Her Majesty The Queen wore a hat decorated with pheasant feathers to church. This seems to have been in response to criticism that had been levelled at her for wringing the neck of a wounded bird at a shoot on the Sandringham Estate (*Daily Telegraph*, 20 November 2000). The defence of Her Majesty offered by Buckingham Palace was that wringing the bird's neck was the least cruel way to put it out of its pain. However, it might be observed that it would not have been in that pain had it not been blasted out of the sky as part of a day's entertainment.

27. *Animals' Rights*, p. 133.
28. *Animals' Rights*, p. 134.
29. *Animals' Rights*, p. 28.
30. *Animals' Rights*, p. 29.
31. *Animals' Rights*, p. 7.
32. *Animals' Rights*, p. 131.
33. Quoted in J. Howard Moore, *The Universal Kinship*, edited by Charles Magel (Fontwell: Centaur Press, 1992), p. 334. It is sad to record that the gentle and sweet-natured Moore was so distressed by the First World War that he took his own life.
34. E. S. Turner, *All Heaven in a Rage* (Fontwell: Centaur Press, 1992).
35. Bernard Rollin, *Animal Rights and Human Morality* (Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books, revised edition, 1992) is a dense and important work that draws extensively on Rollin's experience as a scientist.
36. One particular scandal that helped to create the climate for the reform of the public schools was the 'boar hunt' that took place at Shrewsbury in 1819. Boys from the school pursued and tormented to death a pig belonging to a local farmer. See John Chandos, *Boys Together* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), pp. 151–2. Christopher Smart's *Hymns for the Amusement of Children* (London, 1772) offers an early example of an educational work designed to inculcate the notion that kindness to animals was a Christian virtue.
37. *All Heaven in a Rage*, p. 326.
38. Keith Thomas, *Mankind and the Natural World* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1984).
39. *Mankind and the Natural World*, p. 16.
40. John Mackenzie, *The Empire of Nature* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988), Alfred Crosby, *Ecological Imperialism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986). James Turner, *Reckoning with the Beast* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980) should also be included in this list. In the field of art history the same arguments apply to Kenneth Clark, *Animals and Men* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1977).
41. Clive Ponting, *A Green History of the World* (London: Sinclair Stevenson, 1991). The same might be said of Peter Marshall's *Nature's Web* (London: Cassel, 1995).
42. Joyce Salisbury, *The Beast Within* (London: Routledge, 1994).
43. Harriet Ritvo, *The Animal Estate* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1987).
44. These arguments are continued in Harriet Ritvo, *The Platypus and the Mermaid* (Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1997).
45. *The Old Brown Dog*, p. xi.

46. Peter Mason, *The Brown Dog Affair* (London: Two Sevens Publishing, 1997).
47. Moira Ferguson, 'Breaking in Englishness', *Women: A Cultural Review*, 5 (1994), pp. 34–52.
48. 'Wenn ein Löwe sprechen könnte, wir könnten ihn nicht verstehen.' Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations* (Oxford: Blackwell, second edition, 1958), p. 223.

Chapter 4

1. There is no good reason to identify this book as there were many like it about at the time and some are still appearing. It would be unfair to single out one author for criticism.
2. This was not because of my disbelief that a war might happen but rather because it seemed to me that the rhetoric of apocalypse that seems a necessary part of a millennial period was not made any less rhetorical by the existence of a technology that could blow us all to pieces. The Icelanders converted to Christianity *en masse* in 1000. They did not need nuclear weapons in order to believe in the imminent end of the world.
3. Anne Brontë, *Agnes Grey* (London: Dent, 1985), pp. 16–17 and pp. 37–9, Anne Brontë, *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1987), p. 37 and elsewhere. Daniel Duffy's 'Fiends instead of Men: Sarah Ellis, Anne Brontë, and the Eclipse of the Early-Victorian Masculine Ideal' is an interesting study which touches on the relationship between cruelty to animals and ideas of the masculine. In Antony Rowland, Emma Liggins and Eriks Uskalis (eds.), *Signs of Maculinity* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1998) , pp. 89–116.
4. George Eliot, *Daniel Deronda* (London: The Zodiac Press, 1971), pp. 110–11.
5. This quotation from Johnson has been in my mind for at least 27 years but I am ashamed to say that I cannot now locate its exact source. I think it is in *The Rambler* but a diligent search has not thrown it up.
6. Judith Butler, *Bodies that Matter* (London: Routledge, 1993).
7. *Bodies that Matter*, pp. 10–11.
8. This is to be found in *Martin Heidegger Basic Writings*, edited by David Farrell Krell (London: Routeledge and Kegan Paul, 1978), pp. 189–242.
9. Quoted in Isaiah Berlin, *The Magus of the North* (London: John Murray, 1993), p. 99.
10. Jean-François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984), p. 71.
11. One defence of Lyotard is that his work should not be read like this (i.e. within a particular time frame) but should be understood as constituted by a number of general statements about the world. I find such argument unconvincing as, presumably, in a book commissioned as *A Report on Knowledge* by the government of Quebec, Lyotard must have felt that his work needed at least some engagement with the world as it then stood. One is reminded of Charcot's comment, taken up by Freud: 'theory is fine, but it does not prevent the facts from being what they are.' Quoted in Jeffrey Masson, *The Emperor's Embrace*, p. 211.
12. Quoted in McClellan, *Karl Marx: Selected Writings*, p. 158.
13. Once again there seems no good reason to pillory the individual responsible.

14. George Steiner, 'To Civilise our Gentlemen', in *George Steiner: A Reader* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1984), pp. 25–36. He says:

    > Recently one of my colleagues, an eminent scholar, inquired of me, with genuine bafflement, why someone trying to to establish himself in an English literature faculty should refer so often to concentration camps; why they were in any way relevant. (p. 35)

15. Claude Lévi-Strauss, 'Postscript to Chapters III & IV', in *Structural Anthropology* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1972), pp. 81–97, especially pp. 90–4.
16. *All Heaven in a Rage*, p. 326.
17. Laurence Coupe (ed.), *The Green Studies Reader* (London: Routledge, 2000). Animals are, likewise, barely mentioned in another valuable anthology of ecocritical writing, Cheryl Glotfelty and Harold Fromm, (eds), *The Ecocriticism Reader* (Athens, GA: The University of Georgia Press, 1996).
18. This term derives from Jonathan Bate's important book *Romantic Ecology* (London: Routledge, 1991).
19. Jonathan Bate, 'Poetry and Biodiversity', in *Writing the Environment*, edited by Richard Kerridge and Neil Sammells (London: Zed Books, 1998), pp. 53–70, p. 65.
20. 'Poetry and Biodiversity', p. 65.
21. Charles Cotton, 'Ode', in *Cotton Selected by Geoffrey Grigson* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1975), lines 40–2.
22. Richard Lovelace, 'The Grassehopper', in *The Metaphysical Poets*, edited by Helen Gardner (Harmsworth: Penguin, revised edition 1972), lines 17–24.
23. See John Simons, 'Marvell's Tulips', *Notes and Queries*, New Series 36 (1989), p. 434.
24. Andrew Marvell, 'The Garden', in *The Metaphysical Poets*, lines 1–8.
25. 'The Garden', 57–8.
26. 'The Garden', 47–8.
27. Andrew Marvell, 'The Nymph Complaining for the Death of her Faun', in *The Metaphysical Poets*.
28. 'The Nymph', lines 1–2.
29. 'The Nymph', 13–17. A deodand is an animal or object that has caused the death of a person and is forfeit to the state.
30. 'The Nymph', 123–4.
31. Val Plumwood, *Feminism and the Mastery of Nature* (London: Routledge, 1993).
32. Ariel Salleh, *Ecofeminism as Politics* (London: Zed Books, 1997).
33. A very useful survey of a range of ecofeminist thought, including that of Plumwood and Salleh, may be found in Carolyn Merchant, *Earthcare* (New York: Routledge, 1995).

Chapter 5

1. A fascinating recent study of communication between animals and humans is Rupert Sheldrake's *Dogs That Know When Their Owners Are Coming Home* (London: Hutchinson, 1999).
2. Robert Burns, 'To a Mouse', in Burns, *Poems and Songs*, edited by James Kinsley (London: Oxford University Press, 1971), lines 7–12.

3. 'To a Mouse', 37–48.
4. Robert Burns, 'Address to the Woodlark', in *Poems and Songs*.
5. 'Address to the Woodlark' 13–16.
6. Both are edited in *Poems and Songs*.
7. Robert Burns, 'On Scaring some Water-fowl in Loch-Turit'.
8. Robert Burns, 'On seeing a wounded Hare', 1–4.
9. 'On seeing a wounded Hare', 5–12.
10. Burns's encounter with the hare in 1789 reminds me of Cowper's account of the hares he kept as pets:

    > It is no wonder that my intimate acquaintance with these specimens of the kind has taught me to hold the sportsman's amusement in abhorrence; he little knows what amiable creatures he persecutes, of what gratitude they are capable, how cheerful they are in their spirits, what enjoyment they have of life, and that, impressed as they seem with a peculiar dread of man, it is only because man gives them a peculiar cause for it.
    >
    > This was published in *The Gentleman's Magazine* (28 May 1784). In December of the same year *The Gentleman's Magazine* also published Cowper's charming epitaph on his hare Tiney.

11. 'On seeing a wounded Hare', 13–16.
12. In *Poems and Songs*.
13. See, for example, *The Seasons*, *Autumn*, lines 360–457. In James Thomson, *Poetical Works* (London: Oxford University Press, 1971).
14. Geoffrey Chaucer, *Troilus and Criseyde*, I, 218–24. In *The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer* edited by F. N. Robinson (London: Oxford University Press, second edition, 1966).
15. *The Essayes of Michael, Lord of Montaigne*, translated by John Florio, 3 volumes (London: Dent, 1910), 2, p. 142.
16. Montaigne, *Essayes*, 2, p. 145.
17. Montaigne, *Essayes*, 2, pp. 124–5. Note how Montaigne's account of his relationship with his dog is precisely that which is perverted by Grandcourt in *Daniel Deronda*.
18. Sir Philip Sidney, from *Astrophel and Stella*, in Sir Philip Sidney, *Selected Prose and Poetry*, edited by Richard Kimbrough (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston Inc., 1969).
19. On this see Jean Seznec, *The Survival of the Pagan Gods* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1972) and Edgar Wind, *Pagan Mysteries in the Renaissance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980). For a comprehensive account of horses (and other animals) in the Renaissance see Erica Fudge, *Perceiving Animals* (London: Macmillan, 1999). See also the essays in Susan Wiseman, Erica Fudge and Ruth Gilbert (eds.), *At the Borders of the Human* (London: Macmillan, 1999).
20. Francis Bacon, *Essays*, edited by Frederic Harrison (London: The Gresham Publishing Co., n.d.), p. 177.
21. Bacon, *Essays*, p. 178.
22. Pico della Mirandola, 'Oration: on the Dignity of Man' in Stevie Davies, *Renaissance Views of Man* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1978), pp. 62–82, pp. 68–9.

23. John Milton, *Paradise Lost*, I, 26. In *The Poems of John Milton*, edited by John Carey and Alastair Fowler (London: Longmans: 1968).
24. It is to be found in Genesis I, 25–31 and II, 1–25.
25. See Tony Sargent, *Animal Rights and Wrongs*, pp. 105–8 and Andrew Linzey, *Animal Gospel* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1998), pp. 53–63.
26. *Paradise Lost*, IV, 616–22.
27. *Paradise Lost*, VII, 506–613.
28. *Paradise Lost*, VIII, 437–44.
29. *Paradise Lost*, VIII, 579–87.
30. *Paradise Lost*, IV, 753–7.
31. *Paradise Lost*, IV, 751–2.
32. *Paradise Lost*, IX, 553–9.
33. *Paradise Lost*, IX, 564–5.
34. *Paradise Lost*, IX, 571–4.
35. *Paradise Lost,* IX, 712.
36. *Paradise Lost,* IX, 1043.
37. *Paradise Lost*, XII, 67–71.
38. *Paradise Lost*, XII, 79–90.
39. See Isobel Hapgood, *Service Book of the Holy Orthodox-Catholic Apostolic Church* (Englewood NJ: Antiochian Orthodox Christian Diocese of N. America, seventh edition, 1996), p. 273.
40. *Paradise Lost*, X, 204–5.
41. Jonquil Bevan, *Izaak Walton's The Compleat Angler: The Art of Recreation* (Brighton: Harvester, 1988)
42. Izaak Walton, *The Complete Angler*, edited by Jonquil Bevan (London: Everyman, 1993), p. 62.
43. *The Complete Angler*, p. 181.
44. Herman Melville, *Moby Dick*, edited by Harrison Hayford and Hershel Parker (New York: Norton, 1967), p. 279.
45. *Moby Dick*, p. 232.
46. *Moby Dick*, p. 232.
47. *Moby Dick*, p. 233.
48. *Moby Dick*, p. 233.

Chapter 6

1. *When Elephants Weep*, *Dogs Never Lie about Love*, *The Emperor's Embrace*.
2. It is strange that the reluctance to attribute 'human' emotions to animals is found in a culture that brings its children up on stories about animals who consistently behave as if they were human.
3. See Rupert Sheldrake, *A New Science of Life* (London: Blond and Briggs, 1981) and Rupert Sheldrake, *The Presence of the Past* (London: HarperCollins, 1988).
4. *When Elephants Weep*, pp. 19–37. See also John Andrew Fisher, 'Disambiguating Anthropomorphism: An Interdisciplinary Review', in P. P. G. Bateson and Peter H. Klopfer (eds), *Perspectives in Ethology*, 9, *Human Understanding and Animal Awareness* (New York: Plenum Press, 1991), pp. 49–85.

5. There seems good reason for speculation that our own experience may be of this kind too but that our linguistic presentation of it to ourselves and others acts as a filter that prevents us from fully understanding its nature.
6. *The Silent Ark*, p. x.
7. Kenneth Grahame, *The Wind in the Willows*, in *The Penguin Kenneth Grahame* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1983), pp. 179–309, p. 245.
8. *The Wind in the Willows*, pp. 245–6.
9. Arthur Machen, *The Hill of Dreams*, in *The Collected Arthur Machen*, edited by Christopher Palmer (London: Duckworth, 1988), pp. 171–294, pp. 181–2.
10. *The Wind in the Willows*, p. 246.
11. Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, in *Basic Writings of Nietzsche*, edited by Walter Kaufmann (New York: The Modern Library, 1968), p. 60
12. *The Wind in the Willows*, p. 246.
13. Jonathan Swift, *A Modest Proposal* in *Gulliver's Travels and Other Writings*, edited by Louis A. Landa (London: Oxford University Press, 1976), pp. 439–46, p. 440.
14. Issac Bashevis Singer, 'The Letter Writer', in *The Seance and Other Stories* (New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 1968), p. 270.
15. Art Spiegelman, *Maus: A Survivor's Tale* (London: André Deutsch, 1987).
16. John Coetzee, *The Lives of Animals* (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999), p. 50.
17. Eliezer bar Judah of Worms, 'The Murder of Bellet and Hannah', in *The Penguin Book of Hebrew Verse*, edited and translated by T. Carmi (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1981), pp. 387–8.
18. Isaac Bashevis Singer, *Enemies, A Love Story* (New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 1972), p. 257.
19. Steven Wise, *Rattling the Cage* (London: Profile Books, 2000), p. 101.
20. *Animal Gospel*, p. 39.
21. T. S. Eliot, 'Burbank with a Baedecker: Bleistein with a Cigar' and 'Sweeney Among the Nightingales', in *The Complete Poems and Plays of T. S. Eliot* (London: Faber, 1969), p. 41 and p. 56.
22. George Steiner, 'The Hollow Miracle' in *George Steiner: A Reader* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1984), pp. 207–19, p. 218.
23. Jonathan Swift, *Gulliver's Travels* in *Gulliver's Travels and Other Writings*, pp. 1–239, p. 189.
24. *Gulliver's Travels*, p. 237.
25. *Ecological Imperialism*, pp. 171–94.
26. *Gulliver's Travels*, p. 238.
27. *Gulliver's Travels*, p. 193.
28. *Gulliver's Travels*, p. 193.
29. Eleanor Atkinson, *Greyfriar's Bobby* (London: Penguin, 1996), *Babe*, directed by Chris Noonan (Universal Pictures, 1995).
30. *Dog Love*, p. 258.
31. See *The Brown Dog Affair* for a full account of these monuments.
32. *The Brown Dog Affair*, p. 106.
33. Quoted in Graham Reynolds, *Victorian Painting* (London: Studio Vista, 1966), p. 15.

34. Alexander Pope, *Epigram. Engraved on the Collar of a Dog which I gave to his Royal Highness*, in *The Poems of Alexander Pope*, edited by John Butt (London: Methuen, 1968), p. 826.
35. *Greyfriar's Bobby*, p. 88.

Chapter 7

1. Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, edited by Albert Hamilton (London: Longman, 1977), II, xii, stanzas 85–6.
2. Homer, *The Odyssey*, translated by A. T. Murray (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1919), X, 239–43.
3. *The Faerie Queene*, II, xii, stanzas 86–7.
4. Marsilio Ficino, *The Letters of Marsilio Ficino*, preface by Paul O. Kristeller (London: Shepheard-Walwyn, 1975), 2 volumes, I, p. 132.
5. Alexander Pope, *The Odyssey of Homer*, edited by Maynard Mack (London: Methuen, 1967), 2 volumes, X, 278–81.
6. Henry More, *The Purification of a Christian Man's Soul* in *The Cambridge Platonists*, edited by C. A. Patrides (London, Edward Arnold: 1969), pp. 200–12, p. 207.
7. David Williams, *Deformed Discourse* (Exeter: Exeter University Press, 1996), p. 178.
8. *Bestiary*, translated and introduced by Richard Barber (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1999), p. 19.
9. Pasquale Malaspina de' Marchesi di S. Margherita, *De l'elefante mandato dal Re di Portogallo a Papa Leone*, quoted in Silvio A. Bedini, *The Pope's Elephant* (Manchester: Carcanet, 1997), p. 36. For an entertaining history of other royal and papal animals, see Katharine MacDonogh, *Reigning Cats and Dogs* (London: Fourth Estate, 1999).
10. Michael Allin, *Zarafa* (London, Headline, 1998), p. 173.
11. These two books were published together in The Phoenix Library (London: Chatto and Windus, 1928).
12. Virginia Woolf, *Flush* (Harmonsworth: Penguin, 1977), Sigrid Nunez, *Mitz* (New York: HarperFlamingo, 1998).
13. *Lady into Fox*, p. 5.
14. *Lady into Fox*, p. 2.
15. *The Silent Ark*, p. 9.
16. *Lady into Fox*, p. 91.
17. *A Man in the Zoo*, p. 106.
18. *A Man in the Zoo*, p. 103.
19. *A Man in the Zoo*, p. 105.
20. *A Man in the Zoo*, p. 147.
21. *A Man in the Zoo*, p. 153.
22. *A Man in the Zoo*, p. 189. The corresponding passage from *Paradise Lost* reads:

> The world was all before them, where to choose
> Their place of rest, and providence their guide:
> Thus hand in hand with wandering steps and slow,
> Through Eden took their solitary way.
>
> (XII, 646–9)

23. Will Self, *Great Apes* (London: Bloomsbury, 1997).
24. For example, The Saatchi Gallery, where part of the novel is set, was the scene of the exhibition of John Isaac's 1995 work *Untitled (Monkey)*. See Steve Baker, 'Sloughing the Human', *Performance Research,* 5 (2000), pp. 70–81, pp. 74–5. For a brief analysis of animals and food in Self's *My Idea of Fun*, see John Simons. 'Beyond Human Communities: Self Identity, Animal Rights and Vegetarianism', *Critical Survey*, 8 (1996), pp. 49–57.
25. *Great Apes*, p. 396.
26. *Great Apes*, p. 404.
27. *Great Apes*, p. 404.
28. Marie Darrieussecq, *Pig Tales* (London: Faber & Faber, 1997), William Kotzwinkle, *The Bear Went Over the Mountain* (London: Black Swan, 1997).
29. *The Bear Went Over the Mountain*, p. 74.
30. Lord Byron, *The Prisoner of Chillon*, 381–91. In John Jump (ed.), *Byron, Poetical Works* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970), pp. 336–340.
31. *The Bear Went Over the Mountain*.
32. Lucius Apuleius, *The Golden Asse*, translated by William Adlington (London: The Abbey Library, n.d.).
33. *The Golden Asse*, pp, vi–vii.
34. Henry Chettle, *Piers Plainness*, in *The Descent of Euphues,* edited by James Winny (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1957), pp. 122–74.
35. *The Golden Asse*, pp. 207–8.
36. John Milton, *Samson Agonistes*, 348–52 in *The Poems of John Milton*, edited by John Carey and Alastair Fowler (London: Longmans, 1968).
37. *Samson Agonistes*, 1402–3.
38. *Paradise Lost*, I, 462–3.
39. *Samson Agonistes*, 748.
40. John Milton, *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce* in *Selected Prose*, edited by C. A. Patrides (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1974), pp. 112–80, p. 141.
41. Midas Dekkers, *Dearest Pet* (London: Verso, 1994), See also Alphonso Longis, *Dangerous Emotions* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), pp. 25–39.
42. *The Booke of the Common Prayer*, in *The First and Second Prayer Books of King Edward VI*, with an introduction by Douglas Harrison (London: Dent, 1968), pp. 1–317, p. 252.
43. Peter Hoeg, *The Woman and the Ape* (London: The Harvill Press, 1996), Anne Haverty, *One Day as a Tiger* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1997), John Coetzee, *Disgrace* (London: Martin Secker and Warburg, 1999).
44. *The Woman and the Ape*, p. 84.
45. *The Woman and the Ape*, p. 167.
46. One is reminded here of Keats's use of the word 'tread', redolent of the copulation of birds, in his 'Ode to a Nightingale':

    Thou wast not born for death immortal bird,
    No hungry generations tread thee down.

47. *The Woman and the Ape*, p. 171.
48. *The Woman and the Ape*, p. 216.
49. *One Day as a Tiger*, p. 24.
50. *One Day as a Tiger*, p. 24.
51. *One Day as a Tiger*, p. 25.

52. *One Day as a Tiger*, p. 125.
53. William Blake, *Complete Poetry and Prose*, edited by Geoffrey Keynes (London: Nonesuch, 1967), p. 100.
54. *Disgrace*, p. 219.
55. *Disgrace*, p. 205.
56. See John Simons, 'Nietzsche, Darwin and Balaam's Ass', in Tadeusz Rachwal and Tadeusz Slawek (eds), *Organs, Organisms and Organisations* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2000), pp. 9–15. The best recent account of Nietzsche's last days is to be found in Lesley Chamberlain, *Nietzsche in Turin* (London: Quartet Books, 1997).
57. Adam Mickiewicz, *Pan Tadeusz*, translated by Kenneth R. Mackenzie (New York: Hippocrene Books Inc., 1992), p. 180.
58. Radclyffe Hall, *The Well of Loneliness* (London: Virago Press, 1982), pp. 68–9.
59. Thomas Hardy, 'The Darkling Thrush' in *The Collected Poems of Thomas Hardy* (London, Macmillan, fourth edition, 1974), p. 137.
60. *The Well of Loneliness*, p. 223.

Chapter 8

1. William Blake, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, in *Complete Poetry and Prose*, pp. 181–93, p. 183.
2. Baldassare Castiglione, *The Book of the Courtier*, translated by Sir Thomas Hoby, with an introduction by J. H. Whitfield (London: Dent, 1974), p. 322.
3. Christopher Marlowe, *Dr Faustus*, I. i. 34–7. In *The Complete Works of Christopher Marlowe*, edited by Fredson Bowers, 2 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), I, pp. 121–272.
4. *Dr Faustus*, I. iv. 382–3.
5. Goethe, *Faust*, translated by Bayard Taylor (London: Sphere Books, 1974), p. 168. The German text of the whole speech reads:

   Ach, mitten im Gesange sprang
   Ein rotes Mauschen ihr aus dem Munde!
   Faust, Part 1, 4179–80

6. Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, in *Basic Writings of Nietzsche*, edited by Walter Kaufmann (New York: Random House, 1968), p. 52.
7. Reproduced in Dona Gilliam and Mizzy McCaskill, *The Whistler's Pocket Companion* (Mel Bay Publications Inc., 1982), p. 109.
8. In *An Essay concerning Human Understanding* quoted in *Political Theory and Animal Rights*, edited by Paul Clarke and Andrew Linzey (London: Pluto Press, 1990), pp. 21–2.
9. Richard Wagner, *The Ring of the Nibelung*, translated by Andrew Porter (London: Faber, 1977), p. 203.
10. *The Ring of the Nibelung*, p. 203.
11. This is reproduced by Steve Baker in *The Postmodern Animal* (London: Reaktion Books, 2000), p. 50. To be fair on Sherman I am not suggesting here that she is wearing an actual pig's nose. What I am concerned with is the symbolism of her image.
12. Donna Haraway, *Primate Visions* (London: Routledge, 1989), p. 288.

13. *The Sexual Politics of Meat*, p. 190.
14. Goethe, *Faust*, Part 1, 1237.
15. In *Faking It*, edited by Digby Anderson and Peter Mullen (London: Penguin, 1998), pp. 147–59.
16. *Faking It*, p. 153
17. *Faking It*, 158–9.
18. Ruth L. Ozecki, *My Year of Meat* (London: Picador, 1998). A very interesting and highly experimental novel that also deserves attention in the context of this discussion is Deborah Levy's *Diary of a Steak* (London: Book Works, 1997).
19. There are many ways of defining vegetarianism and these are of varying reliability. The figures that follow are mainly derived from two sources: The Vegetarian Society and The Vegetarian Resource Group. Both these organisations are concerned to promote vegetarianism but their figures are usually based on those produced by or for the food industry.
20. Rationing Records 1945 (<http://www.vegsoc.org/info/staveg.html>), Summary of RealEat Polls (<http://www.vegsoc.org.info/realeat/html>).
21. *IVU Newsletter*, October 1995 (<wysiwyg://13/http://ivu.news/95-96/general.html>). I am indebted to staff at Viva! for providing me with some correspondence on regional patterns of meat eating in Germany and a questionnaire returned by Animal Rights Sweden. This reported a figure of 5 per cent vegetarians for 1999. See also Christel Larsson and Gunnar Johansson, 'Prevalence of Vegetarians in Swedish Secondary Schools,' *Scandinavian Journal of Nutrition*, 41 (1997), pp. 117–20.
22. 'How Many Vegetarians are There?' *Vegetarian Journal*, May/June 2000 (<http://www.vrg.org/journal/vj2000may/2000maypoll.html>).
23. Summary of RealEat Polls (<http://www.vegsoc.org/info/realeat.html>).
24. Summary of RealEat Polls.
25. Summary of RealEat Polls.
26. Summary of RealEat Polls.
27. Summary of RealEat Polls.
28. NOP Poll for Dalepak (<http://www.vegsoc.org/info/statveg.html>) and Gallup Poll for Granose (<http://www.vegsoc.org/info/staveg.html>).
29. Taylor Nelson Poll for RSPCA (<http://www.vegsoc.org/info/staveg.html>).
30. On this see Alan Warde, *Consumption, Food and Taste* (London: Sage, 1997), pp. 32–3 and 84–8. Colin Spencer, *The Heretic's Feast* (London: Fourth Estate, 1994) offers a compact but comprehensive history of vegetarianism.
31. Quorn is a vegetable-based material widely used as a substitute for meat. The Quorn is a foxhunt.
32. See George McKay, *Senseless Acts of Beauty* (London: Verso, 1996) for a study of some of these phenomena.
33. John Gray, *Enlightenment's Wake* (London: Routledge, 1995), p. 184.
34. *Enlightenment's Wake*, p. 184.
35. David Selborne, *The Principle of Duty* (London: Sinclair-Stevenson, 1994), p. 241.
36. *The Principle of Duty*, p. 240.
37. White speaks of 'myriads' of swallows (p. 41), 'vast flocks' of chaffinches (p. 43), 'vast flocks' of common linnets (p. 44), 'myriads on myriads' of martins (p. 185), and even the ring ouzel, which he describes as 'rare' as congregating

in flocks of 20–30 birds (p. 66). Gilbert White, *TheNatural History of Selborne* (London: Dent, 1902). For a charming account of White's relationship with one animal, see Gilbert White, *The Portrait of a Tortoise*, with an introduction and notes by Sylvia Townsend Warner (London: Virago, 1981).

38. Virgil, *The Aeneid* VI 126–130:

> facilis descensus in Averno;
> noctes atque dies patet atri ianua Ditis;
> set revocare gradum superasque evadere ad auras,
> hoc opus, hic labor est.

(The way down to Avernus is easy, the gates of the house of Pluto are open both night and day. But to retrace your steps and to find your way back to the light of day: that is the work, that is the difficult thing.)

39. See Numbers 22, verses 21–35.
40. *Homilies*, quoted in Jon Wynne-Tyson, *The Extended Circle* (London: Cardinal, 1990).
41. Lord comes from Old English *hlaford*. This derives from *hlaf weard* (guardian of the loaf).
42. Thomas Traherne, *Centuries* (Leighton Buzzard: The Faith Press, 1975), p. 14.
43. William Cowper, *The Task*, VI, 321–5, in William Cowper, *Poetical Works*, edited by H. S. Milford, fourth edition corrected and augmented by Norma Russell (London: Oxford University Press, 1971).

Epilogue

1. Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (London: Vintage, 1994), pp. 51–52.
2. Edward Said, *Orientalism* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978).

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