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Confini animali dell'anima umana. Prospettive e problematiche

Animal boundaries of the human soul. Perspectives and problems

CURATORE/EDITOR:

Myrtha de Meo-Ehlert

1. SAGGIO/ESSAY: Cecilia Muratori

Between Machinery and Rationality Two opposing Views on Animals in the Reinassance – and Their Common Origin

The debate on animal souls has been a feature of European thought since the seventeenth century. It originated primarily in human concerns over the metaphysical structure of reality, rather than from an impartiality towards animals. However, it was in the wake of this discussion that reflection on the status of animals, untethered from human considerations and interests, was born in eighteenth and nineteenth-century England. In particular, attention shifted from the human to the animal realm, and this interest was not limited to the issue of the animal afterlife but, moving from a scriptural basis, was focused on the elaboration of ethical perspectives there were inclusive of non-human animals. The present work will focus on four books published by Anglican pastors between 1742 and 1838 that trace the rise of Christian animal ethics.

2. SAGGIO/ESSAY: Brian Donovan Johnson

The Animal Soul in the Seventeenth Century The opposing Views of Descartes and Gassendi

The most salient feature of the relationship between René Descartes and Pierre de Gassendi is the long controversy that marred their friendship. The question of the animal soul is a prominent part of that controversy. Descartes denies animals possession of a soul, while Gassendi admits the existence of an animal soul, although he denies animal reasoning ability. A comparison of each thinker's philosophy of animal nature reveals that Descartes's animal and Gassendi's animal are strikingly similar, highlighting the fact that their dispute over the question of the animal soul is less about conflicting theories of animal nature than it is about Gassendi's discontent with Descartes's arguments for an immaterial soul.

3. SAGGIO/ESSAY: Felice Cimatti

Ten Theses on Animality

Ten theses on animality are presented in order to delineate what the philosophical concept of “animality” really is. The ten theses are: Animality, Animality is different from anti-speciesism; Animality does not directly concern ethics; Homo sapiens has never been an animal; Animality and language; Animality and immanence; Animality beyond animals; Animality and the “mystical”; Becoming-animal.

4. SAGGIO/ESSAY: Reinhardt Brandt

Von der Seele der Tiere und dem menschlichen Denken

The intelligence of animals is marvellous; their communication by signs is extremely refined, nobody can deny it. How can one defend the opinion that animals cannot think? My thesis: The mental activities of animals can be explained as psychological processes, they cannot be subsumed under the norms of logics, they are not true or false, they don't contradict each other, they are not necessarily affirmative or negative. By this, thinking activities of men are different from the intelligence of animals.

5. SAGGIO/ESSAY: Luc Foisneau

Sovranità e animalità. Che lettore di Hobbes è Agamben?

This paper is meant to contribute to the discussion on the contrast between sovereign powers addressing human beings and the transformation of men into animals in specific contexts in which juridical measures and ontological situation diverge. Our aim is to show that Agamben's interpretation of this contrast in terms of a state of exception does not comply with the notion of justice meant by Hobbes when he devised his state of nature. In order to prove it, we argue that the figures of men regressing to the status of a brute that can be hunted, as described by Hobbes, derive from his careful reading of the Statute of Provisors, that allows the chasing of a criminal in certain juridically-determined conditions.

6. SAGGIO/ESSAY: Richard Fry

Bayle's 'Rorarius', Leibniz and Animal Souls

Bayle produces a set of three criteria to evaluate views of non-human animal souls. These criteria arise from Bayle's interaction with the extant Modern views on the topic and are meant to capture features that any successful view will have. Bayle criticizes Leibniz's view of animal souls at length for its reliance on the theory of pre-established harmony, entering into a long exchange with Leibniz on the topic, but Bayle never explicitly applies his criteria. This leads some (including Leibniz) to conclude that Bayle thinks Leibniz's view satisfies the criteria. I argue in this paper that Leibniz's view properly satisfies at most one of Bayle three criteria, but that this examination shows a deep tension between two of those criteria.

7. SAGGIO/ESSAY: Leonardo Caffo, Ernesto C. Sferrazza Papa

Nuda vita come animalità. Un argomento di ontologia sociale contro Giorgio Agamben

In this paper, through the tools of social ontology, we criticize the concept of "anthropological machine" theorized by the Italian philosopher Giorgio Agamben. According to Agamben, the "machine" produces a hierarchy (animal-human-citizen), but we argue that his perspective is still anthropocentric. We substitute the dispositif of inclusion/exclusion with a cascade scheme, where every point of the scheme is considered as a social object. In the end, we show how this perspective allows to consider animality as a primary condition of possibility of all other divisions.

8. SAGGIO/ESSAY: Annika Willer

*«Si dimostra in contra noi crudelissima fiera». Animals and the debates about the sexes in Moderata Fonte's *Il merito delle donne**

In this paper I seek to analyse animal metaphors and comparisons in Moderata Fonte's *Il merito delle donne* (1600), a women-authored contribution to the early modern debate about the sexes. I would like to argue that Fonte links men with animals to emphasize their cruelty towards women and tries to establish the benevolent relationship between animals of the same species as a normative model for the relationship between the sexes.

9. SAGGIO/ESSAY: Saverio Ansaldi

Giordano Bruno. Heroism, Metamorphosis and Animality

The question I wish to ask is the following: why does Bruno appeal to the theme of “speculative” heroism in a work of magic? What are the relationships between heroism, magic and animality? Can magic be equated with heroism? Or is the nature of the mage different from that of the hero? To begin answering the question, we must, in my opinion, revisit the theme of the relationship between heroic frenzy and animal frenzy, as presented by Bruno in *The Heroic Frenzies*. In this context, the relationship between heroism, metamorphosis and animality, highlighted in *The Heroic Frenzies*, is at the heart of Brunian magic.

10. SAGGIO/ESSAY: Federico Morganti

Natural Theology and the Origin of Instincts. Debating the Divine Government of Animals in Early Nineteenth-Century Britain

In recent years, Robert M. Young’s well-known description of natural theology as the «common context» which in early nineteenth-century Britain sanctioned the alliance between science and religion has been questioned in many respects. In what follows, Young’s view is further discussed by focusing on the study of animal faculties. First, I contend that in the first half of the century there could be extensive disagreement over the manner in which the deity governed animal behavior, despite the view commonly held on the origin of instincts. Secondly, by presenting the perspective of Henry Brougham (1778-1868) I argue that natural theology was now more willing to ascribe to animals some degree of intelligence. Finally, I provide some considerations on the importance of these developments for the emergence of the evolutionary explanations of animal faculties.

11. SAGGIO/ESSAY: Eric Baratay

La théologie à la campagne. Exorcisme et excommunication des insectes en France au XVIIIe siècle

The requests for the authorisation to excommunicate or exorcise harmful animals provide a glimpse into the cultural and religious depths of the 18th century. They give the reasons, the ceremonies demanded and the hopes raised. They also bring the compromises traded between orthodox theological interpretations and the ideas of the majority, the confusion maintained here and there, and thus the various ways of handling holy affairs. They also shed light on the peasants’ perceptions of agricultural scourges, popular and cultivated conceptions of the animal and its place in nature and religion.

12. SAGGIO/ESSAY: Katja Krause

Albert the Great on Animal and Human Origin in his Early Works

Among historians of philosophy and science, Albert the Great (ca. 1200-1280) is well-known for his scientific outlook on animals. His mature commentary on the *De animalibus* (after 1258) has been praised for its revival of a *scientia de animalibus*, covering animal diversity in its psycho-physiological nature, generation and habitat, and the causes that lead to this diversity. Far less attention has been paid to the genesis of this scientific outlook, found in his early theological works. This lack of attention, however, has resulted in two gaps in the literature. On the one hand, we have not fully appreciated Albert's motivations and reasons for his mature scientific decisions. On the other hand, we have not fully grasped the systematic impact that his appropriation of the *scientia de animalibus* had on the developments of related systematic fields, such as his eschatology and theological anthropology. The purpose of this paper is to begin to address this second gap in the literature. I show how and why Albert's systematic integration of the Aristotelian model of animal epigenesis into his eschatology and theological anthropology resulted in a thorough modification of his Christian conception of the human soul's *creatio ex nihilo* in his mature works.

13. SAGGIO/ESSAY: Simone Guidi

L'angelo e la bestia. Metafisica dell'istinto, tra Pierre Chanet e Marin Cureau de La Chambre

In this essay we address the debate between Pierre Chanet and Marin Cureau de La Chambre on animal instinct, analyzing it in depth and connecting it to the question of the relationship between God and secondary causes. While Chanet considers instinctive actions as the result of a direct intervention by God, that would conduct his creatures beyond their natural limits, Cureau places them in the cognitive structure that God has given to the animals, doing of instinctive actions natural actions in the strict sense. Starting from that, Cureau can introduce a bizarre analogy between animal's innate capability to act in the environment beyond any previous experience and the innate knowledge of angels. This comparison is strongly criticized by Chanet and probably persuades Cureau to change his presentation of the soul in his late masterpiece *Le Système de l'âme*. My conclusion is that both Chanet's and Cureau's account for animal instinct are functional to an anthropocentric metaphysics that keeps human soul as an intellective, individual and separable substance; but they also provide - especially with Cureau - a good example of a compromise between hyломorphism, dualism and mechanism.

14. SAGGIO/ESSAY: Jean-Luc Guichet

Animalité et humanité au XVIIIe siècle: Condillac, Diderot, Rousseau

The paper shows how Condillac, Diderot and Rousseau deal, in different ways, with the main aspects of the question of animals in the French XVIIIe century. Condillac, who renews Locke's research, addresses the issue to elucidate the origin of knowledge. Diderot sees in animals a mean to enter material laws of life, matter and finally man. Rousseau focuses on anthropology and also ethics, promoting animal as a key to understand man. Thus, these three authors allow us to catch a synthetic view on the very rich question of animals and its stakes in the Enlightenment.

15. SAGGIO/ESSAY: Zohra Makadmini

Das fleischverschmähende Tier als Weg zur Gerechtigkeit

This paper focuses on two fables of the famous arabic book *Kalila wa Dimna*, which is based on the indian *Pancatantra*, dedicated to the relationship between ruler and his philosophical adviser. To impart morals without endangering oneself too much, symbols and metaphors are used and the reader has to discover the masked meaning of these fables himself. I will give an interpretation of the allegory of the lion becoming a vegetarian showing the use of metaphors in this arabic bestseller.

16. SAGGIO/ESSAY: Thiemo Breyer

Bestie – Sull'anatomia del terrore di fronte all'animale

This essay describes various forms of bestial figures (from wild animals to human sadists and spree killers to zombies and vampires) and figurations (institutional systems such as the ancient Roman criminal law with its practices of execution), in which some figures are embedded. The evoked monstrosities exhibit a chiasmatic interconnection of two orders that touches on the well-known dualities of immanence and transcendence as well as life and death. The specific intentionality of the living-as-dead and the animalic-as-human is identified and used to illustrate this double-structure, which can also be expressed in paradoxical predications. Eventually, as will be argued, it is only in human form that the animalic can turn into the bestial.

17. SAGGIO/ESSAY: Stefano Oliva

«Come un che di animale». Wittgenstein etologo

In his mature works (Philosophical Investigations, On Certainty) Wittgenstein develops the idea that the linguistic accord between men is not the result of a conventional agreement but the consequence of a common way of feeling. In this perspective, the certainty that characterizes the linguistic behavior, typical of human form of life, has to be intended not as a cultural item but as “something animal” that lies over our capacity of giving justifications about our beliefs.

18. SAGGIO/ESSAY: Laurence Boulègue

L'ontologie de l'âme noétique dans le débat sur l'immortalité de l'âme en Italie (1516-1518). Quomodo de anima intellectiva considerat naturalis

The present study aims to demonstrate how the question of the ontological status of the intellectual soul – anima or intellectus – as exposed and discussed in the controversy over the immortality of the soul which opposed Pietro Pomponazzi and Agostino Nifo in 1516-1518, aroused a heated debate between the Alexandrist and the Averroïst. This question was also part and parcel of a politico-theological issue, revived by the bull *Apostolici regiminis* of 1513, which related to the respective fields of philosophy and theology, the latter defending a locus sacer forbidden to the philosophical speculations.

19. SAGGIO/ESSAY: Mónica B. Cragolini

«Animula, vagula, blandula», o sobre el alma perdidas de los animales

This paper analyzes a frame of the history of Western Thought in which the issue of animals soul and feeling arises. This paper shows how in Antoniana Margarita, a Gómez Pereira's work, the animal is considered from the point of view of human needs (too human needs, as Nietzsche would say). The question is how it became necessary to deprive animals of soul, in order to use them for production, experimentation and performance (in zoos, circuses, etc).

20. SAGGIO/ESSAY: Alma Massaro

Dall'anima degli animali ai diritti animali

The debate on animal souls has been a feature of European thought since the seventeenth century. It originated primarily in human concerns over the metaphysical structure of reality, rather than from an impartiality towards animals. However, it was in the wake of this discussion that reflection on the status of animals, untethered from human considerations and interests, was born in eighteenth and nineteenth-century England. In particular, attention shifted from the human to the animal realm, and this interest was not limited to the issue of the animal afterlife but, moving from a scriptural basis, was focused on the elaboration of ethical perspectives there were inclusive of non-human animals. The present work will focus on four books published by Anglican pastors between 1742 and 1838 that trace the rise of Christian animal ethics.

21. SAGGIO/ESSAY: Nikolaus Egel

Der gutherzige Tiger. Tierversunft und Skepsis in Michael de Montaignes Apologie für Raymond Sebond

The paper introduces Michel de Montaigne's discussion of the mind of animals in his Essay Apology for Raimond Sebond (II, 12) and focuses on its role as a sceptical strategy in Montaigne's thought for doubting human knowledge claims in general. The thesis of this article is thus, that Montaigne is not only defending the possible rationality and the rights of animals per se, but that he also uses animals in one of his most famous Essays to question our anthropocentric understanding of reason and to doubt the fundamental possibility of gaining certitude. By establishing a sceptical philosophical discourse with the animals as main actors, Montaigne does not only declare the traditional demarcation line between animals and human beings as null and void, but he also shows that every dogmatic and anthropocentric argument is open for question. The aim of the discussion in the Apology is less epistemological than rather ethical and political: By comparing our reason to the minds of animals, we can learn something quite important, namely that we hurt animals, each other and also ourselves by overexcessive knowledge claims which may result in terrible practical consequences for every living creature and especially for human society. Montaigne's sceptical arguments for the defense of animals are meant as a sceptical cure not only for our wrong-headed opinions about the minds of animals, but also for every ill-founded dogmatic view which may lead to epistemic arrogance and – in succession – ethical intolerance.

22. INTERVISTA/INTERVIEW: Myrtha de Meo-Ehlert, John Burnside

Animals in and around Poetry. Intervista a John Burnside

The Scottish poet and novelist John Burnside, winner of the T.S. Eliot Prize (2011) and the Forward Poetry Prize (2011), author of 14 books of poetry and 12 novels, has explored his first novel *The Dumb House* the origin of language picking up the thread of the Persian myth of Akbar the Great and his experiment with children growing in an environment without any contact to human language. The research on how and what human language can express and reflect of human perception of the world and, even more, of its role in the world, is one of the main questions Burnside poses in his writings. In this interview the role of perception, language and imagination as main elements of any poetic production, but also usually identified as main distinction between humans and animals will be discussed, reflecting on Burnside's poems, the Aristotelian definitions of soul and imagination, Montaigne and Stifter.