

Meta-Ethical Outlook on Animal Behaviours

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Abstract

The nominal ground that entwines human beings and animal behaviours is unwilling to admit moral valuing as a non-human act. Just to nail it down explicitly, two clauses ramify the moral conscience of human beings as follows: a) Can non-humans be moral beings?, b) Unconscious animal behaviours go beyond any moral judgments. My approach aims to rebuff these anthropomorphic clauses by justifying animals' moral beings and animals' moral behaviours from a meta-ethical stance. A meta-ethical outlook may enable an analysis of ethical and normative views through the limit of moral motives and reasoning. Animals' sense of moral motives and their apparatus of getting involved in moral acts cannot be compared with human actions. In human moral engagement, we abide by moral paradigmatic theories and their diversified attitudes that could have conceptual and linguistic use in our societal discourses. However, animals' intentional apparatus may have the propensity to choose an act following the moral consequences (care, utility, responsibility, etc.) in their life-forms.

Keywords: Meta-ethics, Animal behaviours, Morality, Genotype-phenotype, Universal toolkit, Ecological adaption.

1. Introduction

Two primordial clauses that safeguard the moral endowment of human beings are as follows:

- a) Non-humans could not be moral beings.
- b) Unconscious animal behaviours are beyond any moral judgment.

This paper aims to challenge these anthropomorphic clauses by justifying animals' moral beings and animals' moral behaviours from a meta-ethical viewpoint.

2. The Crux of Moral Being: A Pattern in the Mind

The Darwinian evaluation of animals seeks to expound on different types of animals' behaviours (ethology) and characteristics that evolve in natural selection in their natural settings (ecology). There are ample numbers of animals whose physi-

cal structures, behaviours, and life-forms are different from humans. Besides, some animals whose behaviours, appearances, and collective essence of life-forms seem quite similar to humans. This brings us to an important question—‘How could animals’ mental behaviours adopt the evolutionary antecedent behaviours?’

As has often been pointed out, the Cartesian line-up discards the notion of any mental life-forms of animals by prioritizing self-consciousness as a unique intrinsic property of human beings. Animals are thus full of bodily events without being allied to mental processes. Cartesian dualism contains an unbridgeable gulf between human consciousness and animal mechanisms (automata). There is no psychological superiority of thought in the animal’s brain (Descartes 1970: iv). The paradigmatic characteristic of thought in an animal’s mind seems weaker in Descartes’ writing. ‘What is mental life?’ To define the notion of mental life, I favour a quote from William James:

Mental and physical events are, on all hands, admitted to present the strongest contrast in the entire field of being. The chasm which yawns between them is less easily bridged over by the mind than any interval we know (James 1950: 134).

We can find a disparity between our mental content and bodily behaviours. The Cartesian doctrine of the dualism of mind and body and its interaction looks entirely debatable since Descartes barely looks back to the question of mental content from the prospect of language. The Cartesian picture of the mind is a non-embodied substance whose state consists of thought. Besides, British empiricist Locke induces language from an external social reality that corresponds to thought. Implementing the language in the thought procedure evokes an *idea* in the agent’s mind and also infuses *ideas* with reality. A fruitful communication for Locke rests on the words that correspond to *ideas*. Locke writes, “To make words serviceable to the end of communication, it is necessary (as he has said) that they excite in the hearer, exactly the same *idea* they stand for in the mind of the speaker” (Locke 1993: 270, or III 9, 6). For Locke, the concept of knowledge relies on the accumulation of experience. He believes in the initial blankness of minds. The Lockean model pins down an animal’s perceptual procedure, memory system, and reason, but does not appreciate any abstraction (*idea*) process. The passive process of perception of humans and animals is sensation-based. In fact, animals have limited sensory apparatus, so their perception has a vague sense. Locke believes in the working memory of animals like a bird who can imitate a tune that they listened to a couple of days before. Even animals have the propensity to compare or discriminate between two different things in a limited sense, and we can take the example of a dog who can compare two objects like a liquid and a solid, etc. Lockean theory construes a crucial demarcation between men and animals by bringing to bear an abstraction theory that engages words to represent the *ideas*. As animals do not have access to words, they cannot construct their *ideas*. Animal’s sense-centric degrees of reason may encompass intelligence and comparison, but their cognitive apparatuses are unable to grab any abstraction in general.

The rationalist account of Descartes and the empiricist account of Locke unify the identity of human beings, where rationality, consciousness, thought, and experience play a very crucial role. For Wittgenstein, the method of thinking is a conscious level of understanding of human beings. Wittgenstein clarifies, “We say only of a human being, and what is like one, that it thinks” (Witt-

genstein 1953: 360). So, the attribution of thought to animals depends on the representative criterion of human thought. Here, the interesting point is that we could not judge animals' mental lives as a stereotype inference or induction. The process of philosophizing the nature of intention, cognition, and memory intends to set up our mental contents from the narrow (intrinsic) and broad (extrinsic) levels. Later Norman Malcolm resonates that these self-absorbed and intrinsic procedures are indeed tangible (physical, decision-centric, sensation, and images) and intangible mental phenomena *constructed by tangible ones* (Malcolm 1976: 36-38). If we put the jargon into the Lockean model, it looks appealing because Locke believes that *ideas* come first, and names come afterwards. This hypothesis confronts a well-known hypothesis that 'language precedes thought'. The notion of meaningfulness of a term undermines the denotation part as this relies on the connotation part that animals barely advocated.

The metaphysical understanding of agency and its psychological speculation on mental contents extensively oversimplified the notion of animal thoughts. The anthropocentric outlooks against animals' thoughts and their mental lives are considered as non-thinking beings. Taking up the point, we can question their moral agency from a behaviouristic-cum-ethical interpretation. Here the ground objections are as follows:

- Animals cannot be the first-person authority or morally responsible for their behaviours and thoughts.
- They are not conscious of their actions.
- Animals could not have any mental states.
- Animals are non-linguistic, agency-less, and mindless living bodies.
- Animals cannot expose valuing, the concept of the capabilities approach, equality, and justice, so there is no question about their moral conscience.

Before tracing back to these objections, let us point up the pattern of mind and the pattern of moral agency differently to revisit the objections in defence of the justificatory clues of animals' moral behaviours and their thought-centric life-form.

To understand the patterns of the mind, language, and mental grammar, one has to review the whole scheme. Mental grammar tells us how we can put words together into a sentence to facilitate the language-communication pattern that can be socially acceptable. Mental grammar is not deliberately accessible to children. Brains genetically run our mental grammar. We cannot teach our children mental grammar from the outside; they can only interact with the sentences just by hearing them. The process of understanding and the construction of new sentences indubitably depend on the pattern of the mind, which may be called innate-based mental grammar. I prefer to bring in the notion of *genotype*, an inherent biological mechanism that conduits frequent changes in humans' biological adaptation. The biological evaluation links with *genotype* rather than *phenotype*, or certain traits. The behaviourist explanation underrates phenotype fitness, but values *genotype*, which looks at the "biological basis of all behaviour" (Wilson 1975: 4). This thesis of Wilson calls for there being a genetic constituent to the behaviours of all species. The rudimentary part of the thesis stresses the perpendicular outline that insists on a journey from genes to behaviour. Besides, the horizontal account of the thesis uplifts an ability to comprehend other minds that looks like a good exposition of human behaviours based on their socio-historical engagements. No tie-up may be accessed between the *genotype* and the

phenotype traits. This slight gap raises the possibility of drastically inflating the gene and deflating the mind. Flanagan clarifies:

The sociobiologist's opening gambit is largely a rhetorical flash-in-the-pan. Ironically, it fails to increase the plausibility of tight genotype-phenotype fit precisely because it tries to elbow out of the way the most likely candidate for creating a genotype-phenotype gap (Flanagan 1984: 258).

In closing the *genotype-phenotype* gap, Wilson intends to secure the "grail of a unifying theory of biology and the social sciences" (Lumsden and Wilson 1981: ix). To articulate the mind-centric social behaviours of humans, we can expose the genes as rule-makers and the mind as rule-followers by synchronizing their functions. The *genotype*-based rules go towards prejudice since the agent has its adaptive choices (mind-based). The collective choices of the different agents and their cognitively stimulated behaviours generate a socio-cultural sphere. The concept of epigenetic rules and their expanded variations appear as the dissent of minds and human behaviours. It looks promising that before language learning, a child first learns various social interactions and expressions from elders. Children are first acquainted with the social and the conceptual world and later map out the linguistic expression and its diversified connotative and denotative parts. The method of connotation and denotation in its preliminary form concentrates on its verbal expression, and later, it aims to fix its precise reference in communication by denoting the proper referents.

To understand animal minds, one must look at the environments where animals evolved. The evolutionary theory inscribes that animals are biologically equipped with a type of mental tool to solve environmental problems or other necessities. There is a tool for animals that we may call a 'universal toolkit', which eventually helps the animals be acquainted with objects, navigate, etc. Marc Hauser says:

Divergence from the universal toolkit occurs when species confront unique ecological and social problems. Thus, for example, bats echolocate using a high-frequency biosonar signal, but we don't. Unlike humans, bats confront the problem of navigation in the dark. As a result, they evolved a brain that is specially designed to process high-frequency sounds [...] The only way to understand how and what animals think is to evaluate their behaviour in light of both universal and specialized toolkits, mechanisms of the mind designed to solve problems. And the only way to evaluate the validity of this approach is to test our intuitions about animal minds with systematic observations and well-controlled experiments (Hauser 2000: xv).

Here the germane query is how morality could evolve in our socio-cultural paradigm.

Like our scientific ability or a mathematical equation, morality evolves because of a genetic fitness stratagem. Our moral simpliciter has an innate sensor that unconsciously impinges on our conscience. I will revert to this issue again.

3. Individual and Valuing

Before engaging in the query of whether animals can execute moral actions (or whether animal behaviours hold any moral conscience), let us clarify whom we

can call an individual and how individuals enrol themselves in the sphere of moral values. An individual is a single numerical identity of a conscious being who passes through different qualitative aspects but still holds the rationality and mindset to carry out the first-person authority of their action and life-form. When we care about the rational or mental life of an individual's performance, the debate emerges in a different circle that we may call a moral agency.

Moral principles in Kant's outlook are tied to an *ought to do* hypothesis instead of an *is to do* hypothesis since moral laws are more prescriptive or evaluative than the mode of description. The groundwork of these moral laws is beyond the sensory experience but exhibited on the pure reason that Kant calls *a priori*. Instilling moral laws from an experience-centric level cannot establish what 'one ought to do' from a universalistic sense. One must allow human's free-will and the corresponding experiences that will stimulate them to do specific moral actions preserving the categorical imperative. In the usage which Kant prefers,

- a. Moral requirements are rational requirements.
- b. Rational requirements go towards universal laws.
- c. These moral requirements must be followed by equality which Kant calls the *categorical imperative*. Only a universal principle could be applied to all rational human beings in an equal sense (Chakraborty & Misra 2022).

Kant expounds upon the supreme principle of *practical reason*, which he calls the *categorical imperative*. This principle can be expressed in a few different formulations, the first of which runs as "Act only accordance to that maxim by which you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law" (Kant 1988: 4:421). The principle we have just quoted, then, means that people should simply promote as rules of living for themselves about those rules that everyone could always follow.

We need to notice that to become a self-conscious moral being, an individual should be responsible for their actions and duties. Moreover, an individual should be concerned about their moral rights and gives value to other human beings and non-human beings' rights as well. Although animals have this type of individuality, they do not endorse any consent to express their concerns or rational choices. Animals are not individuals who have free-will and the notion of categorical imperatives in their life-forms to understand justice and moral systems. The ideas of justice, responsibility, blame, crime, sympathy, and virtue are human-centric qualities that an animal cannot accomplish in nature. The general approach tells us that we can pet or train the animals without their consent because they are not self-conscious or aware of their states of mind. Animals are less reasoning beings who are not cautious about their authority, self-hood, and moral rights.

In fact, individuality comes through a history of our mental and physical journey. The history of our mental life has been secured by rationality, reasoning, and causal efficacy with the society where the individual belongs. The idea of individual agency consists of interaction with others. An individual is living in the field of other individuals. A rational explanation of individuality arises when individuals primarily understand their existence in a meaningful way and become responsible for their autonomous actions. Animals cannot face any moral dilemmas since they are outside of any moral sagacity.

The emerging question that crops up is how the manifestation of individuality or personhood sounds related to the attribution of subjectivity that only belongs to human beings, not in any way to animals. The divination of human behaviours is that we can only ascribe the attributes to others as a premise that we have experienced ourselves. In Strawson's work *Individuals* (Strawson 1977), he attempts to jot down a person as an Individual concept by discarding the dualistic form like the person is the amalgam of two separate entities—physical character and consciousness. The identity theory that Strawson secured describes the inseparable characteristics of a person (consciousness subject) with their attributive physical properties. Strawson believes that individual consciousness could exist as a secondary concept (non-primitive) since its existence relies on the individual or the person. The process of ascription also intertwines with other persons. Strawson argues:

[...] that it is a necessary condition of one's ascribing states of consciousness, experiences, to oneself, in the way that one does, that one should also ascribe them, or be prepared to ascribe them, to others who are not oneself (Strawson 1977: 99).

But this analogy seems opposed to the argument of attributing experience to others by identifying their conscious patterns since an agent cannot attribute the experience to others, considering them as pure consciousness or a collection of experiences. To predict consciousness in the direction of ego subsequently envisages the state of mind collected to the subject's material body. These types of arguments shed doubts on the justification of allowing for the existence of *other minds*. Having said this, we must, however, appreciate the advantage of Strawson's argument. Strawson describes two types of predicates—*M-predicates* attributed to the physical characteristics and *P-predicates* ascribed to states of consciousness. All *P-predicates* are not ascribing the state of consciousness fully. Although these *P-predicates* entail the ownership of consciousness on the part of that to which they are attributed. *P-predicates* look, in essence, both self-ascribable and other-ascribable. One can ascribe *P-predicates* to others on the potency of their behavioural patterns, but to oneself does not depend on the behavioural criteria. Strawson believes in the criterion of any particular psychological state or property that is identical to the criteria of applying physical properties unless the agent has already been identified as a person. Strawson writes:

But it is essential to the character of these predicates that have both first and third-person ascriptive uses, that they are both self-ascribable otherwise than based on observation of the behaviour of the subject of them and other-ascribable on the basis of behaviour-criteria. To learn their use is to learn both aspects of their use (Strawson 1977: 108).

From a critical perspective, this learning procedure is undoubtedly a synthesis of thought and language that no animals can ever attain. The concept of other minds and the attribution of other-ascribable criteria based on behavioural criteria are not available to animals, as they may have sensation or introspection, but they do not have any logical induction.

It seems, indeed, a happy outcome to consider that the aspect of valuing others as much as valuing own-self narrates a way to individualistic ownership of self-valuing of the humans and the universalizability predilection of values (a

type of value-conferring) that one may likewise engender to others. Animals are, in principle, inept at inferring values or logical induction.

4. Animal Behaviours and Morality

Descartes' famous argument against animal behaviours asserts that animals cannot master human language, so their behaviours are nothing but mechanical (automata). The literature (Hunter 1913) of the last century on animal behaviours cued stimulus representation during behaviours. Hence, for the animals, representation is there, but there is no availability of internal stimulus. The logic of parsimony illustrates that the predication or the ability to explicate behaviours does not rely on the stimulus representation, but the stimulus remains available when the individual replies to these. The fundamental difference between animals' and humans' representation looks inadequate while we underscore human-centric appeals. The recent literature shows that the initial studies on human memories are nothing but verbal stimuli. The overlapping of the encoding process between humans and animals causes the verbal rehearses of stimulus. Here the cognitive processes expand to encode the memory that looks conical for animals instead of humans. When we probe into the biological aspects, one thing is strongly clear that animals are not humans as they are different species.

If we recapitulate the Aristotelian meta-ethical claim, in a nutshell, virtue is grounded in human endeavour. It is thus a practice exclusively accomplished by human beings.¹ Spinoza argues:

The principle of seeking our advantage teaches us to be in close relationship with men, not with beasts or things whose nature is different from human nature, and that we have the same right over them as they over us. Indeed, since every individual's right is defined by its virtue or power, man's right over beasts is far greater than their right over men (Spinoza 1982: 4p37sl).

As human moral evaluation and conviction are controlled by reasoning and intentionality, we cannot compare these with animal behaviours. We cannot blame animals for their actions, while we can blame humans for their reason-based acts. Animals are beyond any moral deplore or moral admiration as their behaviours outride any *self-imposed restraint* or psychological and psychiatric assurance.

Human moral behaviours and attitudes endure logical and rational thoughts, whereas animals' mind-sets and behavioural dispositions are imprecise because they cannot be the agents of their life-forms. The ethical indemnity is just for intelligent animals rather than stupid and alien ones. This anthropocentric stance vividly played its own dice in the history of the human-animal interface. The concepts of reasoning, rationality, and moral conjectures, all these criteria from the Cartesian level to Kantian analyses remain challenging to the

¹ Nussbaum writes: "Aristotle's scientific spirit is not the whole of what the capabilities approach embodies. The approach includes, in addition, an ethical concern that the functions of life not be impeded, that the dignity of living organisms not be violated. Unlike Greek thinkers in the Platonist tradition, Aristotle seems not to have pursued such thoughts" (Nussbaum 2007: 348).

animals, but suffering is an explicit criterion where animals and humans merge as living beings. According to Jeremy Bentham, the justification of suffering is the criterion that uplifts animals considering the ethical domain. Many philosophers urge that the limitation of animals' thoughts is viable just because of their inability to language acquisition. However, it looks right that on account of their universal toolkit, animals can execute specific actions like recognizing objects, finding out the shortest route to reach shelter, or determining the number of individuals in a group, etc., which look comparable to human beings. The promising point is that the animals have three types of exploring mechanisms that explicate their behavioural approaches along with their adaption to nature. These mechanisms are as follows:

- a. Universal toolkit
- b. The mental toolkit that relates to their psychological cognition
- c. Ecological adaptation.

The evidence of animals' suffering involves three different states—behaviour, cognition, and health (Dawkins 1980, 1985). Like humans, they have direct access to their cognition and feelings. We may access indirect evidence as a third-person authority of their behaviour and thought. The foremost sign of suffering comes in times of crisis of health like diseases, injury, and emaciated, but any physical damage can be suppressed in some cases because of the high capability of tolerance even in the case of humans like animals. However, evidence of the severe pain of the animals and humans can be expressed through their physical and mental aptitudes. Any physical or psychological harm makes a subsequent change in the level of hormones, brain activity, or heart rate of the animals that any physiological measurement can well measure. The interaction between the mind and the body problem becomes startling due to the supervenience theory, where an external sensation represents cognition in the subject's mind. Any physical damage or injury because of the spinning of neurons reciprocates a sensation to the brain of the animals or humans, and this sensational interaction of the mind-body instils a change in their psychological aptitudes (emotions and feelings)². Moreover, behaviours look for the best evidence to understand this psychological or cognitive apparatus of animals. From Darwin's *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals* (Darwin 1965) to some recent thinkers (Hauser, Dawkins) believe in the behaviour-centric account of animal's actions. They believe in animals' feelings, and how animals express their feelings in their actions articulates that animals have their minds. Animals' feelings about pain

² Seeing other animals in distress or painful situation, some animals feel discomfort or sympathy which is a type of moral emotion. These emotion-centric animal behaviours fulfil the significant criterion of the moral agency once wonderfully put forward by Rowlands as "X is a *moral subject* if X possesses (1) a sensitivity to the good- or bad-making features of situations, where (2) this sensitivity can be normatively assessed, and (3) is grounded in the operations of a reliable mechanism (a 'moral module')" (Rowlands 2012: 230). My understanding points out animals' sensitivity to other animals' distress and psychological suffering from the prospect of moral internalism that holds rationality and moral reasoning eventually to deploy intention-based moral choices, while the same sensitivity of the animals renders an account for moral externalism by bringing the notion of external factors (good for all) and collective agencies.

and suffering always confer them an experience to avoid unpleasant situations and live with a capacity to do something for their survival value.

What is moral right? Any kind of right is considered against incursion so that the interest that has been given to a person or agent can be secured. People have to secure their lives and interests. Because of this reason, they work out in society and bring up moral decorum. Scruton defines moral beings by saying that

The moral being is not merely the rule-governed person who plays the game of rights and duties but a creature of extended sympathies, motivated by love, admiration, shame, and a host of other social emotions (Scruton 2000: 33).

5. Foul and Goal

In his paper “Thought and Language” (Putnam 2022) Putnam claims that animals’ thoughts or understanding of objects have no fundamental concepts or thoughts like human beings. Animals have *proto-concepts* and *proto-thoughts* that only can be successful or unsuccessful. Here the point is that for Putnam, the proto-concepts of animals’ thoughts can merely be satisfied or dissatisfied due to the non-relation between the claims of justification. Human reason-centric thought consists of truth values that could be justified and unjustified.

Let us elucidate what thought is and how thought can be distinguished from proto-thoughts. Thoughts are the reason-oriented mental contents of human minds that help an agent to understand truth values from the level of justification. The pre-linguistic animals have some precision settings that aid them in recognizing the Pavlovian reflexes but do not hold any true mental representation. Putnam argues that as pro-concepts look indeterminate, we cannot question their justification or truth values. Putnam feels uneasy about inculcating any possible relation between pro-concepts and innate language. Determination or any reason-based justification is the basic sign of concepts. The interesting point is that if we compare human beings’ visual systems with animals, we will realize that in their case (animals) the visual systems and the colour perception processes are not the same as humans. That’s why it would be fallible to argue that when an agent perceives a crocodile and at the same moment when the crocodile also perceives the agent, here they have applied comparable visual processes and conceptual representation. Human visual organisms and how they perceive an object cannot be parallel to the reptile’s perception. Human perception has some conceptual representations that reptiles do not have. Putnam considers:

In *Renewing Philosophy*, on the basis of my thought experiment with the dog who is given a veggie steak, I concluded that mental representations that can be *correct* and not merely *useful* do presuppose language. If that were the whole story, then, since thought properly so-called must be truth-apt, the answer to Chakraborty’s question would be that thought presupposes language *period*. Thought does presuppose language (or something very much like language, e.g. “mentalese”), *if* one requires that “thoughts” consist of propositions, can be joined with logical connectives, are components of inferences, etc. [...] But (I learned from Burge) it is not the case that only mental states that consist of propositions, or that contain concepts, can be accurate or inaccurate. *Perceptual representations* can be accurate or inaccurate. If “thought” means conceptual thought and “language” refers to

an activity that uses concepts, then “thought presupposes (something like) language” is a truism (Putnam 2022: 54-55).

However, I think, reasonably that some animals have thought procedures, and they can think accordingly. Still, I am afraid to say that animals have the meta-cognitive privilege or the cognitive ability to think about their thoughts.

It seems true that conscious beings have a sensational state, but it does not mean that sensational states (pain, pleasure, etc.) can always be deciphered into propositional content. Benthamian utilitarianism taught us about preserving animals’ utilities as animals can feel pain-pleasure and suffer accordingly. Human mental states insist on propositional contents, and the processor of the mental content presents the content of the belief about something that we may call the referent of the particular belief. For me, contents are in nature the referential constituent of beliefs. Besides, the causal referential directness to reality is considered a linguistic unit. However, the constituent of the linguistic entities is unavailable in animals’ thoughts. Animals’ thoughts do not appear to carry any referential linguistic content. Related to this conception Chomsky writes:

The examples of animal communication that have been examined to date do share many of the properties of human gestural systems, and it might be reasonable to explore the possibility of direct connection in this case. But human language, it appears, is based on entirely different principles. This, I think, is an important point, often overlooked by those who approach human language as a natural, biological phenomenon; in particular, it seems rather pointless, for these reasons, to speculate about the evolution of human language from simpler systems—perhaps as absurd as it would be to speculate about the “evolution” of atoms from clouds of elementary particles (Chomsky 2006: 61).

The belief procedure attains a holistic purview, where beliefs can be understood as forming corporate bodies, i.e., they are causally allied to each other. Besides, the believer has an individual agency where the linguistic agent carries out agency and takes responsibility for their belief-centric actions. We can exclude here the marginal cases like autistic personalities, children, and mentally challenged persons. From a nominal account, this approach seems closer to human subjectivity, a trust in humanism. Sartre says: “And at the point of departure there cannot be any other truth than this, I think, therefore I am, which is the absolute truth of consciousness as it attains to itself” (Sartre 1963: 44). The universe that Sartre depicts in his literature represents the human universe to which the animal minds have no access. Sartre eliminates the idea of basing human thought on *animalitas*. The world and human minds reframe an intersegment of the world disclosing to the human consciousness, and this deformation is possible because of language use. Even the idea of world understanding remains explicit because of language acquisition. For humanists, the world is doubtlessly human, and humans are the only beings who can understand the ‘world as world’; no other animals have this sort of comprehension. We can remember the celebrated dictum of Wittgenstein, ‘I am my world’. This solipsistic cum humanistic doctrine collides with coinciding an animality into the sphere of an idealized ontology of being and its correlation to others (beings). The world that animals uphold seems to be a non-conceptual world. Just having access to sensory experience, animals’ stimuli cope with the entities of the world without

knowing what the entities really are. An animal feels hungry like a human, but it cannot feel poverty, justice and pride as we often do. I think this radical anthropocentric account has foreclosed any comprehensive assessment of the organic and biological similarities between humans and animals.

If we try to see 'reason' from two diversified senses—theoretical and practical, according to Blackburn the theoretical reason is comparable to a 'navigator's map' (Blackburn 2009: 53) that could help an agent to adjust the belief system and the action afterwards. In comparison, practical reason motivates the agents to select the action, not to construct beliefs. The inevitable patterns of animals' thoughts may have a practical reason that instates them to do some actions or choose a particular thing between different alternatives, but they cannot react by the mode of theoretical reasoning like the knowledge of *apriority* (independent of experience). Animals do not envisage the *a priori* knowledge of how a thing happens to stand without experience. But one can argue in defence of animal minds that the conventional aspect of the rules of any game can be changeable because of the situation and needs, similarly, animals without engaging in *a priori* knowledge just due to their experience and inference could make out the practical reason-based actions. Many people in the world execute these types of actions without being related to *a priori* thought. Alternatively, in a Kantian sense, the notion of practical reason holds an argumentative ground, where the agent preserves certain rational deliberation, a deliberation that generates free-thinking, while rationality initiates actions based on reason and rationality. Animals' choice-based actions that may be guided by reason in a practical sense are unchained from the bond of arbitrary, irrational acts. Only humans who are privileged under moral laws and reason may produce the will that is good in itself. Humans do not always follow moral laws, but they have the integral *a priori* aptitude to follow reason-based behaviours. Humans have an autonomous impulsion that initiates us to act autonomously guided by goodwill and freedom, but the impulsion that instigates animals for their preferred actions is derived from their heteronymous unguided reasoning (if any). However, I do object to this understanding of animals' thoughts and actions since it perversely looks human-centred. The idea of believing something and practising these same things accordingly does not mean that one has to be a linguistic animal. Animals have their practical cognition of something, and they can act on the same action repetitively and could change the same action if the situation disfavours them. We have examples beyond their limited access to thinking and guided evolutionary instinct animals (especially dogs, and chimpanzees) in performing certain actions through their compassion, feelings, and previous experience. I find myself here pushed to the new domain. Animals' essence needs to be verified by more eloquent theories since the old anthropocentric modules of consciousness, linguistic being, or thinking are looked unappealing in the case of initiating a dichotomy between humans and animals. To explain adequately, animals can be the 'subject of a life' in Regan's sense, but it seems quip to call them the 'subject of morality' as they are not aware of their belief model and individual moral agency. Here, I want to defy Regan's stance. Although I never surveyed it or did not have any concrete evidence supporting me, I intend to advocate moral personhood to animals from a philosophical milieu. Finding out some routes to confer the concept of person to the non-humans, I was motivated by the thought of Rowlands, who once argued in defence of animals' personhood and wrote:

To qualify as a person, in the eyes of this book at least, is to satisfy the four most commonly cited conditions of personhood: conditions that can be plausibly regarded as individually necessary and collectively sufficient for an individual to qualify as a person. Many animals qualify as persons by virtue of their being conscious, cognitive, self-aware, and other-aware individuals: they are individuals in which these four features coalesce. Because they are such individuals, there is no respectable reason to think of them as anything other than unified subjects of often quite complex mental lives—aka, persons (Rowlands 2019: 195).

One puts a question: can animals refer to a particular subject or object? As we know, the reference looks as if at a relation between the agent's mental states and the objective world. To get a better reference for a refereed object, one must plunge a certain propositional attitude that seems linguistic or indexical. If we delimit the access of mental representation from the tune of language, the intentionality and the constructive part of the representation preview a teleological account, where far-seeing the mechanism initiates a cognitive status from the aspect of the relational proper nouns derived from the environment. The purport of being close to environmental accessibility pins down the synchronizing status of a biological mechanism that produces the relational proper functions. Rowlands aptly argues:

Representation, therefore, is ultimately a biological notion. And, given that non-human animals clearly have internal mechanisms that have evolved to detect certain environmental features, it is perfectly appropriate, at least in principle, to make transparent attributions of beliefs and other propositional attitudes to them [...] We know, on evolutionary grounds, that dogs are going to have evolved mechanisms to detect friends from foes, familiar from stranger animals, pick members from outsiders (Rowlands 2009: 217).

Animal's moral agency is a theoretical prospect engaged with some empirical plausibility as argued by Korsgaard (2006) and Rowlands (2017).

The primordial questions of our concern are what makes us primarily different from the animals and what construes animals not to carry out moral agency. An unnerving way persistently reveals that we (humans) are set apart from animals regardless of bodily kinship because of an abyss concept that goes towards subjectivity and nothingness together. The origin of forming the conceptual analysis persistently disdains the incommensurable opacity of the animal's moral responsibility. Humans have maintained a bit of inhumanity through their conceptual forming and behavioural patterns, but animals' ethical innovation cannot tussle with this problem. No ethical innovation can obsess the gulf between morality and non-humanity. Human prevails over animals' nature by manifesting linguistic behaviours and moral improvements.

In defining moral autonomy, the philosophical discourse spells the considerable amendment of individuality, moral choices, and responsibility. This individual agency transmits moral autonomy to others and holds a responsible sense for their own moral choices and actions. Comprehending the free choice from external constraints, Hume anticipates that an agent cannot be the final authority of their acts, but they have the freedom to act without being motivated by external constraints. However, the Kantian idea of freedom deviates from external constraints as the theory also deduces from the transcendental apparatus. It looks true to Kant that an agent can act by choosing the moral laws auto-

mously, and here the rudimentary point is that the moral laws need to be freely preferred. The coextensive of autonomy and negative freedom (freedom overseen by external forces) cannot supervene each other. Moral theorists prioritize dispositional autonomy, a necessary condition of autonomy where the second-order reflection of the agent's act supervenes on the first-order preference, which has been fully chosen by the agents themselves. The limit of the dispositional autonomy incumbents to the matter of degrees that could be gradually developed like in the youths' case as they gradually developed their first-order preference concerning the second-order reflection. How old they are getting, their preferences, and the reasons for selecting a particular preference could be gradually enhanced. But this theory is not free from moral dilemmas. Sometimes in a particular framework, the agent's first-order preference that preserved their authentic autonomy could be turned out as wrong and miserable for their future dispositional autonomy like the examples of some religious practitioners who later engaged people in fanatic terrorism in the name of blind religious faith. In the evolution of moral acts, autonomy can coexist with free-will. A recurrent confusion again is generated here: Although animals have their preferences, do they uphold any autonomous moral agency? A possible solution is to claim that animals have a first-order preference for their choices, and subsequently, they may have a second-order reflection in their mind as a prerequisite of their autonomous choices. However, it seems doubtful that animals preserve any moral agency as a dispositional autonomy. In defining moral autonomy, the philosophical outline stresses the considerable amendment of individuality, moral choices, and responsibility. This individual agency transmits moral autonomy to others and holds a responsible sense for their own moral choices.

As noted above, a person's moral claim holds a propositional attitude while the animal's mental claim has a sensational attitude. The pattern of the propositional attitude deciphers the dispositional behaviours that are interlinked to the consciousness and mental content of the person, but animals' sensational states tie to consciousness without bringing the state of mental contents. In this connection, a question arises: Can concepts stand for the context-free representation of minds? Animals can perceive the concepts, but the point seems intriguing when we intensify the range of perceptual entanglement to the mental representation. The element of our mental content corresponds to the perceptual representation. If we pursue the model with human design, we run into other problems. The facet of our mental content and the perceptual replica conjointly insert the context-sensitivity, self-knowledge, and individuality. Those tripartite codes of thought perhaps never could be attained by animals.

Meanwhile, we should note that the animals (chimpanzees and bonobos) can foresee other chimpanzees' or bonobos' intentions and actions. Still, they have certain compatible socio-cognitive abilities that are close to the phylogenetic base. Chimpanzees adopt mutual understanding and collectiveness when they are hunting or feeling benefits in teamwork.³ Here animals' socio-cognitive skills

³ Rowlands writes: "Jane Goodall observed chimpanzees in the Gombe Stream National Park using grasses and twigs to fish termites out of termite mounds. The chimps would often modify the twigs, by stripping off their leaves, so they could be used in this way—demonstrating, like the New Caledonian crow Betty, a facility for tool construction as well as tool use. Not far away, and around the same time, Kinji Imanishi's team found chimpanzees using rocks to crack nuts" (Rowlands 2019: 87). Using different tools is a

are much more engendered to the cooperative function instead of the competitive one. Grueneisen, Duguid, Saur, and Tomasello write:

Importantly, the current findings provide some first strong experimental evidence that chimpanzees and bonobos are able to use their social cognitive abilities in order to successfully coordinate decisions with conspecifics in a cooperative context [...] This corresponds to the recent finding that wild chimpanzee selectively informs ignorant group members of danger which also points to the conclusion that chimpanzees can recruit their understanding of other's mental states more flexibly and across social contexts (Grueneisen, Duguid, Saur, and Tomasello 2017: 6).

Besides, any position that qualifies as conceptualism delineates valuing in a normative framework and expands the boundary of the linguistic circle closer to starkly human-centred. According to this view, the representational appeal of conceptualism exposes the second nature of human beings once we bring up the conception of moral values. This conceptualist account of linguistic nuance enshrines a reason-based rational ground representing the valuable laden theory in human moral acts. Crary urges:

To say that animals of different kinds are "inside ethics" in my sense is to say that, insofar as they are observable, they are endowed with moral qualities. This is not the same as claiming that things animals do invite moral assessment. Nevertheless, I want to close this chapter by underlining the fact that my argument makes room for the possibility that the actions of some non-human animals are open to such an assessment. The upshot of the argument is that a conceptualist outlook does not commit us to hold that animals of all kinds are either mere bundles of stimulus-response mechanisms or mere systems of exploitable instincts. Animals may traffic in concepts, thereby occupying partial stages of rational development. One reasonable way to gloss this claim is to say that animals may be distinguished by partial forms of freedom in virtue of which their actions are rightly subject to some types of moral evaluation (Crary 2016: 120).

A danger that promotes a radical view in philosophy by amplifying the belt of thought and understanding is glomming on morality from a humanistic demand. The psychological discourse of our venture on ethics demarcates non-human beings or animals as non-rational cum non-linguistic beings who cannot entail or understand the fact or the true consequence of values. The impetus comes from Thomas Nagel's writing which intends to exemplify the motivational theoretical pattern of ethics by undermining the pattern of biology. Nagel admits:

Ethics, though more primitive, is similar. It is the result of a human capacity to subject innate or conditioned pre-reflective motivational and behavioural patterns to criticism and revision and to create a new form of conduct. The capacity to do this presumably has some biological foundation, even if it is only a side-

part of causal reasoning that some animals can execute intelligently. Rowlands also appreciates the capability of probabilistic reasoning in animal's cognition and deciphers: "Animals use cognitive maps to represent the possible locations of objects, assign subjective probabilities to the likelihood of an object being at a given location, and then update these probabilities as experience unfolds" (Rowlands 2019: 90).

effect of other developments. But the history of the exercise of this capacity and its continual reapplication in criticism and revision of its products is not part of biology (Nagel 2013: 146).

A point that hails to my mind is to insist on ethics beyond the limit of biology; we may call it an unfair quest to ponder biology as the paradigmatic feature of morality. This unfair quest will make the goal for the animals to ensure the realm of morality without any access to self-knowledge, agency, and language-centric conceptual analysis of moral values. The behavioural and the theoretical patterns of ethics surge two different compatible models for humans and animals separately, and we have to accept this module. Nussbaum in her latest work *Justice for Animals: Our Collective Responsibility* (Nussbaum 2022) resonates with the capabilities approach of animals and writes:

The Capabilities Approach can respond better than these other theories to the facts we now know about animal lives: about the amazing diversity of animal abilities and activities, about their capacities for valuing, for forming social networks, about their capacities for cultural learning, about friendship and love (Nussbaum 2022: 313).

I think a comparable assessment of behaviourism and cognitivism inculcates that the experiential behavioural progress of behaviourist theory is intended to overlook the cognitive ideology of cognitivism. For disdaining the museum myth, viz, minds, and mental processes, behaviourist stresses the exclusive account of the agent's external and observable behaviours. If we follow the behaviourist account, it looks appealing that the animals' behavioural patterns have certain intentional states with intelligence. We know that if we keep foods outside and in trap-boxes (case) for rats, in the first stage, the rats would favour taking the foods from outside since it looks safer for them. Next, they will observe the trap-boxes carefully, and if they find that one trap-box has only an entrance with no exit door, while the second one has entrance and exit doors together, the rat obviously chooses the second trap-box to get the food. So, doubtlessly they have the belief account, and their intentional intelligence guides their desires. The structural parts of beliefs have different components, but the components of the moral behaviour of animals' beliefs still remain inexplicable. The ethical pattern of the animal's behaviour looks puzzling since the module of this pattern is structured for humans and their linguistic-conceptual discourses. Here we need a meta-ethical juncture where the ethical and normative points have to be cognized through the parameter of moral motives and reasoning. Animals' sense of moral motives and their apparatus of getting involved in moral acts cannot be compared with human actions. Animals can act based on *some* moral reasons (moral reasons involving concern for others, taking responsibility for others, and rules followers, etc.). Frans de Waal writes: "Fatherhood changes the biology of men. New fathers experience a rise in oxytocin (the cuddle hormone) while their testosterone level drops. Men shift away from risk-seeking and mate-hunting toward a deeper commitment to their families. Their brains change as well. Neuroscience shows a more active and better-connected amygdala (emotional center) in the brains of men who are the primary caretakers in the family" (de Waal 2023). A somewhat similar approach to being able to live with, and care for families plus offspring is now known to be effective for animal

minds. Many stories of male apes, bonobos, and lions caring for their species or cubs can be found in various zoos and reserved forests.

Their position, I think is a threshold state for getting membership in the community of moral beings who have privileged based on basic capabilities like care, responsibility, individuality, etc. In the case of human moral engagement, we are stimulated by the typical moral theories and their diversified stances that could have conceptual and linguistic uses in our societal discourses. Still, animals' intentional apparatus may have the propensity to opt for an act following the moral consequences in their livelihoods. To find out its pragmatic consequences (utility or damage) tends towards a catastrophic understanding of animals' behaviours from an anthropocentric level.

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