

Animal Justice and Moral Mendacity: between the Jew and the Hindu

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There is always the risk of romanticization when it comes to tackling the topic of animals, in classical discourses or contemporary practices. There are numerous tropes to consider where animals are depicted and represented, or misrepresented. These – to present a short list - may pertain to human sacrifice of animals, symbolic imagery in high-order astral practices – think of animal - mythic and hybrid - iconography in Indian mythologies, art and religions; the animal depicted as the denizens of evil, as threatening part of ‘brutish nature’, living out the law of the jungle, and hence requiring to be subdued under the law of the survival of the fittest. Then there is the utilitarian deployment of animals in agro-culture, farming – the importance of the cow, buffalo, oxen, horse, and other hoofed animals; in dietary praxis and food consumption (meat as corn-porate industry, feed-lot factory farming), through to game hunting, circus and zoological entertainment, domesticization (pet culture), animal guidance (e.g. for the blind and aged), veterinarian euthanasia, bestiality, sexualization of animals, animals in human pornography, and other unrecorded implicates of animals in the human life-world or future trajectories and phantasias. Animals have become indispensable in scientific thinking: consider how animals provided clues for the supposed missing links in evolutionary chain of being, with Spencer and Darwin (non-existent animals were invented to fill in certain gaps in neo-Darwinian theories) , and Dawkins and Dennett clinch organism-evolution as the side-show of the primordial soup of the Big Bang. Huge dinosaurs are reconstructed or virtually resurrected from fossils and archeological excavations, with a certain degree of imaginative extrapolation (which we see projected on big-screens in movie-houses and videos). Much in biology stems first-off with observations of animal behavior and vivisections and implants of monitoring devices in their bodies; animal testing of tissue-cells, toiletries and drugs

supposed to save human lives and animal experimentation in biomedical laboratories and psychological-linguistic research units, and in space or astronomical travels as well (chimps in unmanned rockets), mark the more recent inclusion of animals in the human theoretical and far-reaching geographies.

We just don't pause to realize extent to which the ontology of the non-human animal species is sketched pervasively throughout the fabric and life-world, *lebenswelt*, of the human animal. What would the human world have been without animals? It's mythologies, fables, the Bible, folklore, junglebooks, films, videos, zoos, laboratory experimentations-animal testing, and so on. Sometimes I wonder; we've done away with the gods in our modern world and replaced them with cellphones, so we can hear distant voices; we are now on the brink of doing away with vegetation; and a disastrously similar fate might await the animal kingdom also, according to some pessimist pandits at least. (On an aside, I was so very shocked not to see animals in any comparable numbers in Beijing or Shanghai – though a few people have begun to keep small puppies as pets – but there was no death of animal flesh, even live options in the fish tank as you entered restaurants and diners for breakfast.)

Consider also the quantum of violence visited upon the biospheres and animal species: if we were to record from the stratosphere the pain, belching, shock, horror, confusion from the "peaceful quick sniper or blade", then silence, in plant life (if a certain Bose-an theory is accepted) and definitely in the animal factories/kitchens/hitchens/some 'live eating' restaurants across the globe, that billions of animals undergo each year from discreet slaughterhouses to road-side butchers, and the sacrifice animals are subjected to for the palettes of human beings (hunger has been shown to be less of the imperative as it might have been during the hunter-gatherer era and then too not of the same devastating magnitude – why would the US alone need to kill 16 billions animal species a year?), my hunch is that the erstwhile mantrically-effervescent Hindu gods might be awoken from their sublime postcolonial slumbers recognizing that '*rta*', the timeless order, divined by the impersonal law of karma (or the converse, for the Buddhist-Jains), has been

horribly disturbed: the divine order has been compromised. Why isn't there a celestial intervention? Once we have the 'measure' what do we do, here on earth? More theory, I suppose!

A philosopher-scholar concerned with engaging in ethical reflections and debating theories of justice at large might nevertheless find this field of discourse presenting us with a fertile ground for mining conceptual resources and mapping certain blind-spots and lacunas present in the human moral menagerie. The analogy here is to the sudden ripples felt in the hitherto paternally constructed moral systems – ethics, justice, law, penal codes, 'rights of man', etc – when it was discovered that slaves, women, people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds, indeed even minorities and 'aliens' (foreigners), may have claim under the same libertarian thinking toward fairness, liberty, and certain rights that entail duties of equitable treatment and making available opportunities toward flourishing of that individual or group. Moral antinomies seethe but may not be immediately detected where one principle can lead to two contrary if not clashing derivative outcomes. There might be blood on the other (gloved) hand. If there are antinomies in respect of human disposition towards animals, their welfare, treatment or neglect in moral considerations – which staunch rationalists see no real problems with as animals are not in their view of the same moral subjective status (as moral agents, moral patients, individuals with equal inherent values, interests and rights, or jural entities in legal terms), despite talk of 'natural duties', duty of justice (Rawls), non-cruelty/humane treatment, conservation of species, sustainability, against ecological degradation, environmental responsibility, etc - what does this say about the reach and desired completeness, much less absoluteness, righteousness, of humanly conceived morality or be it moralism? Can non-humans be accorded moral significance and to what degree? There are considerable debates on the intricacies of each of these tropes in the spaces symbolically occupied between humans and animals in our modern times (philosophy, cultural studies, feminism, and pop, media and film

cultures also).¹ Where do the religions – and their theologies or respective theodicies - under consideration stand on these issues and challenges? Is it fair that in any theodicy we cannot seem to answer the question: why do innocent animals suffer and be victims of the horrendous measure of evil in the human world (perpetrated by human beings)?²

But to cover in any depth all these issues and challenges would exceed the limits of this presentation.

So here, I wish to take up this sentiment and put it to test in respect of the claims to moral high-grounds in Hinduism and Judaism by turning the focus in this instance – on a par with issues of caste, gender, minority status, albeit still within the human community ambience - to the question of animals. Between Hinduism and Judaism – how sophisticated and in-depth is the appreciation of the issues and questions being debated in contemporary circles? What degree of awareness could we say has been present in the traditions - not just in some perfunctory, platitudinal, belief-based descriptions or prescriptions, but in actual explanatory and morally sensitized senses? I ask these questions because today's animal rights/liberation movements are based largely on moral-philosophical considerations with secular and legal sensitivities rather than on religious or religion-informed proclivities; in fact, someone like Peter Singer chastises religion for their animosity towards

¹ A good guide to the plethora of issues and debates is surprisingly astutely summarized with immense critical reflection (because the author happens to be a philosopher) in Kerry Walters, *Vegetarianism A Guide to the Perplexed*. London/New York: Continuum, 2012. Especially chapters 4 and 5 – The Argument from Rights, and The Ecofeminist Argument respectively.

² See Joseph Lynch, 'Harrison and Hick on God and Animal Pain', *Sophia* 1996, vol 39, no 2: 67-78; and some rejoinders: Brian Scarlett, 'God and Animal Pain', *Sophia*, vol 42 no 1 May 2003, pp. 61-76, which is a coveted reply to Peter Harrison, 'God and Animal Minds: A Response to Lynch', in *Sophia*, Vol 35, No 2, Sept-Oct 1996, pp. 67-78; and the work that tops it all is *Animal Theology* by Andrew Linzey, Univ of Illinois Press (March 1995); other works by Linzey include, *After Noah; Animals and the Liberation of Theology, and Animal Gospel*, for which see website with other interesting additions from Christian and Jewish animal liberation theologians <http://www.yiffle.com/spirituality/animaltheology/>

animals; and he means largely Western/Abrahamic traditions, though when he does mention India and China he expresses horror at their treatment of cows and other animals. Even so, however, the early roots of animal welfare – e.g. RSPCA/SPCA, anti-cruelty codes, and first vegetarian movements – were all either Christian or Jewish based (Henry Salt, who re-inspired Gandhi's vegetarianism, Lewis Gompertz).³ But there have been movements within Christian and Jewish theologies, and grass-roots movements in the West, and in Israel, as well as in India, to revive, re-interpret orthodox texts and furnish religious or theological grounds for the same arguments and ends that secular animal rights advocates have been striving towards. Morality can have many homes; it is not the exclusive proclivity of secular, not unoften negative utilitarian, philosophers or a handle-full of peace-loving leftist activists. That is *my* argument.

My aim then will be first of all to present the respective representations of and attitude toward animals in as broad a compass as possible. For the Hinduism almanac on animals I draw from a host of material extant in classical and current literature (summarized in *Hinduism and Ecology*, Chapple's work on animals, chapters in *Indian Ethics I & II*), M K Gandhi's praxis and Maneka Gandhi's urban-activism. And the precursor in the Jain view that all animals are humans, i.e. they have souls, even if not the same educated intelligence). For Judaism, I draw on the Hebrew Bible, Maimonides' *Mishneh Torah*, David Bleich, Andrew Linzey, Andrew Weisberger and Carol J Adams.

My concern will not be with details, but rather how Hinduism and Judaism position themselves on the challenges of theodicy and of morality, and on animal utilization, in the light current philosophical and scientific speculations on the sentience of animals. That is to say we may ask: how do the traditions look upon the life-status of animals and justify, or rationalize, the many topographies of evil in respect of the

³ Robert Tappan, 'Feeding the Children of Abraham', *Scholarly Works of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA)*, An Introduction, p 2 (pdf accessed)

animal-kingdom? These topographies include suffering, harm, unnecessary or untimely death, nakedly at the hands of nature (climatic, environmental, inter/intra-species, uncontrollable diseases, etc) but also, and increasingly in greater proportion, in the hands of (hu)mankind. A framing question I will be addressing is the extent to which religious orthopraxies have informed ethical views in these traditions, and vice versa. For example, we need to ask at what point and with what degree of compunction or complicity does Judaism move from the explicit vegetarianism of the Genesis 1:29 to homologizing women and animals (*bestes puantes*), and considering flesh as food? Would animal sacrifice in the erstwhile yajñās of Vedism have ever sparked off moral conscience vis-à-vis *himsā* (injury/violence), had it not been for Jain and Buddhist disquiet against the grain of *ahiṃsā* (a simple act of adding the negative 'non'- prefix: a moral term that likely did not exist in Brahmanism before the rupture). Thereafter Hindu texts rise to the occasion and increasingly become staunch advocates of animal care, welfare, proper husbandry, treatment and hospitality – in proportion to the inclusion of animal imagery in religious symbolism and deification. To ignore such penal ordinances (e.g in Arthaśāstra, Dharmasūtras, Nibandhas, several Purāṇas, Mahābhārata), would be to risk punitive measures and repentance (*prayaścitta*), here and hereafter. Is modern Hinduism even as it becomes more secular (cf. Hindu Code Bills), McDonalized and globalized, after the Gandhian interlude, far behind in abrogating the moral inclusiveness of animals in reformed Hindu ethos? Or will the evangelism and self-righteousness of Hindutva with its almost absolute embracing, 'revivification' of vegetarianism likely to alienate secular, and secular Hindu, animalists, by underscoring more the orthodoxically religious rather than the moral grounds? Still, India boasts the largest number of *faith-based* vegetarians, followed by Israel (not North America mind you, despite its huge South Asian population and New Age-ist movements). And there isn't much of it in Europe-UK, South Americas, rest of Asia, Middle-East or the Oceania-Pacific regions. The contemporary rise of vegetarianism in the secular world, especially among the more ethically concerned of course – and also for health and dietary reasons – has to be factored in. There are

a number of different theories and inclinations that inform ethical vegetarianism, for which see Hamilton (2000).⁴

PART A

Judaism and Animals: rites over rights

First I will present some standard, let us say, 'official' religious views and then moral hermeneutical critiques in terms of their relevance and ethical reach toward contemporary challenges and changes in the animal habitat or treatment brought about by technological and consumer-based developments, and other sensibilities.

The Torah, Genesis 1.26, states: Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

Genesis: 1.29 suggests that people were initially vegetarians living on seed-bearing plants that God gave them. It wasn't until after the Flood (Gen 9.3) that flesh of animals was permitted for food, and after he exodus from Egypt animal sacrifice also (**Jeremiah 7:22-23**). But this appeared to have been short-lived and was never intended to be an absolute prescription.

Of course, the Christian Bible did not interpret 1.26 in the light of 1.29, and took 'dominion' or 'stewardship' (as currently preferred) rather literally. The Jewish tradition has been more circumspect. The key principle or moral intuition that seems to have been the guiding force is the prohibition of inflicting suffering – *tza'ar ba'alei chayim* in Hebrew, on living creatures. There seems to be some recognition in rabbinical rulings of the physical, psychological and emotional suffering of

⁴ Malcolm Hamilton, 'Eating Ethically: 'Spiritual' and 'Quasi-religious' Aspects of Vegetarianism', *Journal of Contemporary Religion*, 2000, (15)1: 65-84.

animals, and hence the innumerable prohibitions against the over-use, recklessness towards and abuse of animals, whether in farming practices, extracting labor from animals, or in human dietary preferences and practices. Religious laws derived from this basic moral intuition have reinforced the duty humans have towards non-human animals; however, in practice and especially religious and secular rites, there have been certain ambivalences and inconsistencies that modern scholars have been at some pain to point out.

While, hunting and games that involves death of animals are prohibited as these serve no religious purpose; animals can be slaughtered for food but only by sanctioned specialists who offer certain prayers in the process, and see to it that blood is fully drained from the flesh, etc. This rule, along with blessings offered at the table, ritualizes the consumption of flesh. Naturally deceased animals cannot for that reason be used for food, but their by-products, especially the skin and horns may be taken for other purposes. Animal products are used in religious rituals: skin and leather for the scrolls, mezuzah and the tefillin, the shofar blown at Rosh Hashanah, and Kosher-meat is permitted on Shabbat and Pesach (what we call the Passover feast), and in daily meals as well. These Jewish dietary laws are given in the Torah, and the basic ones are⁵:

Certain animals may not be eaten at all. Only animals that are ruminant (chew its cud) and have split hooves may be eaten.

Of the animals that may be eaten, the birds and mammals must be slaughtered in accordance with Jewish law.

Certain parts of permitted animals may not be eaten.

All blood must be drained from the meat or broiled out of it before it is eaten.

Meat (the flesh of birds and mammals) cannot be eaten with dairy.

Eggs, fruits, vegetables and grains are considered *pareve*, and can be eaten with either meat or dairy. Fish is also considered *pareve*, but some kosher observant Jews do not eat fish with meat.

⁵ What are Jewish Dietary Laws? By [Giora Shimoni](http://kosherfood.about.com/od/kosherbasics/f/jewishdietlaws.htm), About.com Guide; <http://kosherfood.about.com/od/kosherbasics/f/jewishdietlaws.htm>

Utensils that have come into contact with meat (while hot) may not be used with dairy, and vice versa. Utensils that have come into contact with non-kosher food (while hot) may not be used with kosher food.

But what exactly is the significance of kosher and kashrut and their implications for moral thinking on animals? Do animals have any rights beyond being part of human rites? Should we talk of animal *rites*, rather than animal *rights* (the pun is intended to underscore an ambiguity in classical thinking)? Thus, is there something ambiguous in allowing the beasts of burden to rest on the Sabbath? And yet, apart from enforced rest and strictures on creative work, there seems to be concern for animals underscored in the prohibition against animals laboring on the day of rest (Genesis 8:1) Is a fully-fledged vegetarianism ever entailed in the beneficence shown to animals (Exodus 21:28)? Do we get close to minimal rights of animals in the Hebrew codes? Has contemporary (orthodox and liberal) Judaism countenanced the arguments of one of their own - such as Singer, Weisberger, and Israeli-Jewish animal liberationists and liberal Rabbis in the US and elsewhere - who blame Judaism for sanctioning slaughter of animals for food that through Christianity and Islam also have become a mainstay of Western culture? Although, most do not dismiss Judaism for that moral fault, but rather work to build a new moral metaphysics and set of practices to honor more rigorously the originary moral intuitions (as will be argued).

Let me address these questions by referring to some of the moral codes in the Hebrew Bible which stipulate duties towards non-humans: Muzzled oxen are not to be used when working in fields of corn (Deuteronomy 25:4), cattle (and all animals) should not be made to work on the Sabbath (Exodus 20:10, Deuteronomy 5:14), animals must be fed before humans dine (deduced from Deuteronomy 11:15), eggs should not be taken from a mother bird's nest within her sight (Deuteronomy 22:6-7), animals intended for food must be killed painlessly (deduced from Numbers 22:32), animals are not to be eaten while still alive (with their blood still in them)

(Leviticus 19:26, also Leviticus 17:14-16).⁶ Not all the proscriptions are necessarily out of moral respect for the suffering of animals; some are clearly aimed at putting moral limits on the brutality on the part of human beings against non-human and *human* kind alike. (Kant, incidentally rebuked cruelty towards animals for similar anthropocentric considerations.)

As Andrea Weisberger points out in the ruling against boiling a kid in its mother's milk: 'A statement is being made here about appropriate human behavior, and duties moral agents have toward safeguarding humane impulses, rather than any rights that animals have as animals. From this proscription against cooking a kid in its mother's milk is derived the dietary restriction of mixing dairy and meat-based food products, a cornerstone of kosher practices (known as Kashrut). It is here that we derive the understanding that cheeseburgers are not kosher (even if the meat is from a kosher animal, slaughtered according to religious requirements).'⁷ Likewise, the ambiguity surrounding the beasts of burden to rest on the Sabbath. While agricultural work is not permitted, animals being worked or carrying burden would reasonably be forbidden on the day of rest. But the strict adherence here underscores more a religions based requirement than a moral understanding as such. Elsewhere though feeding the animals before humans and allowing animals to have a right in the fruits of their labor, seems to be 'based on a recognition of an inter-species moral relationship', i.e, entitlement ensuing from investment of labor (ibid). The subjective qualities of animals possessing desires, feelings and needs are given due accord. This is more clearly marked in the prohibition against taking a bird's egg from the nest while the mother is present (she has to be shooed away, only then it is permissible, and may even be considered a heroic act.) Either this is in recognition of the mother's ownership, hence right, over her own egg, or it may be in recognition of the same kind of attachment that humans have to their off-spring: and it would be brutal in both instances to sever

⁶ Andrea Weisberger, 'The Nature of the Relationship Between Religion and Ethics: A Case Study of Animal Rights within Judaism', *Sophia* (Melb. The one I edit, not the Islamic Science one by the same name), 2003, Vol. 42, No. 1: 77-84.

⁷ ibid

that connection. But the beneficence shown in these rules are constrained in two other areas, I shall explain.

When an animal kills or mauls any human person, according to Maimonides, that animal is tried in a court of 23 judges and sentenced to death, destroyed (and its flesh not be eaten), and the owner may be charged with homicide as well. It is strange though moral agency is imputed on the animal when an animal kills out of its own volition, or some instinctual tendency. This renders the animal a jural entity, which no modern law accords to it (though the animal, such as the American pit bull that mauled a child in Australia was instantly destroyed). It is curious however that when animals are horded away to the slaughterhouses, notwithstanding the supervision of rabbis present that proper religious process is followed, animals are not give the right to defend themselves against being killed by humans, for their own dietary drives! "Oh Lord, thou preservest man and beast (Psalm 36.7), but not mauled in slaughterhouse 3. It would seem more cruel to accord moral agency and a mock-right to self-defense in a mock-ing court, where an impending capital punishment is a foregone conclusion, then to foreclose the same right when the killing is in the reverse direction; this is not a bilateral arrangement, nor balanced in the inter-species inclusion of animals in the human community.

When Kosher isn't anymore *kosher*

(and some Jews couldn't care less)

Modern challenges and practices of procuring meat has radically transformed since the industrial revolution and much more so with the corporatization of the hitherto village-based animal farming practices. Critics in the secular-rational-utilitarian, but also in the kosher Jewish worlds, are all too aware that the meat industry is a heinously macabre enemy of the animal rather than its friend, for the industry treats animals as an object to be slaughtered and delivered to the dining table of their

consumers who are for most part blind-folded from the process and deceptions involved in the manufacture of the meat products and by-products. So if today's kosher meat comes from the same abusive [factory farms](#) as all other meat, notwithstanding the humane intention and spirit of the Jewish dietary laws, and rabbinical supervision and /or intervention to see to that prescriptive and kosher rules are followed, there are no standards to ensure that kosher slaughter is any less cruel than conventional slaughter. In some instances, it's been shown to be much worse. Here are some instances (recorded by Jewish animal industry sleuths, PETA-web).⁸

Chickens and turkeys killed for their flesh in kosher slaughterhouses often suffer broken legs and wings as a result of rough handling and malfunctioning equipment. When they are slaughtered incorrectly, these sensitive animals survive for several minutes as they hang upside-down from metal shackles and can only writhe in pain as they slowly bleed to death.

Hens used for eggs live with up to six other birds in battery cages that are the size of file drawers, thousands of which are stacked tier upon tier in huge, filthy warehouses. Male chicks are of no use to the egg industry and are often thrown into garbage bags and left to suffocate.

Cows used for their milk are drugged and bred to produce unnatural amounts of milk. Their babies are stolen from them shortly after birth to be sent to notoriously cruel veal farms.

Cattle raised for kosher meat are castrated, their horns are ripped from their heads, and third-degree burns (branding) are inflicted on them—all without any painkillers. The cruelty discovered during [PETA's investigation into AgriProcessors](#) was shocking, but according to kosher authorities, it is not unique to this particular slaughterhouse.

⁸ PETA website: <http://animalrights.about.com/od/animalrights101/tp>

Here is what goes on in above last kosher rite: slaughterfactory: the cattle is strapped inside in a revolving drum (like those concrete mixers you see at building sites), to make the animal unconscious through shock and confusion, and its horns ripped out, neck broken; then an executioner makes one swipe of a sharp long blade; the cow is let to bleed and the drum is revolved in semi-circular movements again; then another man stealthily walks up, pulls out a small blade hidden inside his massive sterilized coat, and sticks it into the animal's neck. This finishes the job, indicating however that the cow was still alive and suffering after the first massive castration act. Clearly, this is in violation of the rabbinical kosher ruling; but the rabbis if they have not been deceived by the blatant secrecy under which all the supposedly kosherized slaughter takes place, either ignore or are powerless, but worst fail in their duty to inform the community of the gross religious *and moral* turpitude involved in this capitalist menagerie.

As one writer damningly puts it, questioning the relevance of the kosher principle in modern times:

'In the face of horrifically cruel and ecologically devastating factory farms and a kosher industry that has sanctioned even the most [grisly abuse of animals](#), it's difficult to see how eating animals is compatible with Jewish values. The Torah is full of commandments demanding humane treatment of animals, yet the modern factory farms that produce over 90% of the animal products we consume today raise their animals in unconscionable conditions of abject misery. The Torah reflects great concern for the land, yet as the primary cause of water pollution, water use, topsoil erosion, destruction of the world's rainforest, and other environmental harms, animal agriculture takes a devastating toll on the planet. Jewish teachings emphasize the grave importance of protecting human health, yet the consumption of animal products in the United States is responsible for numerous diseases including heart disease, America's number one killer. Judaism places great concern on providing for the poor and the hungry, yet while 800 million people do not

have enough food to sustain themselves, our carnivorous diets are at least ten times as wasteful of food resources as a vegetarian one.' (PETA and other sources)

We can speak of the number of animals killed and how many end up in well-intending Jewish and South Asian (including sizeable Hindu) dining and festive-celebratory tables. Animals killed worldwide for the US food consumption 'needs' in 2009 alone amounted to 8.3 billion land animals and 51 billion sea animals. This includes the proverbial Thanksgiving turkey, but does not include animals in the wilderness killed by hunters, game-shooters, animal experimentations, laboratory research and genetic engineering discards, nor wildlife displaced by animal agriculture and human habitat developments, construction of dams, new housing zones, roads, water-ways etc, nor wildlife directly killed by farmers with the use pesticides, traps, Monsanto's terminator seeds and other methods.

Compare USDA figures for 2008: Cattle : 35.5 million; pigs 116 million; chicken and laying hens; 1 billion (approx.); broiling hens 1 billion (approx.); turkey 271 million.) And consider these more recent figures (I have taken straight from USDA):

10,153 million (nearly 10.2 billion) land animals were raised and killed for food in the United States in 2010, according to data extrapolated from U.S. Department of Agriculture reports. This is a 1.7% rise from the 2009 totals, larger than the 0.9% increase in US population, meaning that animals killed per-capita increased slightly. Of the 10,153 million land animals killed, 9,210 million (91%) were chickens raised for meat, 464 million (4.5%) were chickens raised for eggs, 276 million (2.5%) were turkeys, and the remaining 202 million (2%) were cows, pigs, other mammals, and ducks and geese.

In addition to the 9,278 million animals who were slaughtered, the total figure includes the 875 million animals, or 8.6%, who died lingering deaths from disease, injury, starvation, suffocation, maceration, or other atrocities of animal farming and transport. It should be noted that the U.S. is a net exporter of both live animals and processed meat, so the number of animals actually consumed in the U.S. was less than the number killed.

The 10,153 million animals raised and killed for food in the U.S. in 2009 accounted for 98% of all land animals abused and killed in the U.S. An estimated

additional 200 million land animals were killed in biomedical experiments, by hunters, by furriers, in pounds, or as “pests”.

2011 Projections, Industry Speculations and Aquatic Animal Estimates:

Based on January-August 2011 USDA slaughter numbers, it is projected that the number of land animals killed in 2011 will increase an additional 1% from 2010 numbers, rising to approximately 10,266 million animals. Fortunately, due to increased feed prices and sinking domestic demand, [Bloomberg.com is speculating](#) that there may be a 5% drop in animals raised for food in 2012!

While the number of aquatic animals killed each year is not reported, meticulous calculations by researcher Noam Mohr estimate the number of finfishes killed each year for US consumption to be 13,027 million, and the number of shellfishes to be 40,455 million, resulting in a combined 53,481 million (over 53 billion) aquatic animals who died for American consumption in 2010.

In Personal and Global Terms:

Per-person, an average American meat-eater is responsible for the suffering and death of 28 land animals and an estimated 175 aquatic animals per year, totaling over 15,000 individual animals over a 75 year lifespan.

Globally, the number of land animals killed each year for food has exceeded 65 billion, according to conservative U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization figures. Aquatic estimates are unavailable.

(USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service, “Livestock Slaughter 2010 Summary”, April 2011)

Add to this mendacity the concern among ecologists and environmentalists over the huge impact that the massive meat industry has on natural resources, drainage on the land, water usage, pollution (from the methane gas that cattle produce and the waste from the slaughterhouse), and other unmitigated consequences of the carnivorous fealty (which Michael Pollan and Winfrey Oprah have begun to bring to public consciousness). Animals have become just another fodder to excesses of human desires and exploitative life-style.

The question arises: why do the same legal protection to animals while they are on the farm – well even that is questionable – at least in the homes as domestic pets,

who may be given full funeral rites as well upon their death (naturally or out of mercy for their old-age or diseased-caused pain), to all animals, anywhere? What has happened to the principle of universalization and universalizability that the Enlightened fathers, notably Kant, put forward? But of course they had not conceived of a *sui generis* animal ethic at all. Preference utilitarianism that argues for the reduction of animal pain does not use the language of universal rights and equal moral universalizability for animals; it speaks of duty of care and respect and regards for the interests and desires of animals, as one has towards one's under-aged children and over-aged parents (possibly now in hospices care).

But there have been concerns and outcry from many Jewish quarters; the same moral intuitions that are ruffled in the rationalist are ruffled in the religious (even the most orthodox) as well; while the former, the rationalists, look to secular, leftish, negative utilitarian, and other post-Enlightenment resources to deal with their ruffled sensibilities; the more religiously-mired have begun to look for resources and reinforcements in religious texts and oral law. The response is surprisingly welcome: Rabbi Isaac Bashevis Singer and Professor Peter Singer can meet in solidarity for the sake and plight of the animal, not out of any need to preserve or defend their respective 'ideological' or theoretical, or be it theological, stance. Indeed, a good number of Jewish religious leaders have begun to advocate vegetarianism. These have included Chief Rabbi of Britain, Jonathan Sacks, the late Chief Rabbi of Israel, Shlomo Goren, and the first Chief Rabbi of pre-state Israel, Abraham Kook, The former Chief Rabbi of Ireland, David Rosen, is cited as saying 'the consumption of meat is halachically unacceptable'

We move now to Part B to examine the animal in Hinduism

PART B

The Hindu Animal

Animals and Ecology in the Pre-Vedic age

It is generally believed that the Indus valley people (as far back as 10,000 BCE) domesticated several herbivorous wild animals. They trained those animals for use in agriculture, travel and hunting. Their settlements were on river banks, amidst dense jungles and forests and hence they maintained a close relationship with the natural environment. They superimposed a supernatural force on every aspect of nature and worshipped these. Trees and animals were objects of adoration and they treated them as the manifestations of an higher order (*rta*).

Hence it is that the cow occupies a pride of place in several hymns of the *R̥gVeda*. The cow, its variegated species, and their habitat are described in the texts in glamorous details. The sages considered the cow as the personification of motherhood, fertility and liberty. The cow was compared to the goddesses such as *Pr̥ṣṇi*, *Āditi* and *Ushās*. Rain was regarded as nothing other than the milk pouring from the udder of a cow. It is not surprising that therefore in the early Vedic period, the cow was killed for sacrifice as the main offering (*havis*), because it was seen to have such a resemblance; and this earthly 'good' might well be sufficient to please the gods who would, for their part of the bargain, return rain and calves a plenty.¹ A peculiar type of cow called *vasa* was used in sacrificial rites and offered as an oblation to the gods.² The cow, like the horse, was also given in sacrifices as 'gift' (*dakṣinā*). The cow, owing to her apparent intelligence, patience and acquiescence

was adjudged as among the best sacrificial animal (*yājñiya pasu*). As Laurie Patton noted:

... as many Vedic hymns and later ritual texts ... indicate, sacrifice of an animal into the fire was part of the ecological balance in the ancient Vedic world; the killing and distribution of the animal was part of a larger understanding of human harmony with natural forces.³

The Ṛgvedic people then regarded animals as an integral part of their agrarian and pastoral culture. Their predominant god, *Indra*, was a culture-hero who was invoked for the protection of cows. During the Ṛgvedic period, various animal cults such as theriolatry and ophiolatry had emerged. The deification of animals, apart from the sacrificial theology, probably also indicated a gesture towards animistic beliefs among the indigenous and non-Aryan groups in the region.

The lesson to be gleaned here is that, historically, the killing of animals and their distribution otherwise was part of a larger hermeneutic of the harmony of the human life-world with the natural forces; and, for the nonce, what it might mean to re-disperse the natural world in the process of rejuvenation, and what it might mean to hasten the processes of life and death; and how the tropes of harmony with nature *and* sacrifice could well converge⁴ in short, a kind of redistributive justice in the context of the natural environment.

Antinomianism of fuzzy rsis

However, the antinomian tension doubtless caught up, it would seem, with the Vedic *r̥ṣis* (seers), in respect of this somewhat ‘fishy’ or fuzzy moral reasoning. And so although the sacrificial spirit so described continued to inform later Vedic texts, the proclivity toward focusing on the subaltern species as the sacrificial *havis* changed over the course of time as other implements and matter became available with the growth of agrarian productivity, which were in turn utilized to achieve the same ends. Thus the seers are heard speaking of the cow as a frail animal, to be properly guarded and used with care. The priests decreed against ruthless killing of the cow even in the sacrificial process. Instead, the cow is requested to smell the vessel (*droṇakalaśa*) containing *soma* juice —symbolically representing a purification rite. A goat is requested to safeguard the sacrificial materials and precincts of the altar in general. The tortoise is also praised in several hymns. According to a seer of the *Yajurveda* (*YV*) the animal surveys the bricks employed in the *agnichayana* (fire) sacrifice, wherein fire is both the medium and symbolically ‘martyr’ of the sacrifice. The animal is walked in to ‘guard’ the bricks piled up on the sacrificial altar from possible infiltration of vagrant micro-amoebic and departed (*bhūtaka*) creatures, and so on. The four-legged animal certainly stands promoted in the hierarchy of the species sphere.

The Atharvan sages, by contrast, had a more specific knowledge about the nature and behavior of animals compared to Ṛgvedin seers, it seems. They were more realistic and down-to-earth, and therefore less ‘sacralizing’ in the sense of patronizing from the gods-eyes’ view of the subaltern species, at least in comparison to the people of the Ṛgvedic era.

I will now fast-forward on to the latter period, that of the *Purāṇas*, which is more properly the medieval period in the Indian context.

Ecology in the *Purāṇas*

In the ecological tracts of the *Purāṇas* there are frequent references to animals and the environment associated with them. Cosmologically, the *Purāṇas* advocated the unity of all sentient (*chetana*) and non-sentient (*achetana*) beings. The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* informs us that gods, men, animals, reptiles and birds are but the various forms of the creator Brahma since these have emerged from his limbs.⁵ The treatise also gives details regarding the origin of animals, their primordial place and leadership in the creation process. There are also efforts to enumerate the kinds and numbers of animal species that abound. For instance, the *Nārada Purāṇa* mentions 68 species of animals, the *Vāmana Purāṇa* of 137 animals, and *Garuda Purāṇa* speaks of 300 animals. Of course, by modern day archeological, Darwinian evolutionary biology and zoological wisdom these figures are palpably far off the mark, if only because their discourse was part of the more immediate agrarian and pastoral culture. The sages of the *purāṇic* ages envisioned that human beings ought to co-habit in harmony with nature without being destructive of any part thereof. Hence Krishna calls the fellow cowherds to offer devotion to hills, forests and cows over and above performing Vedic rites to Indra, who (like our present-day weatherman) fails to send them rain anyway.⁶ *Bhāgavata* and *Varaha Purāṇa* lavish praise upon the trees, which they say have the capacity to relieve the fatigue of the travellers, and also provide resting places to the flock of migratory birds, and medicines for the

sick.⁷ An injunction is issued in a verse typifying the *Purāṇic* wisdom: 'One should treat animals such as deer, camel, ass, monkey, snake, bird, flies and the like as their own children.' Hence the *Agni* and *Matsya Purāṇa* implore people to look after plants and animals by giving them good nourishment.⁸

Mention is also made of the need to safeguard the interests and needs for times yet to be: *bhaviśya*. It is interesting that such a future-regarding comparison is made long back in the *Purāṇa*. And so the argument by the best inference goes a fair way toward supporting an ecological perspectivism that is not confined contingently to the interests and needs of the current generation, much less of the terrestrially past or the celestially departed, but factors in the predictable depletion of resources exacerbated by the excesses (e.g. exponential) growth of the population burdensomely on Mother Earth, which more than likely will prove detrimental, if not catastrophic, to the needs and interests of the future generations (*bhaviśyaloka*), to which they have equal entitlement. This is not only mark of good ecology but decent moral philosophy also.

Rituals associated with animals

However, it was not good news all the way down the hierarchy especially for the subaltern species. Several animals were involved in rituals and sacrifices. Cow, bull, goat and other domesticated animals figure in the rituals connected with the departed manes (*pitṛdevatā*).

The *Matsya Purāṇa* enjoins that a bull should be released at Gaya and a tawny cow should be gifted away in order to satisfy the departed ancestors. It

mentions that the gifting of a black bull is equal to the performance of an *aśvamedha* (royal horse) sacrifice. The flesh of the rhinoceros was offered to the manes and they could survive for twelve years on its flesh and the bones of a rhinoceros had the power to ward off evil.⁹ The she-goat was also considered as an important animal. *Kurma Purāṇa* explains that prior to the sacrifice, the place should be strewn with sesame seeds and goats should tread all over the place so that the pollution and haunting of evil spirits could be warded off from the site. The *Agni Purāṇa* explains that some elephants are conducive to prosperity if sprinkled with holy and purificatory waters.

Various vows (*vrata*) connected with the beasts are mentioned in the *Purāṇa*. For instance, a person performing the vow of Heroism (*viravṛata*) should give the gift of an animal made in gold for securing higher benefits. He attains the domain of Śiva having gifted a gold lion. If one gifts the golden deer, then, he would attain the virtue akin to that of a horse sacrifice.¹⁰

A king, on the other hand, for the protection and other distributive boons or omens on behalf of the citizens, was enjoined to kill wild beasts. The animal was slaughtered when a man of reverence arrived at a festival,¹¹ but those hunters should not kill a beast that was sleeping, having sexual intercourse, feeding a calf, or one which was drinking water.¹² (We saw this echoed in Jewish code as well.) The same *Purāṇa* also enlists eight types of animal killers such as one who enjoys killing, one who allows it, accomplishes it, one who sells the beast, one who purchases it, the actual killer, one who carries it, and one who causes it to be killed; and based on the gravity of such animal killings, they should be punished.

Expiation ceremonies

As the animals were elevated to the state of demi-gods, and some continued to be associated with evil spirits, there was a taboo on both counts against keeping or rearing animals as pets. *Manu Smṛti* says that if a celibate committed sexual indiscretion, he was called by the name *avakirṇa* and as a remorse he had to cover his body with the hide of an ass.¹³ *Brahmā Purāṇa* says that *Indra* took the form of a cat and fled after seducing *Ahalya*.¹⁴ Thus keeping a cat in the house invited censure and such a person was treated as a person of abject birth according to *Liṅga Purāṇa*. *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* informs us that a person keeping a cat, rooster, dog, pig, or bird will, upon death, descend into hell or the nether regions.¹⁵ According to S. A. Dange, this taboo was indicative specifically of the *vaiṣṇava* attitude toward the keeping of animals as pets, while other folks, and in particular people tilling the land with the help of animals, were not affected by the theological sanctions.¹⁶

A number of *Purāṇas* suggests several types of expiation rites in connection with the driving of carts driven by forbidden animals. For example, if a person mounts a cart drawn by camels or donkeys, he will accrue demerit. He may regain his purity only at the end of three nights after performing prescribed purificatory rituals. In fact, he should enter the lake in the nude and stay half immersed in the water for three nights. If a person touches a dog accidentally or if some dog bites him, then he should drink milk for three days to counter the demerit and the sting.¹⁷ It is said that a Brahmin who sells his daughter, land, cow, or son is cast into hell forever.¹⁸ A Brahmin who sells a horse was akin to a murderer.¹⁹ Certain castes

were then not to part with their animals, and certain castes were not permitted to be in too close an association with animals. There are obviously sociological complexities in the structure, functioning, and distribution of labor incumbent upon such a society that relied so heavily on the 'technology' or agricultural prowess of animals that belie any straightforward moral judgments we might feel justified in making from this distance in the post-industrial era, where indeed the technology of International Harvester and the abattoir remain dominant.

Purāṇic reasoning on animal health-care

Early Indians took great care in keeping the animal environment clean. *Garuda Purāṇa* prescribes the following medicinal herbs for keeping the elephants healthy:

myrobalans (*Terminalia chebula*), *haritaki* (*Chewbulix myrobalan*) and *brahati*.

These should be dried, powdered and mixed together with black rock salt, and fed to the elephants. Pastes of several medicinal herbs are recommended for curing several ailments of elephants.

Further, the *Purāṇas* say that leaves of turpentine, margosa, guggula, mustard, ghee, sesame, should be tied to the neck of a horse to ward off worms hovering around and festing the animals body.²⁰

Agni Purāṇa informs us that if a horse is suffering from abdominal pains, it should be administered with an insertion of Basri oil through a tube or the veins of the abdomen should be cut off. Further, a paste prepared from garlic, rock salt, buttermilk and gruel oil should be applied. Curds, Margosa leaves should be used for

curing the wounds of horses. Generally, a purificatory ritual (*asva shanti*) was done for the welfare of the horses.

This was done on the bright half of the month of *āsvayuja* (September-October). The gods to be worshipped were the *Aśvins* and *Varṇna*, to whom barley and ghee were offered. Several animals such as roosters, monkey, cow with her calf, and goats were kept in stables for the welfare of the horses.²¹

When any tank was dug for the sake of a ritual, a fish, a crocodile, a non-poisonous snake called *duṇḍubha* made out of gold, a frog and fish made out of copper, and a porpoise made out of iron should be placed on a plate and thrown into the water. As all these were aquatic animals, the early Indians thought that one would harm them or their environment while digging a tank and hence, as an act of expiation, this was performed by the people concerned. This cautious attitude of the *purāṇic* people reflects their views on eco-balance or biodiversity.

The authors of the *Purāṇa* decried and prohibited the killing of animals either for game or for food as this would upset the eco-balance of nature. This taboo clearly presupposes that there was killing of animals in ancient India. Several edicts proscribe a brahmin killing a frog, ichneumon, monkey, some birds, crane, peacock, hawk, crow and others. He should perform various expiation rites and donate gifts to ward off the sins resulting out of such animal killings. He could also cleanse himself by worshipping a cow.²² *Garuda Purana* prescribe the release of five black bulls and white calf for two years for killing an elephant.²³ *Kurma Purāṇa* states that the theft of an elephant, a horse, a cow and a bull should be viewed as a great sin and such thieves would be driven to a perpetual hell.²⁴ The *Garuda Purāṇa* records that

even the worst sinner can be released from those demerit points if he sights a bear or worships a cow.²⁵

Likewise, Kauṭilya in the *Arthaśāstra*, consistent with his policies on statecraft (*rājanīti*) and the 'rule of the rod' (*daṇḍanīti*), prescribed various types of punishments for violators of animal welfare or their proper care. For instance, a person killing a cow or a calf or one who incites another to kill or steal a cow is meted out the severest of punishment. One who changes the cow for the royal cattle should pay a very huge fine. Even a person, milking for the second time during the day out of greed, should be warned and if he persists punished. Other kinds of cruelty against animals, bestiality, and people engaging in violent animal games, using live animals for improper exhibitionism and art were not spared either. A person causing a bull of one herd to be hurled by another bull, was to pay a heavily fine.²⁶

A horse keeper who fails to look after the horse, or transgresses the proper laws, should be punished by halving his daily or monthly wages. One should not ride those horses kept either for some religious rites or by the physician. The violator of this rule was fined with twelve *panas*. Veterinary doctors who showed dereliction or negligence in their duty, such as failure to treat a diseased animal, or contributed to the plight of the suffering and sick animal by administering wrong medicine, were penalized with double the cost of the treatment. In the case that the diseased animal or the animal in the care of an animal keeper dies accidentally, they had to pay the actual price of the animal.²⁷ An elephant rider who drives his elephant to the land of

others for grazing, or leads it to a thicket of trees without the permission of the forest superintendent, was fined very heavily.

Animals and the concept of non-violence (*ahimsā*)

The common ethos emerging through the reflections of *Purāṇas*, *Arthaśāstras*, and the epics appears to be this: It is part of the *dharma* of the *rājaniti* that the king and his ministries maximize protection and maintenance of people and the resources of the kingdom, or all that belongs to the earth (*bhūma*). The prosperity of the land translates into the benefit of the people. ‘In other words, the common good of the kingdom – its social, economic, political, and ecological welfare – was rooted in the *dharma* of the king.’²⁸

The treatises on ethics and religion (*Dharmasāstras* and *Smṛtis*), the two epics (*Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*), and ancient lores (*Purāṇa*) emphasized the fourfold values of life which could be practiced in two ways, i.e., an active life in this world (*pravṛtti*) and renunciation of the world (*nivṛtti*).²⁹ The virtues of the second tradition perhaps led to the development of non-injury (*ahimsā*) in Hinduism. A more compassionate leaning paved the way for a more successful development of non-violent sacrifices in which pulses, cereals, ghee were substituted for animals in the sacrificial fire.³⁰ The *Mahabharata* declared non-injury as the highest duty to be performed by an individual.³¹ The *Bhagavadgītā* — which in the context of the epic *Mahābhārata*, has been much discussed already in this volume — provides quasi-philosophical grounding for the values extolled in the *Mahābhārata* and is more decisive in its ethical pronouncements. It is for this reason that the *Gītā* (for short)

has had a profound impact on modern Hindu-Indian thought and is drawn upon obliquely in Western ethical and ecological deliberations as well.³² Two most commented upon verses in this context are the following:

The one whose self is disciplined by yoga.

See the self abiding in every being

And sees every being in the self;

He sees the same in all beings.

When one sees pleasures and pain of others

To be equal to one's own, O *Arjuna*,

He is considered the highest yogin.³³

Several commentators, including *Śankara*, have observed that the feeling of pain is universalized so as to derive a principle of empathy and non-injury. *Śankara* characteristically commented that one who sees that what is painful and pleasant to himself is painful and pleasant to all creatures, will cause no living beings pain, and that he who is non-injurious is the foremost of yogins.³⁴ Self-realization in the *Gita* takes due cognizance of the moral principle of *lokasaṁgraha*, the well-being of all peoples. The world of living things is brought together in a process governed by moral cause-effect relationships and it makes it imperative for each being within it to respect the autonomy, the interests and destiny of the other, and ultimately to find a way out of the cyclic implications of this process.³⁵

In view of the shortness of time, let me skip to contemporary narratives. I will begin with Gandhi. Gandhi was acutely aware that the demands

generated by the need to feed and sustain human life compounded with the growing industrialization of India, if not of the world at large, far outstripped the finite resources of nature. This might appear naïve and commonplace at the end of the 20th century, but such pronouncements were rare as they were heretical at the turn of the century. With this as the background knowledge, Gandhi was also adamant about the need for a rigorous ethic of non-injury in the human treatment of animals.³⁶ More passionately on active environmental renewal projects, Gandhi wrote in 1926 that for India the next step should not be destructive agriculture but the planting of plenty of fruit trees and other vegetation as these provide nourishment, stability in the soil, and attracts rainfall as well as provide fodder for the insect and animal world. He was even worried about silks and wool extractions, and therefore proposed their replacement exclusively with *khādi* (mix of cotton and linen). The implications of such simple ecological wisdom have only just begun to dawn on a tech-fested agriculture production economics. Gandhi saw vegetarianism as a moral cause, even once stating that he would prefer death to consuming some beef-tea or mutton, even under medical advice. He saw the life of a lamb as no less precious than that of a human being. In his little known treatise, *The Moral Basis of Vegetarianism*, he asserted, 'The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated.' To Gandhi, vegetarianism was not just a religious principle, but an moral obsession that he spent much time and effort on.

We see some of Gandhi's thinking reflected in modern-day animal liberation/rights thinking, e.g. in Peter Singer's argument that the morality of actions should not be determined exclusively in terms of human interests, rather

that since animals indisputably have the ability to feel pain and pleasure (i.e. they have sentience), it would be wrong to intentionally cause suffering in animals. This general doctrine of sentientism is meant to be a corrective to the prelapsarian spectre of speciesism. One would have to be a 'species-ist' to believe that animals are not as deserving of freedom from suffering and subordination brought about by human interests, as is a race of people who are subjugated by another race without justification. Of course, by the same token, one cannot be over-romantic according to this view, about the special 'rights', and so on, on the part of the 'animal species', for this would be tantamount to 'reverse species-ism' (analogous to 'reverse orientalism'). Rather, a non-anthropocentric and non-species-ist moral perspective is derivable from utilitarianism and underscores human responsibility to nature rather seriously, principally by including animals in the 'expanding' moral community of individuals and by not allowing human interests to subordinate the well-being of animals without justification. On this view, vegetarianism is said also to be morally compelling, for it is only out of selfish human interest, for food and feeling well, that one would have an animal killed and consumed, with relish. One might as well eat one's (or another's) pet(s).³⁷

A contemporary Gandhian ethical argument for discontinuing the slaughter and consumption of the cow (ox, bull, buffalo, or cattle) has been taken up by Maneka Gandhi (wife of the late Rajeev Gandhi, and daughter-in-law of Indira Gandhi). Her strident animal rights campaign works through petitioning parliament and the legislature as well as voluntary animal rescue hospices; and one of her major targets has been the slaughterhouses, abattoirs, along the Yamuna River, and

tanneries along the Ganga, which have been the major source of pollution of the waters in recent decades.

It can be surmised from the above discussions that just as Brahmanic Hinduism borrowed the concept of non-injury from Buddhism and Jainism, and moved it to a more universalistic and pragmatic stratagem, modern-day Hinduism and Judaism as well may have yet to learn some more from these traditions and cultures.. The concept of *ahimsā* helped changed the ancient outlook of a nomadically-driven people and brought about a rejection of the violence involved and perpetrated in Vedic sacrifices. It further helped develop the aligned aspects of non-injury in virtues, fledgling to begin with, such as the Hindu and libertarian ideals of toleration, forgiveness, and equanimity.

Thus animals, trees and fauna, for their part as participating subjects, could be said to have played a significant role, directly or indirectly, in the development of Hindu, and the much larger, Indian morality and the practice of preservation of the environment around them. At some point in history Indians could consider it a moral accomplishment to live in harmonious association with fauna and flora without disturbing the eco-components of nature. Whether in real-life practice and in their polity they achieved this or not remains in some doubt and a subject of much bitter complain,³⁸ an ethics is not always measured by its success (consider the problems with utilitarianism, perhaps the most 'successful' Western ethics closer to our times) but by its conceptual coherence and broadness of vision (consider the marginalization of Spinozian and feminist ethics in the West). The sentient and the non-sentient creatures and things of nature became increasingly, in

the philosophical and devotional (including tantric or wildly esoteric) orientated schools in particular, a part of microcosm that is seen to be integral to the macrocosm. The forest universities imparted teaching amidst sylvan surroundings. The denizens of forests and jungles drew minimal food from nature for their survival, thus allowing the periodical growth of forests. People who committed crime on animals were severely dealt with by stringent laws. They propounded the philosophy of unitary consciousness in all the creatures of the world and cautioned against the indiscriminate killing of these creatures resulting in his own down fall. This holistic approach grew slowly but appreciably, such that in our times there can be a Gandhi, an Albert Schweitzer (also influenced by Jaina ethics), Arne Naess, The Dalai Lama, Vandana Shiva, Arundhati Roy, Medha Patkar, Bahuguna, Maneka Gandhi among others, who are able to command or claim a voice in the global movement towards environmentalism and sustainability without compromising to the globalization of industrial capital interest that remains more impersonally blind to the epistemic and real violence of their instrumental rationalism, with a single-minded pursuit of money economy, than the Vedic *rishis* and fishermen of yore, who used animals to appease the gods or provide nourishment to an immediate community.

At the end of the day, or the modern era, what we can learn from the wrongs and rights of the tradition (ancient, through medieval to modern day) is this: We should like to think that human beings are intelligent enough to be able to come to terms with the fact that they have certain basic duties to other species in the common eco-sphere (such as not to harm, not to disturb, not to forego trust, be

willing to make restitution, be compassionate); these duties may ensue either in recognition of the rights of others or in respect for the interests and values of others (more in the Levinasian sense than that acceded by analytical or utilitarian ethics). While a morally stronger case can be made by basing the argument on interests and values than on the moral rights of animals, there is no reason why animal ethics need to favour one over the other. It would seem to me that a case for the *respect* of animals (of the kind that Paul Taylor has made as part of his case for respecting *nature*³⁹) among the faces of the other through which indeed we are, can only be strengthened by finding a mean between rights and interests. There are ample resources for this bridging in all religions, not least on a par in Judaism and Hinduism.

ShalOM

¹ RV I.16.114.10

² RV.X.169.3/II.7.5 X.91.14

³ Laurie Patton, 'Nature Romanticism and Sacrifice in R̥gvedic Interpretations', in *Hinduism and Ecology*, (eds. Chris Chapple and Mary Evelyn Tucker) CSWR, Harvard, 2000, p 43.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*. 15-46.

⁶ *Skanda Purāṇa* I-20.

⁷ *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, X-22-32-35/ *Varaha Purāṇa* XVI-41-42.

⁸ *Matsya Purāṇa*, Ch 35.

⁹ *Skanda Purāṇa, Prabhāṣa Khanda*. Ch 205.

¹⁰ *Matsya Purāṇa* 100-28;ibid., 35.

¹¹ *Brahmānanda Purāṇa (Br. Pu)* II 4.650-57.

¹² *Skanda Purana (Sk Pu)* VI 10-12.

¹³ *Manu Smṛti*, XI.118.122.

¹⁴ *Br. Pu.*, 87.52.

¹⁵ *Vi. Pu.*, II.6.19.

¹⁶ Dange, op cit.

¹⁷ *Kurma Purāṇa*, II.33.58, Ibid 42.

¹⁸ *Brahmā Purāṇa*, 150.9/ 165.11-12.

¹⁹ *Brahhā Vaiivarta Purāṇa*. I. 58.98.

²⁰ *Garuda Purāṇa (Ga. Pu)*, 201-35-39.

²¹ *Matsya Purāṇa*, 216-21-22.

²² *Kurma Purāṇa*, III.32.50-54.

²³ *Ga. Pu.*, I .105.34.

²⁴ *Kurma Purāṇa*, III. 108-22-23.

²⁵ *Ga. Pu.*, I.214.50. .

²⁶ *Ka. Ar.* II. 29.1-48.

²⁷ *Ibid.*,II. 30-45-48.

²⁸ McGee, op cit, p 62

²⁹ For discussion see works of Greg Bailey and T S Rukmani, 'Literary Foundations for an Ecological Aesthetic: *Dharma*, Ayurveda, the Arts, and *Abhijnanaśakuntalam*, in *Hinduism and Ecology*, q.v.. pp. 101-126.

³⁰ *MBh Śāntiparvan*. P. CCLV. 24 ff: CCLVII. 4ff. CCLXI. 19; CCLXIV.17.The

³¹ *Ibid.*, Śāntiparvan CCXXXVII 17 ff.; CCLXIV . 19 ff.: *Anu Parvan* CXVI. 72: CXVII 37-39.

³² Gandhi, 1962; Naess, 1989, p. 194; Jacobsen, 1996, pp. 231-233 ; Gerald J. Larson, 'Conceptual Resources in South Asia for 'Environmental Ethics,:' in *Nature in Asian Traditions of Thought: Essays in Environmental Philosophy*, J. Baird Callicott and Roger T. Ames (eds.), Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1989, pp. 267–277.

³³ *The Bhagavadgītā*, VI. 29-32; de Nicolas, 1976a, p.110.

³⁴ *Śankara*, 1976, pp.198-9; Bilimoria & Hutchings, 1988, pp. 36.

³⁵ P. Bilimoria, op cit, pp. 17-18

³⁶ Gandhi, *My Socialism*, Ahmedabad: Navajivan, 1959, pp: 34-35.

³⁷ See Peter Singer, *Animal Liberation*,. 2nd edition. London: Jonathan Cape, 1990.

³⁸ Alison M Jaggar, 'Is Globalization Good for Women?' in *Comparative Literature*, Special Issue on Globalization and the Humanities, edited by David Leiwei Li, Fall, **53**, (4), pp. 298-314; Gayatri Chakravorthy Spivak, *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason, A History of the Vanishing Present*. Camb, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999. Jennifer Crawford, *The Attentive Heart*, Aldershot: Ashgate, Publishing, 2005.

³⁹ Paul Taylor, *Respect for Nature, A Theory of Environmental Ethics*, New Jersey: University of Princeton Press, 1986.

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