

Project Group (Number and Name): 76 Do Animals Resist? Conceptualizing Multispecies Solidarity

Comment

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Comment:

The systematic Cover-up of animal resistance in our society

In February 2010, killer whale Tilikum dismembered the US-American orca trainer Dawn Brancheau. Tilikum had shown a history of violence throughout his captivity after being confined in dark tanks for hours and being bullied by other orcas in captivity. Despite their shown resistance, orcas are just one species of many which are still suffering in captivity. The following critical comment will reflect on animal resistance and the challenges which need to be overcome to prevent further harm towards animals.

The biggest of many challenges is to overthrow the institutionalized structures that shape the way we think, behave and lead our lives. For example, our behaviour towards animals is strongly influenced by the law and society, leading humankind to view animals as a resource of economic profit. This leads to concepts like slaughterhouses keeping animals under brutal conditions that are only built for benefitting the meat and dairy industry. Animal speciesism is another problem caused by that. It means that we categorize animals into domestic farm animals, pets or wild zoo animals and give them different values. Only by breaking and changing these traditional ways of thinking, can we recognize animal resistance and evolve our view on animals.

Moreover, due to a lack of education and established stereotypes as well as a misled interpretation of animal welfare and treatment due to capitalistic marketing structures, a large proportion of the population is unable to reflect on animal resistance. Therefore, no discussion of moral values can take place. For example, about the dignity and value of an animal.

Another aspect is the insufficiency of the scientific base regarding the animals' rebellious behavior, as we did not find specific indicators, looking at which we could tell whether an animal acts as if it feels pain and protests or not. Challenges mentioned above would be much easier to tackle if we had certain biological tools that could help us understand emotions and feelings of different animals and learn to recognize as well as properly interpret them. That is why it is essential to continue scientific research towards discovering ways of hearing the real voice of animals. However, this is not an excuse to remain in the perspective of a humanized worldview ignoring the suffering and systematic mistreatment animals have been resisting against ever since their domestication and captivation taking away most of their never properly institutionalized rights of living.

As a result, the project work on the article “Do Animals Resist” by Chiara Stefanoni as well as the creative interpretation of an alternate potential utopian world vision left us with diverse moral and ethical questions regarding human behaviour.

What is our responsibility as a human or (multi-species) society and how will the capitalistic and consumerism-oriented system develop in an alternate world with us being aware of emotional and psychological consequences for non-human animals regarding the domestication, captivity as well as exploitation of animals on multiple levels? Are we able to recognize resistance and how will we change our behaviour linked to that gained knowledge, possibly changing a whole political system and revolutionizing old anthropocentric ethical values, so this planet can finally become a peaceful place of multi-species interaction and co-existence?

Video Information

Title of the Video: How recognizing animal resistance could change the world

Authors of the Video: Olivia Hintz, Luis Bosse, Lisa Ladwig, Julia Freymuth, Sarah Kosakowski, Lilly Rieck, Theresa Lohff, Franziska Heinelt, Elias Specker, Paula Voß

Music: Underwater Ambience - Fission9 (Pixabay)
Forest with small river birds and nature field recording- Garuda 1892 (Pixabay)

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