

Project Group (Number and Name): Group 78

## Comment

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Comment:

Do Animals Resist? Conceptualizing Multispecies Solidarity  
Critical Comment Group 78

Industrial farming and slaughter, trophy hunting, fur farming, experimentation and domestic abuse – only a few of the many ways in which humans apply cruelty and oppression towards non-human animals. As a result, people go on the street every day to speak up for these suffering, “voiceless” creatures. They want to be their savior but there are many examples of situations in which non-human animals have raised their voice for themselves – simultaneously science is just starting to understand animal's various ways of resisting. So far due to our anthropocentric worldview and several other challenges scientific results have not yet been publicly recognized.

The most obvious examples of resistance to a human eye are the many cases of non-human animals actively escaping their captivity and abuse by physically crossing borders. But there are many more forms of resisting which might not be as easy to see for us but still equally valid like e.g. the development of a disease or psychological disorders as a reaction to deprivation of freedom.

Our understanding of agency is closely linked to having a conscious intention behind an action that we do not want to ascribe to non-human animals in order to preserve our anthropocentric worldview. Contrary to that exists the concept of ecocentrism which in its theory ascribes equal worth to all parts of nature. Consequently all power relations and superiority between “us” and “them” would be erased and instead we would all become allies who join forces with the victims themselves.

So what are the challenges that present itself as most pressing regarding the process of no longer seeing non-human animals as less worthy?

First there is the question of how far can we go, how extreme can we act to reach our goals on one hand and still take everyone with us on the other hand? As a basis for this we would need to have a clear goal in mind. What is the utopia that we could see become reality one day and how do we create a life where all living beings can coexist peacefully?

Another challenge is that we do not know where to start. Which suffering is greater than the other and therefore has to be tackled first? The hundreds of farm animals that are being murdered each day in the slaughterhouse nearest to us or our neighbor's dog which you can hear howling all day because he is not given food or taken for a walk.

In order to deal with all these obstacles, change the public's minds and behaviors and make them more sensitive to the various ways in which non-human animals resist a

foundational change is crucial: a major shift from anthropocentrism towards ecocentrism. To bring about this turning point the role of empathy is critical but also one that we cannot exclusively rely on.