

WELFARE OF FARM ANIMALS

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The evolution of man's relationship with animals

A belief system called animism has been traced back to the Paleolithic Age (the earliest period of the Stone Age). Animism is the belief that every object, living or not, contains a soul. Thus, animals, trees, and even rocks had spiritual meaning to prehistoric people. Anthropologists theorize that humans may have believed that they could capture the spirits (and thus the fierceness, strength, and speed) of wild animals by eating their flesh. Likewise, some wild animals may have been worshipped as gods by early humans.

Around 15,000–13,000 B.C., the change of climate. The hunter-gatherers had increasing difficulty finding the big game they had hunted before. Scientists believe that mammoths and many other large animals were driven to extinction around 10,000 B.C. because of climate changes, overhunting by humans, or both. Humans turned to hunting smaller animals and began gathering and cultivating plants in centralized locations.

This major shift from nomadic life to settled existence had a tremendous effect on the human-animal relationship.

In the Late Stone Age, the people of Europe and Asia began to domesticate animals suitable for riding or pulling carts.

Of these animals, donkeys were used almost exclusively for transporting loads after an early period, and even camels found only limited use in battle. The two most important species of animals used by military forces in antiquity were elephants, which played important battle roles, and horses. Horses, which were first used for pulling war chariots and later for riding, were the most influential in ancient warfare.

Prehistory - the only period when the status of man was comparable to that of animals.

Between 13,000 and 2,500 B.C., humans **domesticated** dogs, cats, cattle, goats, horses, and sheep from their wild counterparts.

The terms "**taming**" and "**domestication**" are often used interchangeably, they are not the same. Individual wild animals can be tamed to behave in a docile manner around humans. By contrast, domestication is a process that takes place with an entire animal species over many generations.

Domesticated animals are not just tamer than their wild ancestors; they are different genetically. Over the ages, desirable qualities, such as size and disposition, were engrained by breeding only those animals that displayed them. This explains some of the physical differences between wild and domesticated animals. For example, most domesticated species **are smaller and fatter and have smaller teeth and brains** than their wild ancestors.

Successful domestication is only possible with species that exhibit these characteristics:

- A diet that can be supplied easily and relatively cheaply by humans.
- A relatively fast growth rate with short time intervals between births.
- The ability to mate and breed in captivity.
- A tendency toward calm, predictable behavior rather than panic
- A lack of viciousness toward humans .
- A social structure based on hierarchy and cooperative group living without strong territorialism.

Horses are thought to have been domesticated around 6,000 B.C. Archaeological evidence indicates that they were first herded for their meat, hides, and milk. Horse milk was fermented into an alcoholic brew called kummis by ancient people living in central Asia. As the growing of crops became more important, horses and oxen became more useful as work animals, pulling carts, wagons, and plows. The Egyptians began using horses to pull plows in the fields sometime after 4,000 B.C. Gradually, horses were trained for use in transportation and in warfare.

Donkeys are believed to descend from African wild asses. Domestic donkey remains have been found in Egyptian excavations dating back to around 4,000 B.C. Donkeys were probably first used as beasts of burden to supplement the work done by oxen, and later as riding animals. Horses and donkeys allowed people to become much more mobile than they had been, which led to increased trading among different cultures.

Chickens were domesticated from Asian jungle fowl around 3,500 B.C. as a source of meat and eggs. **Camels** were domesticated around 2,500 B.C. According to the Agropolis-Museum of France, other early domesticated animals were **turkeys and musk ducks** in Central America, and **llamas, guinea pigs, and alpacas** in South America.

Domestication failures:

Virtually no other animal species have been domesticated since around 2,500 B.C. Humans tried to domesticate many other types of animals that could be useful for work or provide a good meat source, but these attempts have been unsuccessful. **Zebras** are the most notable example. Ancient herdsman tried for centuries to domesticate zebras. Although they are genetically very similar to horses and can even breed with horses, their behavior is quite different. Zebras are notoriously bad-tempered around humans and have never lost their tendency to bite unexpectedly.

Domestication failures:

Elephants have historically been used as work animals in some parts of the world, but they grow too slowly to become truly domesticated animals.

Grizzly bears and African buffalo have never been domesticated, because of their unpredictable dispositions. Likewise, **deer and antelope** are unsuitable because they cannot be herded or penned up (with the exception of reindeer). They flee in panic when they are frightened and do not have the proper social structure for domestication.

History has shown that the most suitable animals for domestication (and use by humans) are those that naturally live in groups with a hierarchical social structure.

Roman Empire

The Romans worshipped many different gods and goddesses, most of which were in human form, and often adopted the deities of other cultures, particularly those of Greece. Animal sacrifices were common in Roman religious practices.

The rulers of the Roman Empire delighted in brutal competitions and sports and invented many "games" to entertain their citizens. The Colosseum of Rome was a massive arena that featured events in which wild animals fought to the death with each other or with humans. Ancient texts describe the deaths, very torturous and cruel by today's standards, of thousands of bears, bulls, lions, tigers, elephants, and other animals. Often the animals were chained together or tormented with burning irons and darts to make the fighting fiercer.

Historical evidence shows that the Romans were very fond of horses. Their economy, troops, and postal service were dependent on the work done by horses. The Romans also practiced animal husbandry with cattle, pigs, sheep, goats, and chicken and kept cats and dogs as pets or working animals.

Christianity became the official religion of the Roman Empire in 325 A.D. This put an end to the killing of humans in the Colosseum, because the human soul was sacred to Christianity. There is no evidence that animal games ended, however, until the Empire became too poor to acquire exotic and wild animals for them.

Roman Empire

The Roman legal system regarded the animal as a thing for which any consideration of suffering and the need for consideration was irrelevant.

Pythagoras – ancient Greek philosopher and mathematician did not eat meat, he judged that animals, like humans, are endowed with a soul that can pass from human to animal and on the contrary.

Ovidius, Seneca, Plutarch also sympathized with animals in ancient Rome - unlike Pythagoras, they did not build on the idea of the migration of souls. They promoted the idea of being kind to animals.

Middle Ages

In general, Europe's medieval period, also called the Middle Ages, is considered the era from the fall of the Roman Empire in the late fifth century through the sixteenth century. The early centuries of the period are called the Dark Ages because few known scientific and cultural achievements were made by western societies during this time.

The authorities of the Christian church began to hold great power over the people of Europe. In the Middle Ages, animals were subordinate creatures, much like slaves. Their usefulness was realised and in a sense respected, but cruelty in their treatment was the order of the day.

Saint Francis of Assisi (1181–1226) is arguably the most famous animal lover of the medieval period in Europe.

One of the most influential philosophers of the Middle Ages was **Saint Thomas Aquinas** (1225–74). In 1264 he published a work called *God and His Creatures*, in which he included a section entitled "That the Souls of Dumb Animals Are Not Immortal." Aquinas argued that animals can neither understand nor reason and that their actions are driven entirely by natural instincts rather than by "art" or self-consciousness. Because animals can comprehend only the present and not the future, Aquinas believed that their souls were not immortal like human souls.

The Renaissance period

This period was characterized by the elevation of man and his abilities. Renaissance humanism, however, had nothing to do with humanity, humane treatment of other creatures. The difference between man and animals was emphasized - **the anthropocentric view.**

A departure from these ideas displayed:

Leonardo da Vinci (15th-16th centuries) considered humanity to be cruel and invoked God in these words: "God's justice! Why don't you see through and see how these creatures are mistreated?"

Michel de Montaigne (16th century) - The French writer openly rejected the anthropocentric attitude and considered humans and animals equal.

17th century - period of mechanics and rationality

Mathematician and philosopher **René Descartes** expressed the opinion that everything that is made by matter is governed by mechanistic rules and functions like a well-adjusted machine.

In the 17th and 18th centuries in England and North America, the first partial laws and regulations were created - protecting animals from cruelty.



René Descartes:

The human body is also a machine, but the fact that it is endowed with a soul and consciousness puts man in a different category. Animals, however, according to him, have no soul and no consciousness and are mere machines, incapable of feeling pleasure or pain and functioning on the same principle as, for example, a watch. The moaning of animals is then actually just the creaking of a broken machine.

Descartes already had many opponents in his time, but his concept has gained ground and has had tragic long-term consequences for animals.

It was at this time **that animal experimentation** became widespread. There were no anesthetics and all procedures and experiments were carried out while fully conscious.

Charles Darwin: The Descent of Man (1871) "There is no fundamental difference between man and the higher mammals in their mental faculties." Animals, Darwin said, could reason, make decisions, hold memories, had the power of imagination, and emotional lives. „Humanity to the lower animals" was one of the "noblest virtues with which man is endowed." Darwin testified before a Royal Commission on Vivisection, lobbying for a law to protect both the animals used in vivisection, and the study of physiology.

The scope of man's use of animals and the planet was increasing - the question of how humans should treat animals was becoming more and more pressing:

ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS began to deal with the relationship between man and animal. The founder is **Albert Schweitzer** (1875-1965) German physician, musician and philosopher. He wrote the work "The Doctrine of Reverence for Life" - "it is good to protect and love life, evil to destroy and injure it". Another representative is **Peter Singer** "Animal Liberation" (1975), he formulated here the ideas on which modern protection of animals and their rights are based.

Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832) is considered an important figure - British legal theorist, philosopher and founder of **utilitarianism**, he was one of the first advocates of animal rights. He published a passage that is still quoted today, that it is not important whether animals can think, but whether they can suffer.

Modern times

From the 19th century onwards, a special period in man's relationship with other living creatures began. **With the expansion of industry and agricultural "production", animals** increasingly become mere raw materials and tools of labour or production in the eyes of man. They begin to be exploited to a degree unprecedented in history. "Livestock" animals are being bred in increasing numbers and at increasing intensities, helped in particular by the development of factory farms since the mid-20th century.

Here, the maximum number of animals was kept in the smallest possible space at the lowest possible cost. This type of farming is no longer able to meet the natural needs of the animals and inevitably leads to their deprivation. **Breeding for ever greater productivity puts further pressure on the animals,** so that today's animals produce far more milk and eggs than those of 50 years ago. The number of animals "used" for experiments has increased an estimated 5 to 10 times in the last 100 years.

Modern times

On the other hand, the issue of humane treatment of animals (rather a minority) also came up.

J. Bentham, Arthur Schopenhauer, Samuel Coleridge
- 19th century.

The English thinker **Jeremy Bentham** (18th-19th century) made a major contribution to the debate about why we should be considerate of animals (whether because of their consciousness, souls, intelligence, or whatever). In his book *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Law*, he said: "The question is not - Can they think? or Can they speak? But Can they suffer?" It is the fact that we can inflict pain and suffering on animals by our actions that has since become the main argument for why animals should have the right to considerate and sensitive treatment.

Modern times

In 1824, the first **animal protection organisation** was also founded in England, which later became the Royal Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA).

The organisation was founded by members of parliament and other political figures, which on the one hand gave it prestige, but at the same time forced it into a relatively conservative stance. It did, however, have some notable successes, for example, by campaigning for a ban on cockfighting, which was popular at the time. Through its inspectors, it also acted as a check on specific cases of animal cruelty.

20 century – **L.N. Tolstoj, G.B. Shaw, M. Gándhí** –
are interested in human treatment with animals

**The greatness of a nation and its moral
progress can be measured by the way
animals are treated.**

Mahátma Gándhí

In the 1960s and 1970s, movements for equality of women, races, etc. developed, and the problem of discrimination and abuse of animals began to emerge as part of this "liberalisation wave". Gradually, animal protection organisations took their rightful place in society and began to address the most serious and controversial issues in society - the breeding of 'farm' animals and animal experimentation. Thanks to the work of these organisations, the public is gradually learning what goes on behind the closed doors of factory farms and experimental laboratories.

Religion and animals

Judaism

Although the Hebrews followed **various worship practices, including animism**, eventually they developed a central religion known as Judaism. This change was largely brought about by a Hebrew leader **named Abraham**, who devoted himself to a single god called Yahweh (or Jehovah in Latin). Around 2,000 B.C. Abraham led his people to a land that was eventually called **Israel**. The followers of Judaism came to be called Jews.

Judaism was unique among the many religions of the time because it is **monotheistic**. The Jews worship only one god instead of many gods. The Hebrew Bible—which is also called the **Old Testament** and comprises half of what later became the sacred text of Christianity— **says that humans were created in the image of god**.

According to the first book (Genesis) of the Hebrew Bible, God created the earth and populated it with all kinds of creatures. **God granted humans "dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth."** This idea of dominion was to have a profound effect on western civilization for centuries to come.

Many domestic and wild animals are mentioned in books of the Hebrew Bible. Domestic animals include donkeys, horses, camels, goats, cattle, sheep, oxen, mules, pigs, and dogs.

The Hebrew Bible also includes some very strict dietary rules regarding the eating of meats. Orthodox Jews are only allowed to eat certain animals that they believe are considered clean by their god. These include:

- Animals with parted hooves that are cloven-footed and chew their cud.
- Fish with fins and scales .
- Most birds, except birds of prey .
- Locusts, grasshoppers, and crickets.

Jews believe that all other animals, including pigs, are considered unclean by God and are not to be eaten. Animals that are eaten have to have the blood removed because consumption of blood is forbidden.

The Old Testament also contains some instructions on how animals are to be treated. For example, animals as well as people were supposed to rest and do no work on the Sabbath (Friday evening to Saturday evening). In another version the Old Testament states that "**the right person regards the life of his animal.**"

Christianity

Christianity began as a sect of Judaism during the first century A.D. Its followers believed that God had come among them in the form of a human named Jesus Christ. He was executed by crucifixion around 33 A.D., but the Christian movement did not end with his death. Jesus' followers believed that he was resurrected. They set down their beliefs in scriptures that came to be known as **the New Testament of the Bible**.

His followers considered Jesus' death to be a human sacrifice, similar to the animal sacrifices that were common in Jewish religious practice. This symbolism played an important role in the new religion. **The New Testament mentions many animals, but mostly in the context of everyday life and as food sources.**

Because the Christian religion had its roots in Judaism, early Christians followed Jewish laws and customs regarding the eating of animals. However, the sect soon split apart from Judaism and abandoned the idea of clean and unclean animals.

Afterward, Christianity had no specific constraints on eating meat or the treatment of animals.

Christians did maintain the belief from the Hebrew Bible that humans had dominion over animals. The importance of the human soul was central to Christian theology. Many Christian philosophers of later centuries, such as Saint Augustine (354–430 A.D.), argued that only humans (not animals) had rational minds and souls.

Since the 19th century, for example, Catholic and other theologians have begun to notice that the Old Testament condemned cruelty to animals, and that throughout the Bible there are many indications that we owe our non-human neighbors consideration and kindness as well.

Christianity - of all the Christian churches, the evangelical church has probably shown the most compassion for animals.

Andrew Linzey (1950)- British professor, arguably the most important figure in philosophy and theology today, who has written extensively on the relationship between Christianity and man's attitude towards animals. He rejects the anthropocentric approach.

Islam

What is remarkable about Muhammad's teachings is that **he emphasized the protection of life itself and the protection from suffering in relation to animals.** In most other cases, when religions somehow regulate or restrict the use of animals by humans, it is only in the sense of protecting life. The Koran says, "Muhammad taught that an animal may be killed only if necessary and without unnecessary suffering." **However, this aspect of Islam has faded in practice over time.**

Muslims are forbidden by the Koran to eat certain animals, mainly swine and those that have died of natural causes (such as illness or old age). The Koran also forbids the eating of animal blood or any animal that has not been blessed in the name of Allah.

Eastern religions

Hinduism and Buddhism - based on a completely different idea. Here man has no privileged position, living beings have the same nature, animals have a soul like humans. Important here is the idea of non-violence - animals should not be killed unnecessarily - the development of vegetarianism (from the 3rd century B.C).

Representative in modern times - **Mahatma Gandhi** - advocated not only for human rights and freedom, but also for love and compassion for living creatures.

Currents of opinion in animal protection

- **Animal rights/freedom** - animals should not be exploited, they have rights, they have value, they are not here for our benefit.
They have the right to live freely .

Animal Welfare - animals may be used and killed, but only if they are allowed to lead a dignified life and are treated with respect. There should be limits to this use of animals.

The difference between Animal Welfare and Animal Rights (Gary Varner)

Animal welfare	Animal Rights
Political characteristics	
Moderate	Radical, extreme
Revision of animal usage	Cancellation of animal usage
Systematic	Unsystematic
Rational	Emotional
Scientific	Unscientific
Representatives	
Peter Singer	Tom Regan

„[Philosopher Tom Regan on Animal Rights \(famous-trials.com\)](http://famous-trials.com)“

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