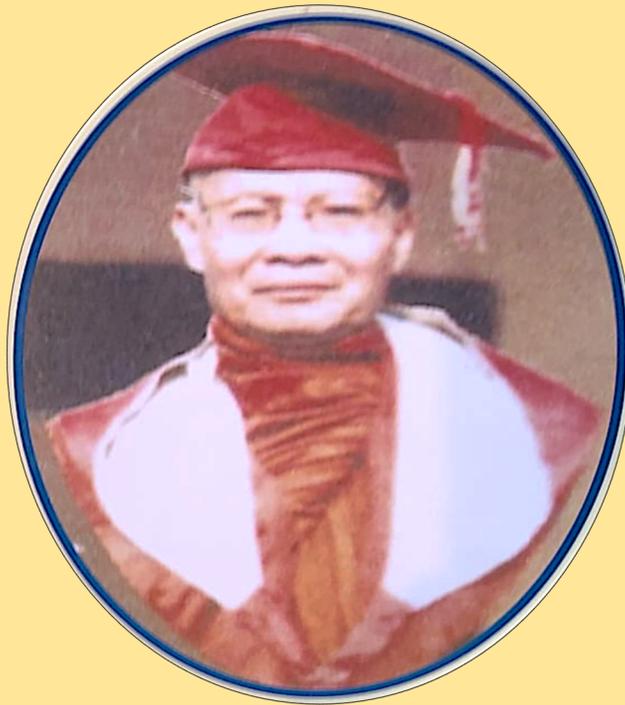


FLESH-EATING AND ANIMAL RIGHTS
IN BUDDHISM (THESIS)



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Biography

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Born on March 10, 1940 at Prey Krabas Village in Takeo province, Cambodia. Dr. Hok Savann was the middle class in which he was the third child. After completing his high school, he was ordained novice and a Buddhist Monk.

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DEPARTMENT OF BUDDHIST STUDIES
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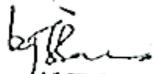
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October 30, 2003

TO WHOMSOEVER IT MAY CONCERN

I have the pleasure to certify that Venerable Hok Savann has successfully completed all the formalities for the award of the degree of Doctor of philosophy in Buddhist Studies of the University of Delhi. As a result thereof, the Ph.D degree shall be conferred on him on the occasion of the forthcoming convocation of the University of Delhi. I offer Venerable Hok Savann my felicitations for the same .


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DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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after approval of his/her thesis on "Alush: Dating
and Historical Rights in Buddhism"*

*in October,2003, has been admitted to
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in this University
at the Convocation held in 2004.*

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Delhi, dated the 23 February, 2004

THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF BUDDHIST STUDIES,
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FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

BY
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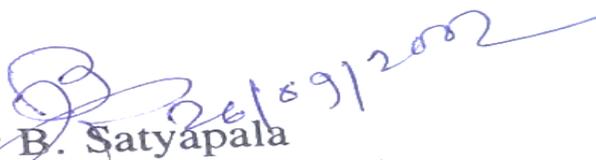
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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis entitled “Flesh-Eating and Animal Rights in Buddhism,” submitted to the Department of Buddhist Studies, University of Delhi, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, is original to the best of my knowledge. The work was carried out by Ven. Hok Savann under my guidance and supervision. Neither this work nor any of its parts has been submitted in any form to this or any other university for any purpose. Neither this work nor any of its parts in any form has been published. All the assistance and sources are duly noted by her.


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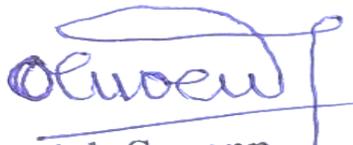

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of Contents.....	7
Chapter: 1 Introduction.....	8
Chapter: 2 The Human Versus the Animal.....	18
Chapter: 3 Flesh-Eating, Ahimsā and Animal Rights.....	29
Chapter: 4 Animal Rights and the Politics Behind Them.....	38
Chapter: 5 Pāli Dhammapada, Animal Rights and the Universal Declaration of Animal right.....	63
Chapter: 6 Conclusions.....	116
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	151
Abréviations	173

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

The issue of flesh-eating, animal killing and accompanying violence is an important ethical and moral issue in the post-modern period. A large number of people are vegetarians in this world and consider flesh-eating wrong on various grounds. An increasing number of people, especially in the West, are taking to vegetarian diet for the same reasons. Violence in various forms has been perhaps the most serious issue that humans are trying to come to terms with. The September 11 incident has shown that we indeed live in very violent times. Violence is an impulse from without tending to force one without any concurrence on his part to act against his choice. The stimulus or moving cause must come from without; no one can do violence to himself. The person compelled to act or to abstain from action not only does not assist this external force but resists and as far as possible strives against it: if he is merely indifferent, there is no violence. Violence cannot affect the will directly, i.e., the elicited acts of the will, since it is contrary to the essential notion of an act of the will that it should be free. Acts however that are merely commanded by the will and exercised through the medium of some other faculty, internal or external, may be coerced, since these faculties may be impeded by violence from putting into execution the behests of will. Not only elicited acts of the will, but likewise acts commanded by the will, are called voluntary. Since, then, acts commanded by the will may suffer violence, violence to that extent causes involuntariness and freedom from importability. It is apparent

that in so far as coercion is irresistible, the agent is not responsible for the external act resulting. Violence that is not absolute may be weakened or overcome by resistance: the more vehement it is, the more is our freedom limited. He, then, who can, by resisting, repel violence and does not, at least indirectly, desires to suffer violence. If they will yield a reluctant but nevertheless real consent, we are culpable, though in a less degree than if there had been no reluctance. Often fear and force go hand in hand, since not infrequently force begets fear, but they are not to be confounded. In what is done through violence the will is quiescent, but in what is done through fear the will is active. An act performed through fear is voluntary in the concrete, involuntary in the abstract, i.e., it is willed under the circumstance, but in itself it is not desired.

Keeping in mind the above stated paradigm of violence, we propose to discuss in this thesis **FLESH-EATING AND ANIMAL RIGHTS IN BUDDHISM**. Therefore, this thesis is an attempt to apply Buddhist principles to one of the major ethical issues of modern times i.e., meat-eating and rights of those animals who become victims while providing their own flesh for human consumption. There is also the problem of biomedical ethics. Though some small articles on the topic have appeared from time to time, no major monograph has appeared on the topic. Thus, it is the first contribution of its kind. The reasons behind the choice of this topic were more than one. Apart from personal interest and involvement in the subject, the author has also found during his long experiences as a monk and a student of

Buddhism that these days not only specialists but also public in general take keen interest in subjects such as the one under hand. It is also quite heart-warming to see that growing number of Buddhists in the West also now show increasing interest apart from the commitment of a substantial percentage of the Western academic community.

While dealing with a subject, such as the one under hand, it is also important to take notice of some important issues related to the topic. The most important issue is that of methodology. As shall be seen through the pages of this thesis, we have built our case on the basis of two types of data. The first type of data is the kind of information that is available through the modern media and relates to the issue in the sense of contemporary topic. Here, we have taken into consideration the work done by various Non-Governmental Organizations, various public societies, governmental organizations and the legal wars-of-tug that go on in the modern society relating to the topic. The second form of data in from the various Buddhist texts. The author himself is a Theravada monk and has mostly collected data from the Pali Tipitaka. However, the author has also used vast material from the Mahayana Sutras as well. The data available in both these forms has been put together to build a hypothesis and an attempt has been made to give it the shape of a logical paradigm.

The other issue that has been dealt with in this thesis is the central issue of the food material eaten by the Buddha at the house of

Smith Cunda. This material that was the last meal of the Buddha is said to have poisoned the Buddha and caused his death within a day or so. Scholars are divided as to whether it was meat or some other sort of material. We shall also devote some portion of the thesis to examine the various references relating to the eating of meat by the Buddha and some of the leading monks of his times. We shall basically, try here, to show that all such portions that talk about the eating of meat, are later interpolations. We have also tried to show that the Rule of Tikotiparisuddhi is also a later invention by some clever minds in Sri Lanka.

Another important issue that needs to be clarified before moving on to the heart of the subject, is the concept of animism. Through the various chapters, we shall make an attempt to discuss the issue of animal rights in the light of our understanding of the concept of animism. The importance of animism to-day is shown because; its validity as a theory has been questioned; a school has risen which treats psychology without reference to the soul; hence the attempt at “psychology without a soul”, e.g., Sully, James, Murray, Davis, Hoffding. In establishing the doctrine of animism, the general line of reasoning is from effect to cause, from phenomena to their subject or agent. In this sense animism is the theory proposed by some evolutionists to account for the origin of religion. Evolution assumes that the higher civilized races are the outcome and development from a ruder state. This early stage resembles that of the lowest savages existing to-day. Their religious belief is known as animism, i.e., belief

in spiritual beings, and represents the minimum or rudimentary definition of religion. With this postulate as the groundwork for the philosophy of religion, the development of religious thought can be traced from existing data and therefore admits of scientific treatments. The principle of continuity, which is the basal principle in other departments of knowledge, was thus applied to religion. Animism therefore discovers human life in all moving things. To the savage and to primitive man there is no distinction between the animate and the inanimate. Nature is all alive. Every object is controlled by its own independent spirit. Spirits are seen in the rivers, the lakes, the fountains, the woods, the mountains, the trees, the animals, the flowers, the grass, the birds. Spiritual existences, gnomes, ghosts, manes, demons, deities inhabit almost everything and consequently almost everything is an object of worship. The Milky Way is “the path of the souls leading to the spirit land”; and the Northern Lights are the dances of the dead warriors and seers in the realms above. The Australians say that the sounds of the wind in the trees are the voices of the ghosts of the dead communing with one another or warning the living of what is to come. The conception of the human soul formed from dreams and visions served as a type on which primitive man framed his ideas of other souls and of spiritual beings from the lowest elf up to the highest god. Thus, the gods of the higher religions have been evolved out of the spirits, whether ghosts or not, of the lower religions; and the belief in ghosts and spirits was produced by the savage’s experience of dreams and trances. Here, it is claimed, we have the germ of all religions, although Tylor confesses

that it is impossible to trace the process by which the doctrine of souls gave rise to the belief in the great gods. Originally, spirits were the application of human soul to non-human beings; they were not supernatural, but only became so in the course of time. Now, as modern science shows the belief in ghosts or spirits to be a hallucination, the highest and purest religion being only the elaboration of savage beliefs, to the savage mind reasonable enough cannot be accepted by the modern mind for the reason that it is not supernatural nor even true.

The general principles of animism are that in the last analysis it is a biological theory, and attempts to explain all phenomena through analogy with biological phenomena. To the savage and to primitive man, all moving things lived, and the fancy which created ghosts or souls to account for human life soon extended this explanation to all other external objects. The greater value it attaches to unwritten sources, viz., folk-lore, customs, rites, tales, and superstitions, in comparison with literary sources.

Another important issue that has been taken care of in the methodology while building up our thesis is a systematic analysis of applied cross-cultural normative ethics. Thus, the approach adopted here is based on the conclusion concerning the theoretical basis of Buddhist ethics. Therefore, the study understand may be seen as an Aristotlian framework within which the issues are addressed. As we pointed out above, however, are based on the canonical and

commentarial literature of the Theravada School, which, following widespread practice, is the closest we are likely to get to the teachings of the Buddha. Further, we have explicitly raised some methodological issues, which we think are significant for a topic understand. We are sure, such an attempt, will no doubt engender further serious study and debate by specialists, without sacrificing accessibility to a more inexperienced, general audience.

In Chapter: 2, the differences and struggles between the worlds of the humans versus that of the animals. Here, we have tried to show that Buddhism prescribes compassion on the part of human towards the human as well as the non-human. It got without saying that there is long-standing evidence of the Buddhist concern for an ethically grounded relationship between humans and animals. Thus, we have made an effort to bring home the idea that the notion of the interconnectedness of human and animal existence is implicit in even so basic a set of concepts as that of karma and rebirth. On the basis of the early Buddhist literary evidence, we have made an effort to show that the lion, elephant, horse, and to a lesser extent, the bull, had come to acquire specific Buddhist meanings in early Buddhist thought. The lion symbolized aspects of the Buddha's personality and preaching. The elephant stood for the conception of the Bodhisattva by Mayadevi and symbolized a miraculous-cum-historical event of great significance in the history of Buddhism. The horse was used as a symbol of the Bodhisattva's Great Departure in search of Nibbana;

while the bull signified in similes and metaphors the pre-eminent position of the Buddha among the teachers of age.

In Chapter:3, the Buddha based his philosophy of ahimsa on the simple fact that even though the action of ahimsa maybe difficult to perfect, yet the perfection of the spirit of ahimsa is quite possible to cultivate in the heart. Recognizing this fact, the Buddha did not set up unduly strict rules for ahimsa as action. This form of moderate and rational doctrine of ahimsa is perhaps the most important contribution of Buddhism to human civilization. In this chapter, we have also made an attempt to bring home the point that Buddhism essentially in its forms such as Theravada, also was a vegetarian faith. Thus, with the exception of butchers, hunters and fishermen, who kill the food they eat, the majority of flesh eaters are only indirectly responsible for the violence to and destruction of animals. This, however, does not make them less answerable to the first precept.

In Chapter 4; seeks to provide a research agenda for the study of animal protection politics. It looks firstly at the animal protection movement's organization and maintenance in the context of Olson's theory of collective action. While existing research suggests that activists tend to be recruited because of the purposive and expressive benefit they offer rather than the material ones emphasized by Olson, these alternative forms of selective incentives can hinder the achievement of the movement's goals. Secondly, the chapter outlines alternative models of policy making and shows how they might be

operationalized to explain the development of animal welfare policy-making in different countries such as India, Britain and the United States.

Chapter: 5; deals with Pali Dhammapada, Animal Right and the Universal Declaration of Animal Right. By attacking speciesism, we have made an attempt through the Universal Declaration that inequality meted out to animals is unfair and unjustified, i.e., different rights for species as ranked in a hierarchy are wrong. Modern science has, in fact, clearly demonstrated that each living creature has its place in the biosphere, playing its own role and being part of a collective balance. The egalitarianism of rights of life is therefore based on scientific realities: these are the unity of the living world, its vast diversity, a key factor in evolution, and the complementary nature of the different components. There have been attacks because the defence of animal rights disturbs or threatens vast financial interests. It has been poorly understood because egalitarianism is often mistakenly interpreted as being equality, confusing the equality of physiological realities (an erroneous interpretation) and equality in terms of rights. It has been difficult to gain acceptance for animal rights as the concept runs counter to the habits, behaviour and dogmas that have prevailed for thousands of years.

In Chapter: 6, we have basically summed up the arguments arrived at in the first five chapters. Other than this, many suggestions have also been made in this chapter in the sense as to how we have

changed our attitude towards animals and give them equal consideration. An attempt has also been made to show as to how the world will become a happier place if we changed our attitude towards animals from negative to positive. In other words, our kindness towards animals shall only make this world a happier and better place to live.

Chapter 2

THE HUMAN VERSUS THE ANIMAL

It is an established fact that Buddhism prescribes compassion on the part of human towards the human as well as the non-human. It goes without saying that there is long-standing evidence of the Buddhist concern for and ethically grounded relationship between humans and animals. The idea of the interconnectedness of human and animal existence is implicit in even so basic a set of concepts as that of kamma and rebirth. The Buddha is known to have said “that beings are inferior, exalted, beautiful, ugly, well-faring, ill-faring according to (the consequences of) their Kamma.”¹ According to this view, beings pass from existence to existence being reborn in accordance with the nature of their deeds². The usual position of the Nikayas is that there are five possible courses, or realms of existence (gati), to which an individual’s Kamma may lead. Among these, rebirth as a human or in the realm of animals are especially to be noted in this context. After the breaking up of the body after death, individuals of comparatively good conduct will be reborn in a relatively satisfactory state of existence (sugati), such as the human state. Those of bad conduct and wrong views, to the contrary, are destined to attain a miserable rebirth (duggati) as an animal or worse.³ Thus, for instance, if they do not end up in hell itself, individuals who creep or slink along in life, be they bloody-handed

¹ A.I.164; III.18; M.I.182; II.31; III.99 etc.

² M.I.22; II.21 etc.

³ M. III. 178f.

hunters, robbers, or whatever, are most likely to be reborn in the form of a sneaky or creeping creature- as “a snake, a scorpion, a centipede, a mongoose, a cat, a mouse, an owl,” or the like.⁴ It is possible, then, for a human being to be reborn as an animal if this is consistent with his/her Kamma. The inverse is also true. Animals can be reborn as humans. They too are conceived as subject of kamma and their deeds to bear fruit. Thus many of the Jataka tales are concerned with meritorious and wicked deeds done in the past by various kinds of animals. These are then linked up with the present, the good creatures being identified through the process of rebirth with the Buddha and his followers, and the wicked with Devadatta, or the like. That animals as well as humans are considered capable of truly ethical behaviour is underlined by a striking passage from the Vinaya Pitaka.⁵ Here a partridge, a monkey, and a bull elephant are pictured as having undertaken the five moral precepts, and living together, “courteous, deferential, and polite to one another.” Their life-style is referred to as “Partridge, Brahma-faring,” and set up a model of morality upon which even the Buddhist monks should pattern their lives. Animals and humans, are then considered part of the same chain of becoming, the same universal flux that in the Buddhist view constitutes phenomenal existence.

Animals as such are not considered to be capable of growth in the Dhamma and the Vinaya. For this reason the Parivara and the Mahavagga of the Vinaya Pitaka both declare the ordination of

⁴ A.V.289.

⁵ Vin.II.161.

animals into the monastic order to be an invalid practice.⁶ Similarly, to recite the Patimokkha in the presence of an animal is reckoned an offence of the class of wrong-doing.⁷ It is perhaps significant that in this instance the prohibition against Patimokkha recitations against its recitation in the presence of eunuchs, thieves, parricides, schismatics, matricides and seducers of nuns etc-clearly suggestive of a low estimation of the spiritual qualifications of animals.⁸ For this reason it is further forbidden to ordain a man who has had an animal as a preceptor.⁹ Although on the whole animals are seen to be more violent, and less wise,¹⁰ and their experience less satisfactory than that of humans, it can still be said that within the samsaric scheme there is no permanent or ultimate distinction between beings within these two courses of existence.¹¹ This being the case, it becomes incumbent upon humans to relate to animals on the basis of the same ethical principles that govern their relationship with each other. Within the Buddhist context, morality is seen to embrace right speech, right action, and right livelihood. It is to these principles and their application to animal/ human relationships that we should turn our attention. Right action may be applied to human/animal relationship and may be seen to begin with observance of the five precepts (Panca sila) which are binding on all Buddhist layman.¹² The first of these precepts is to abstain from the taking of life. The precept against

⁶ Vin.I.86; V. 222.

⁷ Vin.I. 135.

⁸ Vin.I.134f.

⁹ Vin.I.88.

¹⁰ Mil.32, for example says that sheep, goats, oxen, buffaloes, etc. have reasoning, but lack wisdom.

¹¹ I.B Horner, Early Buddhism and the Taking of Life, Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1967: 18.

¹² S.II.68.

killing is also included in the eight precepts (attanga samannagata) observed by Buddhist laity on the four fast (uposatha) days of the months,¹³ the ten precepts (dasa sila) observed by novices and fully ordained monks,¹⁴ as well as in a list of 26 precepts found at various place in the Tipitaka.¹⁵ In each of these lists the precept against killing is listed first. It is further included as first in the category of ten good actions (dasa kusal kamma).¹⁶ In each of these instances the precept is taken to refer to abstinence from the conscious destruction of any sentient being, from human to the smallest animalcule.¹⁷

In the Vinaya killing a human being is listed as a Parajika offence, but killing a sentient being other than humans as a less serious pacttiya offence. An additional pacittiya forbidding monks the use of water containing living beings which might thereby be destroyed makes clear the intent to apply the rule against the destruction of life even to insects and the smallest of one-celled creatures.

A number of post-canonical texts go to great lengths to assign those who have destroyed various types of animal life under diverse circumstances to appropriate hells. The Sutra of the remembrance of the True Law,¹⁸ a Sanskrit text from the 4th or 5th century AD which is

¹³ Sn.400f; A.IV.254.

¹⁴ S.IV.342

¹⁵ D.I.4f; 63f; A. II.208f.

¹⁶ M.I.47.

¹⁷ DA.I.69.

¹⁸ The saddharmasmrtyupasthana Sutra. Extant only in Chinese and Tibetan translations, it is classed as Hinayana Abhidharma text, but shows strong Mahayana influence. See, Lin Li-khouang, Introduction au Compendium de la Loi (Saddharma-smrty-upasthanasutra). Recherches sur un Sutra developpe du Petit Vehicule. Annales du Musee Guimet, Bibliotheque d'etudes 54, Paris : Adrien-Maisonneuve, 1949.

generally ascribed to Gautama Prajnaruci, is an early example of the pattern. To illustrate selectively: those who kill birds or deer without remorse are destined for a sub-hell known as the place of excrement; those who boil alive camels, boar, sheep, rabbits, bear, and the like suffer retribution in the Place of Cooking Pot; those who smash turtles or smother sheep are doomed to Place of Darkness.¹⁹ Later texts describe still other hellish regions reserved for those who kill fish for market; for those who suffocate foxes, pythons, etc. with smoke; and so on.²⁰

Even to injure animal is seen as an unacceptable behaviour. For instance, if a monk digs a pitfall and an animal fall in it, there is an offence of wrong-doing. If the animal died as a result, the offence requires expiation.²¹ Regarding eating of meat there is a problem: There Buddha did not forbid it. He said that one does not become pure as a result of the food he or she eats, but rather as a result of practising self-restraint.²² And conversely, the Amagandha Sutta attributes of Kassapa Buddha the view that it is evil action that defiles an individual, not meat-eating.²³

¹⁹ See, Daigan & Alicia Mastsunaga, *the Buddhist Concept of Hell*, New York: Philosophical Library, 1972: 81-85, 107-109.

²⁰ *The Lokapannatti* (ca. 11th-12th CE) Ch.XIV.i.A. See, Eugene Denis (ed), *La Lokapannatti et les Ideesconsmologiques du Bouddhisme Ancien*, Tome I, Paris : Librairie Honore Champion, 1977, text pp. 92-114 ; tr. Pp.89-105.

²¹ Vin.III.76.

²² M.I.80; A.I.221; Sn.241ff.

²³ Sn.239-252,

Where monk releases an entrapped pig, deer, or fish intending to steal it, there is an offence entailing defeat and warranting expulsion from the Sangha. But if a monk releases such an animal on compassionate grounds, there is no offence at all.²⁴ Right livelihood: Among the five trades which the Buddhists are explicitly forbidden to engage in, are included trade in flesh and trade in living creatures.²⁵ The animals most frequently occurring in similes and metaphors in early Buddhist literature are the lion, the elephant, the horse, the bull, and the monkey. In the Asokan, Sunga, and Satavahana art these animals are also conspicuous as symbolical and decorative motifs.

The elephant, bull, and horse commonly occur in the stock list of items of wealth and are included along with jewels, land, slaves, and servants as marks of prosperity²⁶. Groups of horses and elephants are described as the traditional elements among the distinguishing properties of a court and “elephant craft” and “horse craft” are among the recognized sciences (*sippayatanani*) with their own bodies of knowledge concerning the training, treatment of ailments and upkeep of the respective animals.²⁷ The ox, bull, and cows formed a major part of the productive apparatus in a pastoral-cum-agrarian economy and the bull is perhaps the commonest of animals referred to in the Pali literature²⁸.

²⁴ Vin.III.62f.

²⁵ A.III.208.

²⁶ M.I.15f; S.IV.402; Thi. V329. Nalanda Series.

²⁷ M.II.129ff, III.294; D.I.10, 44.Nalanda Series.

²⁸ M.I.279; D.I.10; S.I.42. Nalanda Series.

The importance of the various animals transcended their purely economic role. They had already become a part of the contemporary folklore and had assumed some quasi-religious implications. The luring of a wild elephant through the use of a lute is a well-known motif in folklore as indicated by the story of Udena and Candapajjota.²⁹ The *Kusa Jataka* refers to an elephant festival (hatthimangala) and the Matiposaka Jataka indicates that the practice of setting up stone images of elephants for the purpose of religious worship existed.³⁰ The Pali word asabhatthana for “position of leadership” indicates the role of bull symbol in popular imagery.³¹ The elephant occurs in the interpretation of omens. A queen dreaming of sitting on the back of a white elephant is taken as a premonition of the king’s death, while if she dreams of touching the moon while riding such an elephant, it may presage hostile kings about to attack her husband³². In another Jataka a spotless white bull is declared to be a promise of the king’s victory over his foes, while if he saw a perfectly black bull it meant his defeat³³. The elephant and the horse are mentioned among the jewels (ratanani) of a “universal monarch”. The elephant is described as all-white, seven-fold firm, wondrous in power and being able to fly through the air; while the horse is also all-white but with a crow-black head, a dark mane also able to fly through the air³⁴. The lion which figures so much among the fauna of the Rg Veda continues to be the most prominent wild animal in the early Buddhist literature. This is

²⁹ J.VI.262.

³⁰ J.IV.95.

³¹ See, PED, s.v. asabhatthana.

³² J.V.443.

³³ J.III.5.

³⁴ D.II.132-133

surprising in the sense that the geographical background to the early Buddhist movement was a rather tiger-terrain than a lion country. This may have been due to the fact that the lion had already become fixed as the preeminent wild predatory beast, a position which the tiger was unable to secure for himself in spite of his greater ecological advantage. The lion is invariably described as the king of wild animals, and the Jataka stories often relate how the lion was elected to this position. The lion is the symbol of majesty, his jaw is called his fifth paw, and the Buddha forbade his monks from using sandals made of lion-skin. Ornaments with the lion-motif seem to have been in frequent use such as earrings with the face of a lion on them; and the sight of a fully-maned lion was taken as an omen for the foundation of the city of Sihapura.

The Buddhisattva is shown as being born as an elephant in several Jataka stories especially the Chaddanta Jataka. The Buddha is compared to a tamer of elephants, his ability to suffer pain patiently is linked to that of an elephant; and the arahat too is described as the lonely one like the elephant disporting himself in the forest or not being frightened of lightning like the elephant. The simile of the elephant's footprint (*hatthipadopama*) occurs in two of the famous suttas of the Majjhima Nikaya and the Therigatha is replete with elephant symbolism in a variety of contexts. There is also the mention of an architectural motif called *hatthinakhka* which seems to have been a pillar with the capital of elephant-heads. This motif existed during the time of the Buddha himself as the Buddha allowed the

Sangha to accept a house with such pillars donated by the great laywoman Migaramata. It is conceivable that the figures of lions may have also adorned capitals of pillars in contemporary wooden architecture.

The use of the lion-symbol with reference of the person of the Buddha is most striking. The Buddha is called the lion of the Sakyas (Sakyasimha), the front half of his body is described as that of a lion (sihapubbaddhakaya); his jaws are likened to that of a lion's (sihahanu); the posture he adopts when going to sleep was called the lion-posture (sihaseyya)- sleeping on the right side with one foot resting on the other; he is also called the lion among those "who are not grasping" (sihosi anupadano), lonely like the lion, and his preaching is called the Lion's Roar (Sihanada). The use of white elephant as a symbol either for the conception of the Bodhisatta in his final life on his way to Buddhahood or for the Buddha himself is Asokan epigraphy and art is well known. Animals like elephants had also acquired a cult-significance with their own distinct festivals. The elephant and the horse became parts of the paraphernalia of the universal monarch and may have been used in the Buddhist literature and art to invest the Buddha figure and mission with aspects of universal spiritual power.

Lion accounts for an overwhelming proportion of animal representation in Asokan art. Next to the lion comes the bull which is represented at two places. Elephant is represented once. There is

little doubt that the pillars set up by Asoka were used by him for the purpose of indicating either spots specially associated with events in the life of the Buddha or events in his own life such as his visit to the site of the stupa of the Buddha Konagamana as at Nigali Sagar. It is only at Saranatha that there is the extraordinary frieze on the abacus showing the four animals: elephant, bull, horse, and lion, along with wheels intervening between the animal figures.

The vogue of animal capitals appears to have existed as early as the time of the Buddha. These pillars surmounted by a group of animals such as elephants were adjuncts to buildings and this vogue continued in the post-Asokan Buddhist architecture as seen at Karle. It is possible that pillars surmounted by groups of animals could have been free-standing. The early Buddhist literary evidence seems to suggest that the lion, elephant, horse and, to a lesser extent, the bull, had come to acquire specific Buddhist meanings in early Buddhist thought. The lion symbolized aspects of the Buddha's personality and preaching. The elephant stood for the conception of the Bodhisattva by Mayadevi and symbolized a miraculous-cum-historical event of great significance in the history of Buddhism. The horse was used as a symbol of the Bodhisattva's Great Departure in search of Nibbana; while the bull signified in similes and metaphors the pre-eminent position of the Buddha among the teachers of his age. Thus, as pointed out by B.G.Gohkale, "Asokan use of animal symbolism and the wheel seems to be an ingenious device deliberately contrived in a particular configuration and used by Asoka to indicate both his own

imperial majesty spreading in all directions and the Dhamma of the Buddha doing likewise.”

CHAPTER: 3

ELESH-EATING, AHIMSA AND ANIMAL RIGHTS

Vegetarianism developed in India from the concept of ahimsa as it was used for the first time by the authors of the Upanisads in connection with the cruelty of Vedic sacrifices. The Buddha advocated ahimsa strongly in the sixth century BC. He saw the inner feeling of the spirit of ahimsa and its outer manifestation in the form of non-violent action, as two different things. Thus, the Buddha based his philosophy of ahimsa on the simple fact that even though the action of ahimsa maybe difficult to perfect, yet the perfection of the spirit of ahimsa is quite possible to cultivate in the heart. Recognizing this fact, the Buddha did not set up unduly strict rules for ahimsa as action. This form of moderate and rational doctrine of ahimsa is perhaps the most important contribution of Buddhism to human civilization.

The effort of will is important for abstaining from evil actions such as destruction of life in any form. Ahimsa, thus, implies deliberate avoidance of injury to living beings. In other words, a Buddhist is expected not only to shun killing but also avoid inciting others to kill. Ahimsa to living beings, which is the First Precept in Buddhism, is based upon the principle of mutual attraction and rightness common to all nature. This precept is really a call to life and creation even as it is a condemnation of death and destruction. Knowingly to cause pain to a human being or animal-these are not the

only ways to defile this precept. To cause another to harm any living being likewise offends against the first precept.

Sacrifices in various form, especially the ones in which animals were killed, were perceived by the Buddha as not only a ridiculous absurdity, but also a cruelty that does not deserve pardon. He did not recognize the efficacy of sacrifices on the one hand, and highly regarded the life of living beings, on the other. “at the sort of sacrifice...(where)... creatures are put an end to... is neither of great fruitfulness nor of great profit; nor of great renown; nor of widespread effect. It is just as a farmer were to enter a wood taking with him plough and seed, and were there, in an untilled tract, in unfavourable soil, among uprooted stumps, to plant seeds that were broken, rotten, spoilt by wind and heat, out of season, not in good condition, and the god were not to give good rain in due season.”³⁵ It has been pointed out in the Samannaphala Sutta that “the bhikkhu, putting away the killing of living beings holds aloof from the destruction of life. The cudgel and the sword he has laid aside, and ashamed of roughness, and full of mercy, he dwells compassionate and kind to all creatures that have life.”³⁶ In this way, ahimsa has been amalgamated by Buddhism with compassion and a consciousness of shame. Where there is compassion in the heart, it is expressed in an outward act as Ahimsa. Ahimsa is considered a noble act because it is not only the object of the act, but it also results in happiness to the one who

³⁵ DB.II.307f.

³⁶ DB.I.79.

practices it. On the other hand, those who harbour hatred, not only injure others but also bring unhappiness to themselves.³⁷ The killing of living beings is a shameful act and is wrong because it opposes the spirit of compassion. Moreover, when Ahimsa is practiced one comes to know the true feeling of love and attains happiness. Thus, to develop a compassionate heart is to desire happiness and well-being of all living beings. In Buddhism, ahimsa is taught from the standpoint that all people love their own lives and do not wish to be hurt or killed by others.

To develop a compassionate heart is to desire that all living beings shall reach a state of happiness, tranquillity and well-being, and then to awaken in oneself the feeling of compassion towards innumerable and infinite kinds of life, and thus, encompassing all life by the thought of compassion. In Buddhism, ahimsa is not just confined to the ethical rule that one should love all living beings. It goes far beyond that and recognizes in a religious sense that by practicing it the lofty heights of Buddhahood can be realized. Therefore, in Buddhism the practice of ahimsa is taught in many ways. As a result, the lay follower undertakes to abstain from injury to living beings not only as a matter of intent but also by actualizing it in action. Even despite having the intent, when one cannot practice it in real life on certain occasions, the precept is broken. This sort of breach of the

³⁷ "hatred never ceases by hatred in this world. Through loving kindness it comes to an end. This is an ancient law." (Dh.v5). "who kills not, nor aught causes to be killed,/ who robs not, not makes others rob, for all/ within his heart hath share, he hatred none." (GS.IV. 104)

precept means that while the intent of ahimsa is there, the selfish desires opposed to this intent are very strong. In such circumstances, there is inevitably a regret for the breach of the precept and thus, confession is made. However, this confession must come from the heart.

The non-killing of life is given in great detail in the Patimokkha, in the Vinaya of the monks and nuns. As per the third precept of the Parajika in the Patimokkha a monk or nun is expelled from the Sangha for committing a murder, which is the severest punishment for the members of the Sangha. Buddhism condemns strongly the one “who should deliberately and purposely in various ways praise the beauty of death or should incite (anyone) to death.”³⁸ The methods of causing death mentioned in the Vinaya are many, including the use of weapons, devices ranging from pits and traps to more subtle psychological strategies like frightening someone to death by dressing up as a ghost, and, of course, death resulting from unsuccessful medical treatments. In terms of intention, the examples show that guilt is firmly tied to state of mind of the caused at the time the offence was committed. Generally speaking in the Vinaya, an action which requires intention for it to be an offence is no offence at all if there is no bad intention.

The buddha felt that the human sentiment of mankind is not to be limited merely to themselves but to be extended to all sentient

³⁸ Vin.III.73.

beings, who should share as much kindness as mankind itself does. The buddha taught “never to destroy the life of any living creature, however tiny it might be.”³⁹

It is even forbidden to throw the remains of food an green grass or into water because the creatures living in both water and grass can be harmed⁴⁰. According to him “making onslaught on creatures, being cruel, blood-handed, intent on injury and killing, and without mercy on living creatures... is conducive to shortness of life span.”⁴¹ Not even “for the sake of sustaining life would we intentionally deprive any being of life,”⁴² said the Buddha. Monk are forbidden from digging soil.⁴³ Water must be strained before drinking because it contains living things.⁴⁴

Violence cannot be eschewed completely and is inescapable in certain critical situations. In other words, in certain situations application of negative aspect of nonviolence is unavoidable. One can see certain examples of the application of the negative concept of nonviolence, namely injury with a view of alleviate pain, or violent defense of the honour of women. Buddhism also makes a destruction of or injury to both involves sin, there is a difference of degree. The sin accrued by killing a man is more than the cutting of a plant. The Buddha asked every one to “cultivate a boundless (friendly) mind

³⁹ BSE.XVII.30;XX.128.

⁴⁰ SBE.XVII.22.

⁴¹ MLS.III.250.

⁴² GS.IV.129

⁴³ Vin.IV.33.

⁴⁴ BD.III.3;J.I.83

towards all beings,”⁴⁵ and not only the agricultural ones. Had the buddha been really concerned about the sudden need of agricultural animals, he certainly would have included the names of these animals in the list of those whose meat had been declared avoidable by the Buddha. We must bear in mind that none of these animals had any fruitful bearing on agriculture and the loss of their lives would have made no difference whatsoever to agriculture. Strictly speaking, the Buddha considered agricultural activities as entailing violence because they led to destruction of life.⁴⁶

The reason as to why the Buddha criticized animal sacrifices, was that they were cruel, illogical and futile. Moreover, cow (especially a milch-cow) which most importantly contributed towards agriculture, had been protected much earlier. In the Sutta-Nipata, “brahmanas of yore” are told as having regarded cows as their parents, brothers and kin, as their best friends and as the source of all healthful things, and hence in gratitude they never killed cows.⁴⁷ Also the evidence provided by early Indian Buddhist literature for the suppression of great animal sacrifices suggests that outside the Brahmanical circles, this practice was not particularly cherished by the ordinary people.⁴⁸ If the statements of the Pali texts, which presume to be an record of the Buddhavacan, are accepted at face value, it can be argued that the Buddha allowed the eating of animal flesh. The view of flesh eating is sharply criticized and contradicted by the Mahayan Suttras, also purporting to be the spoken words of the

⁴⁵ SBE.X(2).25.

⁴⁶ Vin.IV.33.

⁴⁷ Sn.52.

⁴⁸ I.B.Horner, Op. Cit.:442.

Buddha, which categorically assert that flesh eating is contrary to the spirit and intent of the first precept since it makes one an accessory to the slaying of animals and therefore contravenes the compassionate concern for all life that lies at the core of Buddhism.

Unfortunately no serious attempt has been made by scholars to resolve the glaring discrepancy between the contentions of the two branches of Buddhism on meat eating. If we go by the Pali Tipitaka as it is, the Buddha did not put a ban on the eating of flesh. A monk is allowed to accept “what has been put in his alms bowl.”⁴⁹ Many references prove, though almost incidentally, that the eating of meat was thought of as customary, and monks are recorded to have eaten flesh and fish frequently enough to give it the appearance of its having been a fairly important part of their diet. Meat, fish, fruit, dairy products and cereals especially rice, constituted the staple food of the population, and the Buddha was strongly convinced that purity did not depend upon food,⁵⁰ but on restraint over such bodily, mental and moral conduct as could defile a man.⁵¹

The Mahayana Suttras take Pali Buddhism to task severely for allowing the eating of meat. The Rule of Tikotiparisuddha may have absolved the monks of any sin, but the slaughterer was very severely criticized by them. Thus, these days one often comes across a large number of Theravadi monks savouring meat. They justify eating meat on the grounds that not only that there are references in the Pali

⁴⁹ SBE.III.155.

⁵⁰ M.I.80.

⁵¹ A.I.221.

literature to the Buddha allowing the eating of meat, but they invariably point out that the Buddha, in fact, had died as a result of eating pork (which was putrid, and poisoned the Buddha) at the home of one of his followers called Cunda. They further point out that they gratefully accept whatever is put before them, without preference or aversion. Various statements and actions of the Buddha are used to justify the eating of meat, implying that if the Buddha himself ate flesh food when it was offered to him, surely, they have permission to do likewise. However, anyone familiar with the numerous accounts of the Buddha's extraordinary compassion and reverence for living beings, for instance, his insistence that his monks carry filters to strain the water they drink lest they inadvertently cause the death of any micro-organisms in the water, could not have imagined that the Buddha allowed their flesh to be eaten. Monks by virtue of their training, their strength of character, and their life purpose are different and stronger than the laity and better able to resist the pleasures of the senses to which ordinary people succumb. It appears that monks and scribes interpolated the portions relating to meat-eating into the Theravadin scriptures.

While it is admitted that food is the main prerequisite for existence, it is also acknowledged as a principal source of temptation, as an object through which the sense of taste develops into craving. Hence, on numerous occasions temperance with regard to food is advocated, although never to the extent of self-mortification (attakilamatha). The ideal monk is described as controlled in deed

and word, restrained in food for the stomach⁵² with light stomach, moderate in food, easily satisfied, and undisturbed.⁵³ On the other hand, a person who is immoderate as to food is described as one who thoughtlessly and unwisely takes food for the sake of amusement, pride and thoughtlessness as to food.⁵⁴ A good Buddhist who is expected to be *intent upon compassion*⁵⁵ cannot be expected to live by eating meat acquired in whatever manner. With the exception of butchers, hunters and fishermen, who kill the food they eat, the majority of flesh eaters are only indirectly responsible for the violence to and destruction of animals. This, however, does not make them less answerable to the first precept.

⁵² S.I.172; Sn. 78.

⁵³ Ibid. 707.

⁵⁴ Puggalapannatti, PTS.21; Tr.31.

⁵⁵ D.II.241f.

CHAPTER: 4

ANIMAL RIGHTS AND THE POLITICS BEHIND THEM

This chapter seeks to provide a research agenda for the study of animal protection politics. It looks firstly at the animal protection movement's organization and maintenance in the context of Olson's theory of collective action. While existing research suggests that activists tend to be recruited because of the purposive and expressive benefits they offer rather than the material ones emphasized by Olson, these alternative forms of selective incentives can hinder the achievement of the movement's goals. Secondly, the chapter outlines alternative models of policy making and shows how they might be operationalized to explain the development of animal welfare policy-making in Britain and the United States. Preliminary observations suggest the Britain's animal welfare record is more substantial because policy communities have been able to manage and limit change through concessions and cooptation. No such mechanism is available in the American political system where the greater openness and fragmentation often results in severe confrontation and ultimately, stalemate.

Organizational concern for the plight of animals dates back to the nineteenth century but over the past two decades or so the animal protection movement has been revitalized and radicalized to the extent that it has become an important player in the social movement and pressure group universes. Despite this, social sciences-and

political scientists in particular-have been seemingly reluctant to regard the movement on behalf of animals as worthy of extensive study. Thus, in the inaugural editorial of this journal, it was pointed out that “sociopolitical movements, public policy and the law” is an area under-represented in the animal studies literature.⁵⁶ To illustrate the dearth of material, a recent substantial collection of the latest pressure group scholarship emanating from the United States all but ignores the animal protection movement despite allocating a generous amount of space to the increasingly significant phenomena of cause or public interest groups.

It would be wrong to give the impression that little has been published on the sociopolitical character of the animal protection movement. However, much of the available literature has been written by those active in the movement and often participants in the events they describe.⁵⁷ Although such work is often enlightening, valuable, and sometimes exceptional, it understandably tends to lack analytical rigor. Likewise, journalistic accounts tend to be descriptive, sensationalist, and sometimes inaccurate.⁵⁸ Academic accounts remain few and far between. One early exception was a chapter by Jefferey Berry on the American group Friends of Animals.⁵⁹ There is

⁵⁶ K. Shapiro, Editorial, *Society and Animals*, 1, 2, 1993; 2.

⁵⁷ See, C. Hollands, *Compassion is the bugler*, Edinburgh; McDonald Publishers, 1980; R.D. Ryder, *Animal revolution, Changing attitudes towards speciesism*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989; I. Newkirk, *Free the animals*, Chicago; The Noble Press, Inc, 1992.

⁵⁸ D. Henshaw, *Animal warfare: The story of the animal liberation from*, London: Fantana, 1988; *Newsweek*, 1988.

⁵⁹ J.M. Berry, *Lobbying for the people*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977: 110-40.

evidence that the neglect is beginning to be rectified. Book length accounts of the movement in the United States have appeared in recent years.⁶⁰ There is a growing interest in the psychological characteristics of the movement⁶¹; and social movement theory has been utilized to explain how animal protection organizations are created, organized and maintained⁶².

What has been largely missing is the input of political scientists⁶³. One only has to consider the number of group seeking legislative redress for animals to recognize that the political and institutional dimension of animal studies should have a higher priority. To help this process along, this chapter seeks to identify the parameters of the political dimension of animal studies and to indicate potentially fruitful research avenues. While the primary aim is to chart a research course, empirical work relating to the organization and maintenance of the animal protection movement is reviewed and some preliminary findings of my own work relating to interest group intermediation are also outlined.

Animal protection groups are usually categorized, along with consumer and environmental organizations, as public interest causes

⁶⁰ J. Jasper, & Nelkin, D., *The animal rights crusade*, New York: the Free Press, 1992; S. Sperling, *Animal liberation: Research and morality*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988.

⁶¹ K. Spapiro, Editorial, *society and animals*, 1, 2, 1993; H.A. Herzog, "the movement is my life:" the psychology of animal rights activism, *Journal of Social Issues*, 49 (1) 1993: 103-19.

⁶² J. Jasper, J. & Poulsen, J., *Fighting back: Vulnerabilities, blunders and countermobilization by the targets in three animal rights campaigns*, *Sociological Forum*, 1993, 8, 639-57; J. Jasper, *Recruiting intimates, recruiting strangers: Building the contemporary animal rights movement* Unpublished manuscript, 1992.

⁶³ For the exceptions see Gerner, R. Garner, *Political animals: A survey of the animal protection movements in Britain*, *Parliamentary Affairs*, 2, 1993: 333-53; R. Thomas, *the politics of hunting*, Aldershot, UK: Gower, 1980.

since they aim to achieve collective benefits not restricted to the narrow economic interests of their members. Such a label is generally problematic (environmental protest movements, for instance, may be campaigning against a specific localized development-such as the placement of a new road-which threatens their own interests economically or otherwise) but it is particularly so for the movement seeking to protect animals. Uniquely among the pressure group community, the focus is not on human beneficiaries and , because of this, animal protection is particularly susceptible to the charge-often laid against it by opponents-that is has narrow concerns unconnected with any human interests, let alone public interests. In a prescriptive sense, then, it is clearly necessary for the animal protection movement to forge a common agenda with others-such as environmentalists, consumer groups, and health-care reformers-who have a greater claim to the “public interest” label. To do this requires demonstrating the link between animal exploitation and human concerns.⁶⁴

Leaving this difficulty aside, it should be pointed out that the problems allegedly associated with creating and maintaining public interest groups do clearly apply to animal protection organizations and potentially impact upon their political effectiveness. The notion that there is a problem relating to the creation and maintenance of associations of individuals with common aims and/or interests is a relatively recent phenomenon. Up to the mid-1960s, the conventional wisdom was that it was completely natural for like-minded people to

⁶⁴ K. Stallwood, the editor's agenda, the Animals' Agenda, 14 1994: 2-3.

organize themselves into groups whenever common interests, grievances or deprivations arose, in order to seek public policy goals.⁶⁵ This was to change with the publication of Mancur Olson's *The Logic of Collective Action*.⁶⁶ Since then, questions of organizational recruitment and structure have been an important area of research.

For Olson, it is against the self-interest of individual to participate in the achievement of collective goals even if they value these goals. The rational individual, he argues, will take a "free ride" by calculating that it is not worth paying the costs of participation since she will enjoy the benefits gained by the group anyway. Thus, in the case of animal protection, one individual's participation in the movement will not significantly affect the chances of the movement's success. This, of course, makes the process of organizing a group and recruiting members a problem area since, if Olson is right, it is not clear how any groups can be mobilized for collective action. Yet groups, of course, do exist. Olson's answer to this apparent paradox is that groups are able to recruit members either because they can coerce members to join (in a "closed shop," for instance) or because they can offer "selective incentives" which are not available to non-members.⁶⁷ It is primarily economic groups, of course, which can offer such selective incentives in the form, for instance, of pension benefits or cheaper insurance rates. Public interest groups, on the other hand, are not generally organized for reasons other than campaigning or

⁶⁵ D.B. Truman, *The governmental process*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1951.

⁶⁶ M. Olson, *The logic of collective action*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965

⁶⁷ M. Olson, *The logic of collective action*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press 1965: 132-3.

lobbying and, with few exceptions, are unable to provide substantial material benefits.

Olson's work produced a major shift in the preoccupations of interest group scholars toward the analysis of organizational creation and maintenance and led to the formation of a new so-called "resource mobilization" school of study.⁶⁸ As far as the animal protection movement is concerned, there are two ways of reacting to the problem Olson identified. The fact that animal protection groups on both sides of the Atlantic have succeeded in surviving and, in some cases, prospering (as have many other public interest groups) would suggest either that Olson's rational choice model is wrong or that groups are able to compensate in some way for their inability to offer selective incentives. Whatever the answer, there is a clear research agenda here which has only just begun to be explored.

One approach to the creation of groups from within the Olsonian tradition is to focus on the role of organizational elites. There are two strands to this argument. One is that group leaders: learned how to cope with the public good dilemma not by inducing large numbers of new members to join the group through the manipulation of selective benefits, but by locating important new sources of funds outside the immediate membership.⁶⁹ Thus, groups seek to attract large individual gifts and foundation grants as a means of overcoming the problem of attracting enough members paying subscriptions. The

⁶⁸ See, J.D. McCarthy, J. D. & Zald, M. N., Resource mobilization and social movements, *American Journal of Sociology*, 82, 1977: 1212-41

⁶⁹ J. Walker, J., The origins and maintenance of interest groups in America. *American Political Science Review*, 77, 1983: 390-406: 397.

second strand focuses on the role of individual “entrepreneurs” who are prepared to pay the costs of setting up organizations and providing a set of benefits with which they hope to attract members. In return, they expect to retain a senior staff position within the organization. As the major exponent of this “exchange theory” of interest groups points out, most group activity “has little to do with efforts to affect public policy decisions but is concerned rather with the internal exchange of benefits by which the group is organized and sustained.”⁷⁰

This approach does seem to have some explanatory capacity as far as the animal protection movement is concerned. Many groups have relied and some still do rely on a small number of large donations.⁷¹ More research however, is needed here. Some groups (particularly in the United States-witness PETA’s progress) do have much larger memberships and conceivably do rely much more on them for their organization’s costs. Indeed, the major characteristic of the revitalization of the movement in the past few years has been not just the formation of many new groups but increasing memberships for the older ones too.⁷²

The idea of entrepreneurs also has a great deal of resonance. The animal protection movement includes Cleveland Amory (Fund for Animals) and Christine Stevens (Animal Welfare Institute) in the United States and Jean Pink (Animal Aid) and Mark Glover (LYNX) in

⁷⁰ R. Salisbury, An exchange theory of interest groups, *Midwest Journal of Political Science*, 13, 1969: 20.

⁷¹ R. Gerner, Political animals: A survey of the animal protection movement in Britain, *Parliamentary Affairs*, 2, 1993: 333-53: 46.

⁷² ⁷² R. Gerner, Political animals: A survey of the animal protection movement in Britain, *Parliamentary Affairs*, 2, 1993: 333-53: 41-48.

the United Kingdom, to name but a few, who have played a crucial, sometimes indispensable, entrepreneurial roles in creating organizations. This concurs with Berry's study which found that entrepreneurs were responsible for the creation of 55 of the 81 public interest groups in his sample.⁷³ The problem here is that such entrepreneurs hardly fit the model of utility maximizers required by rational choice theory. Many of those creating animal protection groups did not need the staff job that Salishury's theory posits was their motivation and one can only assume their main concern was the plight of the animals their groups were set up to ameliorate.

An alternative model is the idea that members are recruited into public interest groups because of the solidary rewards that derive from associating in group activities. That is, the very act of participating along with others is inherently satisfying, meeting deep-seated psychological needs, irrespective of the external benefits accruing from it. Olson rejects this inherent satisfaction explanation as insufficiently precise to be included as a selective incentive. Nevertheless, if valid as a explanation for group recruitment, it does have important implications for the political effectiveness of the animal protection movement. The only other viable explanation for involvement in group activities is the "common sense" view that individuals have purposive, ideological or issue-oriented goals. This, of course, clearly takes us beyond the Olsonian framework.

73 J.M. Berry, *Lobbying for the People*, Princeton: Princeton University Press. 1977-24.

The limited amount of empirical research so far conducted on the motivations of animal protection activists would support an issue-oriented explanation. Shapiro's portrait of animal rights activists, for instance, is centered around such an assumption.⁷⁴ Likewise, Jasper and Poulsen have emphasized the role of ideas or moral sentiments as people are recruited into the animal protection movement through the use of "shock" symbols that raise "such a sense of outrage in people that they become inclined towards political action even in the absence of a network of contacts."⁷⁵ Thus, Jasper and Poulsen suggest that these shocks tend to affect isolated individuals with little involvement in other progressive causes. A significant proportion of those recruited into the animal protection movement, then, do not hear about the organizations and issues through a pre-existing social and organizational network, although once involved in the movement they may join other groups in this way. This also suggests that, for some at least, concern about issues occurs prior to the desire to enjoy the benefits of participating in a group of like-minded individuals.⁷⁶

It can be argued, however, that the issue-based reasons for involvement are not totally separate from those associated with the inherent satisfaction of group involvement. It is recognized that the development of a collective identity is crucial for the formation of

⁷⁴ K. Shapiro, Editorial, *Society and Animals*, 1, 2, 1993.

⁷⁵ J. Jasper, J. & Poulsen, J., *Fighting back: Vulnerabilities, blunders and countermobilization by the targets in three animal rights campaigns*, *sociological Forum*, 1993, 8, 639-57.: 10; see, also J. Jasper, *Recruiting intimates, recruiting strangers: Building the contemporary animal rights movement*, Unpublished manuscript, 1992.

⁷⁶ Confirmed by H. A. Herzog, "The movement is my life" *The psychology of animal rights activism*, *Journal of Social Issues*, 49 (1), 1993: 103-19: 117.

solidary feeling and that this becomes a problem in groups with no common social location in a class or ethnic group.⁷⁷ It is reasonable to assume, then, that in the case of animal protection this collective identity is promoted by an ideology which internally unites movement members and sets the movement apart from others. Thus, it is worth speculating that the elaboration of rights for animals serves precisely this function, of providing a distinct ideology which aids the recruitment and mobilization of members.

This is potentially problematic for the animal protection movement since it could lead to a conflict between organizational maintenance (requiring the use of distinctive ideology promoting an “us and them” mentality) and the achievement of organizational goals requiring a certain degree of compromise, and negotiation. Seen in this way, the achievement of welfare-based goals becomes counterproductive since it reduces the exclusiveness of the identity required for organizational maintenance (after all, virtually everyone can claim to be concerned about the welfare of animals). Conversely, the achievement of these goals is itself hindered by the need to maintain the identity of the group. If this is correct, we may well have hit upon one important reason why the animal protection movement has expanded in recent years but also why the potential of an active mass movement has not realized more fundamental changes in the way animals are treated.

⁷⁷ W. Gamson, the social psychology of collective action, in A. D. Morris and C. Mueller (Eds.) *Frontiers in social movement theory*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992: 56.

Political scientists are primarily concerned with the relationship between interest groups, the state, and public policy and the rest of this paper will seek to sketch out a research agenda for this area of animal protection politics. In the past, scholars and movement participants have paid little attention to the political-institutional of animal protection. This is partly because the movement itself has adopted a whole range of strategies, most not dependent upon influencing national (or even local) decision-makers and partly because attempts to achieve public policy goals have invariably failed. Of course, many groups have, from the outset, sought to indirectly influence decision-makers through seeking to influence public opinion on specific issues and, more generally, to create an alternative cultural climate more favorably inclined toward the well-being of animals. Such activity is essential for groups who do not have regular access to decision-makers and may, of course, be a prerequisite for access to the political arena. A focus on a public policy strategy requires an effective means of following up public campaigns and full-time, permanent lobbyists with influential contacts.

There are a number of reasons for suggesting that students of the movement must focus more on national decision-making arenas. In the first place, it can be argued that alternative forms of action—designed to bypass the decision-making arena—are unlikely to achieve a great deal more. Attempts to influence consumers can only work effectively with legislative backing, for example, on labelling.⁷⁸

⁷⁸ R. Garner, *Political animals: A survey of the animal protection movement in Britain*, *Parliamentary Affairs*, 2, 1993: 333-53: 185-8.

Likewise, the various type of direct action in defense of animals are only, at best, a supplement to legislative activism and, at worse, can hinder the achievement of public policy goals.⁷⁹ Finally, there is also evidence to suggest that targeting specific companies (the strategy particularly associated with Henry Spira in the United States) is of limited utility now that the food industry and the animal research community have learned the lessons of the early days of the animal protection movement by countermobilizing effectively.⁸⁰ Of course, these strategies should not and will not be jettisoned but the importance of laws protecting animals should not be underestimated. If effectively drawn up and enforced, they will not only immediately improve the lot of animals but also help to change people's attitudes towards them as well as symbolizing the importance of the issue on the political agenda.

Secondly, whatever one may prescribe, the animal protection movement has over recent years focused a great deal more on the decision-making arena. While this has happened less in Britain (for reasons connected with the dominance of the RSPCA and the more closed executive-dominated structure of the political system) there are signs of a switch in emphasis. The classic example here is the British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection which has made a deliberate effort to move away from the traditional direct-mail approach of outside groups and now targets far more of its resources toward lobbying decision-makers in Britain and the European Union.

⁷⁹ R. Garner, *Political animals: A survey of the animal protection movement in Britain*, *Parliamentary Affairs*, 2, 1993: 333-53: 222-7.

⁸⁰ See, J. Jasper, *Recruiting intimates, recruiting strangers: Building the contemporary animal rights movement*, Unpublished manuscript, 1992.

In. the United States, there are now over 30 animal protection and wildlife conservation groups with Washington offices and a majority of these have emerged in the past 15 years or so (to put this into perspective, there are over 70 organizations which have varying degrees of interest in defeating the animal protection movement's demands for more stringent legislation). Nevertheless, as a result of the growth of the animal protection lobby and greater public concern, most members of Congress now have staffers who deal with animal welfare issues.

This greater emphasis on conventional lobbying, of course, is itself the consequence of the growing maturity of the movement and its greater legitimacy in the eyes of political actors. While one can point to the 1986 Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act in Britain and the various Animal Welfare Act in the United States as steps in the right direction, this is not to say that great legislative strides have been made. In any case, a fuller understanding of the policy-making process is becoming more important if only to explain why more has not been achieved.

Explaining policy-making is an enormously complex task and the process of disentangling the importance of the various potential influences upon public policy is fraught with difficulties. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that the literature contains competing models of decision-making. Very generally, policy decisions come about as the result of the interaction between elected politicians, bureaucrats

in government departments and agencies, interest groups, and public opinion. This interaction is mediated through the particular historical, social, economic and scientific contexts within which decisions are made.

What we have to explain is why certain public policy decisions are made over others or why certain policy demands are ignored. Taking this one step further, there is a general consensus among political scientists that policy outcomes are the product of policy networks. Thus, it is argued, policy is made at a sectoral level in a variety of more or less autonomous networks each involving a different mix of political actors. The nature of these networks has been a matter of some dispute and it is possible to identify a continuum based on their degree of openness, complexity and competition.⁸¹

At one end is the so-called policy community, sometimes referred to as an iron triangle or a sub-government.⁸² It is characterized by regular interaction between a small number of long-term participants, usually a government agency and certain privileged interest groups, operating within a large degree of consensus and closed off from other competing groups and areas of government. At the other is the so-called issue network, characterized by a considerable degree of openness and flux with a

⁸¹ D. Marsh, D. & Rhodes, R. (Eds), *Policy networks in British politics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992: 249.

⁸² G. Jordan, *Sub-governments, policy communities and networks*, *Journal of Theoretical Politics*, 2, 1990: 319-38.

variety of competing groups able to gain access to decision-makers.⁸³ These two models are, ideal types representing two extremes and the reality may well reside on some point between the two. In addition, it should be remembered that different networks may apply to different issue areas.

After identifying the type of network, the next step is to seek to explain why it exists. An obvious line of inquiry is to examine the interest groups involved with a particular issue since it is often assumed that the ability of a group to gain a privileged place in decision-making is a product of the resources it is able to muster. These resources can include conventional items such as money, expertise and so on. In addition, it has been argued that business group also have structural power in the sense of the vital economic role-providing employment, aiding the balance of trade-that such organizations perform.⁸⁴ In the case of animal protection, for instance, economic defenses of factory farming and animal experimentation are common. While this is an attractive conclusion which surely has some empirical force, the role of group resources should not be overestimated since to do so is to neglect other variables such as the preference of politicians and officials and the general cultural climate and historical circumstance within which groups are operating.⁸⁵

⁸³ H. Heclo, Issue networks and the executive establishment, in A. King (Ed), The new American political system, Washington, DC: American Enterprise Institute, 1988: 87-124.

⁸⁴ C. Lindblom, Politics and markets, New York: Basic Books 1977.

⁸⁵ See, E.A. Nordlinger, On the autonomy of the democratic state, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981.

It will now be reasonably clear what a research agenda for animal protection politics should look like. Operationalizing it to discover the character of animal protection policy networks is not an easy task. The first step is to identify the rules and regulations concerned with animal welfare. It is useful to adopt a comparative study of two or more countries, particularly countries with different political structures and records on animal welfare, since it might be possible to isolate a particular variable or variables responsible for differential policy outcomes.⁸⁶ It is generally recognized, for instance, that animal protection laws and regulations are more stringent in Britain than in the United States where no federal legislation or regulations exist to protect the husbandry of farm animals, and where animals used for experimental purposes have only minimal legislative protection.

Tracing legislative proposals and the fate of regulations relating to animal welfare through the press and such sources as the Congressional Record, Hansard, and European Union documents is an easy enough, albeit laborious, task. A study of congressional bills is essential here since Congressional committees (and particularly the chairpersons) have a great deal of influence and may indeed (along with certain groups and a particular government agency) form one leg of an animal welfare iron triangle.

⁸⁶ H. Kitschelt, Political opportunity structures and political protest. *British Journal of political science*, 16, 1986: 57-85

Some work has been done on groups relevant to animal protection, specifically farmers⁸⁷ and the food industry in general although none of these focus on the issue of animal protection. Thus, all that these sources can provide is some preliminary indications of which groups are involved, what role they play and how important they are. Building upon this, a more comprehensive list of participants can be devised by utilizing published lists of associations and lobbyists.⁸⁸ Once such a list is created, it is then possible to seek to elicit further information from the groups identified. This can initially take the form of a questionnaire to develop a more manageable list of the most active and influential groups to be drawn up. These organizations can then be targeted for more extensive interviews, along with the relevant government officials responsible for animal protection policy.

Based on my own research utilizing the methods described above, a number of preliminary observations can be made and a hypothesis open to further testing suggested. In the first place, it is clear that self-contained animal protection policy networks do exist. In Britain, for instance, there are separate sections within the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF) and the Home Office dealing with farm animal welfare and animal experimentation respectively. Likewise, there are separate networks concerned with

⁸⁷ See, P. Lowe, (ed.) *Countryside conflicts: The politics of farming, forestry and conservation*, Aldershot, UK: Gower, 1986.

⁸⁸ For the UK, see, P. Millard, (published annually), *Trade associations and professional bodies of the United Kingdom*, London: Gale Research International Ltd., for the US see Close, A. (published annually), *Washington Representatives*, Washington, DC: Columbia Books.

issues relating to companion animals (again centering on the Home Office) and wild animals (Department of the Environment).

The results of a survey of group involvement confirms the self-contained nature of the policy networks by revealing that the sphere of group concerns tends, with few exceptions, to be narrow. Groups do not usually traverse the boundaries between the four animal protection areas identified above (i.e., groups involved in the farm animal sphere do not concern themselves with laboratory animal issues). Even those groups (such as the RSPCA, the Humane Society of the US and Putting People First) who have a wider scope do not always lobby extensively on all animal-related issues even if they have a position on all of them. Moreover, not only are network boundaries rarely traversed but, in addition, group concerns are sometimes focused even more narrowly within a particular network. Thus, for instance, the League Against Cruel Sport in Britain does not concern itself with other issues involving wild animals, leaving that to other groups such as the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds which, in turn, does not get involved with blood sports. Likewise, organizations representing particular commodities, whether it be pigs or eggs, tend to stick to issues directly affecting their industries. The Research Defense Society in Britain, is far more active on the issue of product testing than on medical research using animals.

In Britain, it is clearly apparent that, in the area of farm animals and animal experimentation at least, the reality approaches the policy community model. In the case of agricultural policy, including farm

animal welfare, the National Farmer's Union (NFU) has a dominant role dating back to the Second World War and the immediate post-war period. The origins of the community are instructive since they illustrate, as Smith persuasively argues, how historical circumstances (in this case the need for an efficient farming sector providing a plentiful and reliable source of food) can explain the institutional organization of policy-making. Thus, it was not so much the power of the NFU which determined its privileged position as it was government's appreciation of a problem to which the NFU offered a solution.⁸⁹ Thus, while animal protection groups do have access, occasionally, to the Secretary of State and more often to the Animal Welfare Division of MAFF, this is not the formalized, regular access that the NFU and other subordinate members of the food industry has.

Similarly, the animal experimentation community, based around E Division of the Home Office and the Animal Procedures Committee, is dominated by scientists and the pharmaceutical industries and, while animal protection organizations do have occasional access through the Animal Procedures Committee, only those groups who accept the prevailing ethos of the community (that animal experimentation is worthwhile and that prohibiting any particular procedure is illegitimate) are accepted as fully paid-up members. More radical group-most notably the British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection-have recently been successful in securing meetings with

⁸⁹ M.J. Smith, *the politics of agricultural support in Britain: The development of the agricultural policy community*, Aldershot, UK: Dartmouth, 1990.

civil servants; this a minor advance over their former portrayal as terrorists.

What is fascinating about the British case is that the policy networks have engaged in a seemingly deliberate strategy of cooptation and concession. For example, the outcry over factory farming in the 1960s produced a government response in 1965 (the Brambell Committee's Report) which, over a period of years, led to limited legislation and the creation of the Farm Animal Welfare Council (1979) on which representatives from the animal protection movement sit. Likewise, similar concerns over laboratory animals produced the 1986 Animal (Scientific Procedures) Act and the creation of the Animal Procedures Committee, again allowing for the participation of animal welfare interests. Only moderate animal welfarists are coopted as "valid" spokespersons precisely because they do not challenge the dominant ideology of the policy community. When the moderated challenge the prevailing consensus, they can be replaced or ignored. Thus, although the government has acted upon FAWC reports, more radical suggestions (such as the banning of fur farms) have been ignored. The danger this points to is that animal welfare interests granted some formalized access may well find themselves imprisoned within a community they are unable to influence. Arguably, the strategy of concessions and cooptation was precipitated by government actors, raising the interesting speculation that policy networks have been manipulated in order to serve the long-term interests of animal researchers and agribusiness.

The position in the United States is less clear and is the area most in need of research. The American political system has often been regarded as much more open and therefore more likely to produce issue networks than its British equivalent because of the numerous access points for groups provided by the separation of powers, the federal system, the lack of party discipline and the recent reforms which have further decentralized power in Congress⁹⁰. The number of animal protection groups with offices in Washington would seem to attest to this fact. Paradoxically, fewer and less stringent animal protection laws exist in the United States. Two alternative answers seem plausible. In the first place, it might be argued that the system is more closed than it appears. Traditionally, for instance, committee chairpersons in Congress had enormous power to block legislation and, in the case of farm animal welfare in particular, there is no question that farming and agribusiness interests have been well represented on agricultural committees in addition to within the Department of Agriculture. Likewise, the animal research community has always been extremely influential within agencies such as Health and Human Services. The National Institutes of Health and the National Institute of Mental Health have been research's mouthpiece, defending animal experimentation much more vigorously than equivalent agencies in Britain.

⁹⁰ See, M.J. Smith, *Pressure, power and policy: State autonomy and policy networks in Britain and the United States*, Hertfordshire, UK: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1993: 8-10; W.P. Browne, *Private interests, public policy and American agriculture*, Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1988: 41-45.

Despite this, there is evidence to suggest that the influx of new cause groups in recent years and the changing public agenda has had an impact on interest representation. In the case of animal protection, it has proven much more difficult in recent years for policy communities to ignore animal welfare issues, not least because Congress, ever vigilant of public opinion, provides an important counterweight to government agencies.⁹¹ The problem for animal protection group is that while their influence is greater now than it has ever been, the fragmented nature of the political system has produced so many competing policy-making centers that something approaching stalemate is the result.

The classic example of this is the fate of the 1985 amendments to the Animal Welfare Act (known as the Improved Standards for Laboratory Animals Act). Much to the alarm of the research community, this legislation was carried as part of the Farm Bill, largely because of the patronage of Reboort Dole and Congressional reaction to revelations about the way some animals were treated in the laboratory environment. Although a moderate piece of legislation, the research community was determined to fight it at the implementation stage. Here, they were clearly aided by an administration indifferent to animal welfare and hostile to the expenditure needed for the legislation's effective enforcement. As a consequence, the Act and its predecessors are under-funded. Other parts of the executive branch, including the Office of Management and Budget and the National

⁹¹ See, J. Rifkin, & Rifkin, C., *voting green*, New York: Doubleday, 1992, for evidence of the "greening" of Congress.

Institutes of Health applied enormous pressure on the Department of Agriculture (responsible of drawing up the regulations fleshing out the spirit of the legislation) and as a consequence some regulations are not yet in force. Even though the Animal Legal Defense Fund won a spectacular victory in the Washington D.C. District Court, ordering the Department to come up with regulations in accord with the spirit to the legislation, an appeal (promoted by the National Association for Biomedical Research) resulted in an overturn of the ruling.

Thus, while it appears that a more open system does exist in the United States, there are numerous points where the research community can regroup and fight the same battles over and over again, thereby obstructing or diluting legislation. What is interesting is that in the area of animal experimentation, the absence of a clearly-defined, self-contained and confident policy community seems to prevent, unlike in Britain, the granting of concessions and the cooptation of the more moderate elements of the animal protection movement. It is not entirely clear why this should be so or what the long-term implications are, but it explains why less has been achieved by the animal protection movement in the United States.

There is no question that the revitalization and radicalization of the animal protection movement in the past two decades has had a significant impact. Earlier, decisions on the welfare of animal were made in closed de-politicized policy communities. Only humane societies challenged the status quo, and their moderation and failure to focus on the institutional abuse of animals represented no great

threat. Now, with growing public concern—partly the product of years of campaigning by the animal protection movement—animal welfare questions can no longer be safely ignored in cozy policy communities.

This is not to say that the policy communities have collapsed. Particularly in Britain, regular and effective access to decision-makers for the animal protection movement has proved to be largely elusive. Even in the United States, where the legislature is more open to group influence, those groups who have an interest in obstructing animal welfare measures are extremely powerful. Nevertheless, in both countries cracks are beginning to emerge. In Britain, policy communities have had to make concessions and, while the logic behind them is the future, the granting of concessions does indicate a weakening of their position and reflects the government's need to take into account changing public demands. In the United States, Congress has begun to take animal welfare more seriously and the animal protection movement's opponents are more often forced out into the open to defend their position.

On the periphery, in both countries, there is an ideological battle (what Gramsci called a “war of position”) resembling an issue network with, for the first time, those who use animals having to vigorously defend themselves in order to win over an increasingly hostile public. This is crucial, as Smith points out, for “the institutional exclusion of other interests cannot last long without a legitimizing ideology.”⁹² As

⁹² M. J. Smith, *The politics of agricultural support in Britain: The development of the agricultural policy community*, Aldershot, UK: Dartmouth, 1990: 38.

in the case of farm animals, it is not just the welfare of animals that governments have to consider, but also the environmental and health problems associated with intensive agriculture. It is these “problems”, rather than the purely moral case for the humane treatment of animals, that is likely to undermine the present power relationship simply because the farmers and agribusiness interests do not seem to offer a solution. Indeed, they may be seen as part of the problem.

While much of this is optimistic for animal advocates, it should be pointed out that for the most part it is the animal welfare and wildlife conservation agenda rather than animal rights that is at issue not only with decision-makers but with the general public as well. As the first part of this chapter demonstrated, the ideological and solidary reasons that seem to attract activists into the movement can conflict with a goal-achieving welfare agenda. There is an ever present danger that the needs of organizational maintenance hinder the crucial task of coalition-building, a prerequisite for keeping the plight of animals, and realistic proposals to improve their condition, before the public.

CHAPTER: 5

Pali Dhammapada, Animal Rights and the Universal Declaration of Animal Rights

The *Universal Declaration of Animal Rights* proclaimed on 15 October 1978 and further modified on 18 October 1989 was “not written in a solely protectionist perspective, but endeavours to offer man a new moral stance based on respect for life as a cosmic phenomenon. It obviously aims at doing away with human cruelty and any human abuse of animals, but it is also designed to eliminate any discrimination between species-speciesism-arising from the hierarchy man has established for his own purposes and with his own criteria, comparing species in the living world to the human species, describing “inferior” creatures as useful or as pets, conferring on them attributes such as fierceness, evil, ugliness, cunning, laziness, intelligence or stupidity, and distinguishing “superior” animals and “inferior” animals.⁹³ Such a hierarchy is quite arbitrary and no scientific argument can justify speciesism. By attacking speciesism, the Universal Declaration attacks the inequality of rights implied in it, i.e., different rights for species as ranked in a hierarchy.⁹⁴ Modern science has, in fact, clearly demonstrated that each living creature has its place in the biosphere, playing its own role and being part of a

⁹³ Georges Chapouthier & Jean-Claude Nouet (eds), *The Universal Declaration of Animal Rights: Comments and Rights*, Paris: Ligue Française des Droits de l'Animal, 1998: 11.

⁹⁴ Jean-Claude Nouet, “Origins of the Universal Declaration of Animal Rights,” Georges Chapouthier & Jean-Claude Nouet (eds), *The Universal Declaration of Animal Rights: Comments and Rights*, Paris: Ligue Française des Droits de l'Animal, 1998: 11.

collective balance. The egalitarianism of rights to life is therefore based on scientific realities: these are the unity of the living world, its vast diversity, a key factor in evolution, and the complementary nature of the different components. There have been attacks because the defence of animal rights disturbs or threatens vast financial interests. It has been poorly understood because egalitarianism is often mistakenly interpreted as being equality, confusing the equality of physiological realities (an erroneous interpretation) and equality in terms of right. It has been difficult to gain acceptance for animal rights as the concept runs counter to the habits, behaviour and dogmas that have prevailed for thousands of years.⁹⁵ A parallel can be drawn with the exploitation of non-human living creatures for commercial purposes, death for entertainment, the destruction of species and disrespect for basic physiological needs or for the balance of nature, all of which attract ardent supporters today, including a number from the scientific community. It is true that tradition often impedes progress and that new ideas, new theories and new dogmas have always met with opposition, their proponents being dismissed as idealists, madmen or heretics, mocked, reviled and even put to death. The main obstacle to the concept of animal rights may not be mercenary interests, but a basic dogma entrenched in western thinking, i.e., the systematic primacy of man as the final and almost perfect product of creation or evaluation on earth, designed in the likeness of his creator. The Universal Declaration is totally opposed to such western anthropocentrism which is responsible for speciesism

⁹⁵ Ibid. 12.

and non-egalitarian rights to existence. This does not infer that man as a species does not have the rights to defend his own interests, but this defence cannot be justified by a metaphysically inspired form of anthropocentrism. Embryology, ethology (the study of animal behaviour), ecology (the study of environmental relationships), neurophysiology, genetics and molecular genetics, modern palaeontology and the use of radioisotopes have all helped extend and confirm the theory of evolution, making it possible to explore the animal world and reveal behaviour patterns, social lifestyles, means of communication or even the existence of actual thought. Man is directly related to his ancestors and animals still living in the world today. While animals have taken on different forms in every different direction in every context where life can exist, man has taken on a different direction from his own direction. The distinguishing features of the human species are nothing more than differences in relation to features of other species and do not confer any special status or privilege on man. The earth can then only be considered as being what it is, i.e., a world bearing life, one of an infinite number of worlds bearing life, one of many hundreds of thousands in our galaxy alone. And the human species can only be considered as one of the animal species currently living on earth, as a link between men of the past and men of the future, just as animals today are the heirs of past species and the ancestors of future species. (this declaration is only) suggesting a new moral code for humanity, a new code of ethics based on respect for life. With the progress made by science and the doubt now cast on dogmas and taboos observed for thousands of

years, man needs to acquire a new vision of the world and change his extremely predator-like behaviour, particularly as he has come to the sudden realization that he cannot destroy nature and survive at the same time. The collapse of anthropocentrism spells the end of speciesism, of hierarchies created in our own image and of non-egalitarianism. Ipso facto it makes man recognize the right of other species to live with him on Earth, on an equal footing, all being subject to the same laws governing the balance of nature, without man having the right to exploit or kill for either commercial purposes or entertainment, or to cause the disappearance of a species which would render him guilty of a heinous crime against evolution. It is not entirely unreasonable to maintain that consideration for animal rights and consideration for human rights are simple, incomplete stages, and to see a future where there will be greater recognition of far more sweeping rights, i.e., the rights of every being endowed with Life to live according to the natural laws of the biosphere.”⁹⁶

As far as the issue of animal rights is concerned, among the world’s hundreds of millions of Buddhists, there is disagreement about this basic issue. There are a large number of Buddhists who do not eat meat because they believe that according to the tenets of their religion, they should not eat meat. At the same time, there are also many Buddhists who continue to eat meat and feel that this is consistent with Buddhism. However, it cannot be denied that

⁹⁶ Jean-Claude Nouet, “Origins of the Universal Declaration of Animal Rights,” Georges Chapouthier & Jean-Claude Nouet (eds), *The Universal Declaration of Animal Rights: Comments and Rights*, Paris: Ligue Francaise des Droits de L’Animal, 1998: 15.

Buddhism takes the plight of nonhuman animals very seriously indeed. But the question arises as to whether Buddhists, or at least Buddhist nuns and monks, have to be vegetarian or not. Here, it may be interesting to see as to what exactly does Buddhism have to say about our return to the Buddhist scriptures and see what (if anything) they have to say about the issue. As far as the Buddhist scriptures are concerned, it may be useful to evaluate this issue in the light of *Pāli Dhammapada*. The reason that we have chosen *Dhammapada* is that this is possibly the most widely read and known Buddhist text. Dhamma (Dharma is Sankrit), means “law, a moral law, a spiritual law of righteousness, the eternal law of the Universe, Truth;” and pada means “foot” or “step.” So the *Dhammapada* are the steps we must take to live according to (Buddhist moral and spiritual laws. According to scholar Juan Mascaró, “that the spirit of the Dhammapada is the spirit of the Buddha is accepted both by his followers and by scholars.” Therefore, it seems reasonable that we can derive at least a first approximation of the Buddhist approach to the question of animal rights from the basic moral foundation laid by Gotama Buddha in the *Dhammapada*.

In Buddhism, there are five “precepts,” which could be considered to play a similar role as the Ten Commandments do for Jews and Christians. These precepts provide moral guidance for lay Buddhists as well as monks and nuns. They are concisely summed up as follows:

He who destroys life, who utters lies, who takes what is not given to him, who goes to the wife of another, who gets drunk with strong drinks he digs up the very roots of his life. The injunction against destroying life is known as the First Precept. In addition, the Buddha also tells us not to “Hurt” others, for example: “He who for the sake of happiness hurts others who also want happiness, shall not hereafter find happiness.” Probably because not killing and not hurting are so important, the Buddha repeatedly asks us not to do either in many places throughout the Dhammapada. The fact that the First Precept and other teachings forbid killing and hurting is not controversial among Buddhists. Where the controversy comes in is the question of whom Buddhists are forbidden to kill or hurt. Now the question arises as to whether the First Precept and other passages against hurting protect non-human animals or not. Perhaps they, like the Judeo-Christian Commandment “Thou shalt not kill,” were intended to apply only to humans. This possibility can be ruled out almost immediately, for in the Dhammapada, there are numerous explicit injunctions against killing or otherwise hurting “living beings,” rather than “person.” But although a man may wear fine clothing, if he lives peacefully; and is good, self-possessed, has faith and is pure; and if he does not hurt any living beings, he is a holy Brahmin, a hermit of seclusion, a monk called a Bhikkhu.

“The wise who hurt no living being, and who keep their body under self-control, they go to the immortal Nibbana, where once gone they sorrow no more.” “A man is not a great man because he is a

warrior and kills other men; but because he hurts not any living being he in truth is called a great man. It seems clear that the Buddha has taken pains to make it clear that the injunction against killing or hurting is not confined to humans, but extends to other “living beings.” However, there is another important issue that needs to be settled and that is as to whether who or what these “living beings” are. Some have argued that the protection of “living beings” extends to plants as well as to animals, for they are also alive. If this were the case, then it could be claimed that for a Buddhist, eating a rabbit is no worse than eating a carrot. However, a beautiful passage suggests that the beings referred to are sentient beings: all beings tremble before danger, all fear death. When a man considers this, he does not kill or cause to kill. All beings fear before danger, life is dear to all. When a man considers this, he does not kill or cause to kill.

Here, the Buddha explains that we should not kill out of consideration for the feelings of fear and the love of life that beings experience. Moreover, he says all beings share these attributes, suggestion that the world which Mascaró has translated as “beings” really means “sentient beings.” Some skeptics may claim that nonhuman animals are not really sentient. However, in another passage, the Buddha alludes to the sentience of fish in a metaphor describing an unquiet mind: like a fish which is thrown on dry land, taken from his home in the waters, the mind strives and struggles to get free from the power of Death. This passage suggests that, like the “beings” referred to in Dhammapada the fish’s life is dear to him—otherwise there is no reason as why would he “strive and struggle to

get free from the power of Death” when removed from his aquatic home. If the Buddha believed fish to be sentient, it is highly improbable that he would deny that many of the other animals commonly killed and hurt by humans (e.g. mammals and birds) are not sentient. Therefore, at least fish, birds, and mammals could not be killed or otherwise hurt according to the First Precept and other teachings which protect sentient beings. It is quite possible that the First Precept covers other animals as well.

Thus, the question arises as to why the Buddha did not come right out and say that “animals” should not be harmed, rather than “living beings.” Perhaps it was because, when and where the Buddha lived, practitioners of other well-known religions such as Jainism were already conscientious about protecting animals and so it would have been obvious to the Buddha’s students that not killing “living beings” meant not killing animals. Perhaps there was no word in Pāli which would encompass both nonhuman and human animals, so that the term translated as “living beings” was needed to be inclusive. Or perhaps the Buddha wanted us to be more concerned about sentient animals, rather than any non-sentient animals which might exist.

Since the Buddha’s time, there have been enormous changes in the relationship between human and nonhuman animals. Practices such as vivisection and factory farming would have been unknown to the Buddha, and so of course they are not explicitly mentioned in the Dhammapada. Moreover, the Dhammapada is very concise, and does not catalogue all the possible misdeeds which could be committed

against animals (that includes both humans as well as non-humans). However, although the myriad harms to animals are not all explicitly mentioned in the Dhammpada, we can infer a great deal merely from the First Precepts and the teachings against hurting other beings. It is clear that the Buddha does not want us to kill or hurt animals ourselves. Therefore, Buddhists cannot be hunters, fishers, trappers, slaughterhouse workers, vivisectors, etc., nor can we “ethanize” homeless animals in so-called animal “shelters.”

Regarding meat-eating, some might claim that, as long as people do not kill animals themselves, it is okay to eat meat. However, note that verses 129 and 130 in the Dhammpada specify that we should not “kill or cause to kill.” When people buy products made from the bodies of dead animals, they must necessarily cause someone to kill those animals. Therefore, meat, leather, and fur are off limits. It is probably true that, in order to be economically viable, killing older, less productive animals is necessary to produce milk and eggs—certainly this is one claim of the egg and milk industries in justifying this practice. If so, then buying milk and egg also necessarily causes killing, and thus should be avoided under the First Precept.

The biggest problem arises while dealing with an issue such as the Tikotiparisuddha. According to this rule, a monk should not accept meat in case he has heard, seen or suspected that the meat was particularly acquired for him. But this rule appears to be self-contradictory and an interpolation. As far as meat bought by someone

else is concerned, in most, perhaps all cases, by accepting meat served to us by someone else, we are causing killing. For example, if meat-eating friends invite us over for dinner, they will buy extra meat for us in anticipation of our visit, or if our visit was unplanned they are likely to buy extra meat to restock their larder after we leave. In either case, our acceptance of the meat has caused additional animals to be killed. So ideally, we should not accept meat served to us by others, and should let people know this in advance whenever possible. Some claim that the contents of their stomach do not matter, only the contents of their mind. However, the Buddha points out that we should give thought to what we eat.

“He who lives only for pleasures, and whose soul is not in harmony, who considers not the food he eats, is idle, and has not the power of virtue—such a man is moved by Māra, is moved by selfish temptations, even as a weak tree is shaken by the wind⁹⁷.” Not to hurt by deeds or words, self-control as taught in the Rules, moderation in food, the solitude of one’s room and one’s bed, and the practice of the highest consciousness: this is the teaching of the Buddha who are awake⁹⁸. Probably these passages refer to avoiding gluttony as well as vegetarianism. Certainly, people who find the thought of “giving up” meat (or other products of animal killing) distressing should also consider if they have allowed themselves to become too attached to material pleasure, and heed the word of the Buddha.

⁹⁷ Dh.7.

⁹⁸ Dh. 185.

He who does what should not be done and fails to do what should be done, who forgets the true aim of life and sinks into transient pleasures—he will one day envy the man who lives in high contemplation. Let a man be free from pleasure and let a man be free from pain; for not to have pleasure is sorrow and to have pain is also sorrow⁹⁹. Although the ideal of detachment does not mean we are forbidden to experience material pleasure, clearly allowing one's attachment to, say, the taste of meat to override adherence to the First Precept is contrary to the spirit of the Dhammapada. Many people have tried to justify killing animals because of the (alleged) benefits it brings, whether economic benefits to people who work in animal-killing occupations, or potential medical benefits which might arise from vivisection. But the Buddha says: he who for himself or others craves not for sons or power or wealth, who puts not his own success before the success of righteousness, he is virtuous, and righteous, and wise¹⁰⁰.

That is, doing the righteous thing (obeying the Precepts) has a higher priority over worldly “success.” Moreover, the Buddha cautions against being overly attached to our current bodies. It may be interesting to consider a human body which is basically a painted puppet with joined limbs, sometimes suffering and covered with ulcers, full of imaginings, never permanent, for ever changing. It is decaying and is a nest of diseases, a heap of corruption, bound to destruction, to dissolution. It is also an established fact that all life ends in death. By looking at these grey-white dried bones, like dried

⁹⁹ Dh.209-10

¹⁰⁰ Dh.84.

empty gourds thrown away at the end of the summer, no one will feel joy in looking at them. A house of bones is this body, bone covered with flesh and with blood. Pride and hypocrisy dwell in this house and also old age and death. The glorious chariots of kings wear out, and the body wear out and grows old; but the virtue of the good never grows old. Although the Buddha does not ask that we harm our body, either directly or by neglecting our bodies' needs (this would be pointless), he emphasizes that the body is impermanent, and we should be more concerned about virtuous than about preserving the body. Therefore, killing animals (a violation of the First Precept), cannot be justified by the claim that it will prolong human life. Moreover, unlike the Judeo-Christian scriptures, the Dhammapada does not claim that humans are superior to or more important than other animals.

It is a depressing fact of life that absolutely everything we buy has involved harm to sentient beings at some point in its production, imply because that vast majority of people are willing to harm non-humans whenever it is expedient. For example, the vegetables we eat may have been fertilized with bone meal, plant-fibre clothing may have been treated with animal-derived products, medications are currently required by law to be tested on animals. However, in buying products such as these which do not require killing for their production, it is not clear that we are causing others to kill—especially if we are also working to change the practices in these industries. Still, it is best to keep the consumption of all products to a minimum, both to minimize

our monetary contribution to killing, and in keeping with the Buddhist ideal of detachment. At a minimum, the *Dhammapada* is consistent with animal rights. Indeed, it seems to mandate many of the goals of the animal rights movement, for example, the abolition of the meat industry and vivisection. Given that the *Dhammapada* is one of the core scriptures of Buddhism, it is difficult to see how Buddhists who do participate in activities which kill animals can justify the discrepancy between their practice and the words of the Buddha. However, animal rights activities should note that killing of animals in “shelters” is also forbidden. This is an unfortunate reality that many who consider themselves part of the animal rights movement still see killing of homeless cats and dogs as legitimate or perhaps even necessary. Also, although the goals of animal rights are by and large consistent with Buddhism, too often the actions taken to achieve these goals are not. Many animal rights advocates speak harshly of those who oppress animals, but the question arises as to whether it is of any good or not. The Buddha reminds us to never speak harsh words, for once spoken they may return to you. Angry words are painful and there may be blows for blows¹⁰¹. Then the question further arises as to how can we to work to liberate our fellow sentient beings from suffering. We would do well to reflect frequently and often on the following: overcome anger by peacefulness: overcome evil by good. Overcome the mean by generosity; and the man who lies by truth.¹⁰²

¹⁰¹ Dh. 133.

¹⁰² Dh.123

It is sufficient merely to tell the truth about what is happening to animals—there is no need to attack the character of the people committing these actions as well. And striving to live peacefully will teach the world more about compassion than hostile ranting. Of course, this is not easy but one must continue to strive because the Buddha acknowledges the difficulty, but encourages us to keep striving. If he makes himself as good as he tells others to be, then he in truth can teach others. Self-control is indeed very difficult. At times when this ideal seems pointless, and frustrating, and futile, an effort must be made to set aside our rage and despair at what our fellow humans are doing to animals, and focus on the love for animals which motivates our animal rights work.

“For hate is not conquered by hate. Hate is conquered by love. This is a law eternal”¹⁰³ people who eat meat often make the excuse that it is natural to do so, that people were meant to eat meat. They promote this idea, and then freely indulge in taking the lives of their fellow creatures, thereby creating extensive hatred and enmity-kamma. Over time, as their killing and consuming becomes a habit, meat eaters no longer feel their killing is unusual. They do their evil deeds unknowingly, unaware of the consequences of slaughter and the resentment it evokes. As somebody in the past said, “It is a cause for tears and sobbing, for wails and cries, for deep regrets, and mournful cries.”¹⁰⁴ In order to recount our confusion and point out our attachments, I have formulated seven categories, and will explain them below. Any other points to be discussed can be investigated in

¹⁰³ Dh.5.

¹⁰⁴ Dh.147.

similar fashion. To begin with, all creatures with awareness share just one identical body. When we humans eat the flesh of our fellow creatures, we are doing a bizarre and abnormal act. Yet we do not feel it is strange, because the whole family takes part, and for generation after generation, killing and eating meat becomes a custom. Our neighbors in the local villages copy one another, and repetition makes the practice seem normal. Over time we lose sensitivity to the wrongness of killing. We think instead, that it is right to kill animals for the good flavor their bodies provide. Our desire for taste dominates our sensibilities, and we no longer feel that eating dead flesh is strange or grossly savage. It may be worth considering as to what will be our response if someone were to kill and eat the body of a human. Surely everyone would reckon it a monstrous act, frightening, and taboo. Everybody would be anxious to execute the culprit as a murderous criminal. The simple reason for this would be that only because eating human meat is very much not a part of our conventional habits. But eating the flesh of animals' bodies has become a habit the world over, so that we no longer feel that killing these creatures is wrong. In fact, "it is a cause for tears and sobbing, for wails and cries, for deep regrets, and mournful cries."

Our parents endured great trials and suffering to bring us into the world. Thus, to celebrate our births it is fitting that we avoid all killing, and instead, eat vegetarian food. On those particular days we should extensively do good deeds, and amass merit so that our ancestors might ascend quickly to a higher state of rebirth. In this way, the life-span and blessings of our parents in this life may increase

as well. It is a shame that we very easily forget the pain and trouble that all mothers go through in giving birth. In this light, it is hard to imagine that one could indulge in harming or killing any living thing whose mother suffered to rear and nurture it. To do so only increases the karmic burden on our parents, and delivers no real benefits to us. But the entire world has made slaughter and meat-eating a habit on birthdays, and no one any longer feels it is wrong. This is a cause for deep regrets and mournful sighs. The Emperor Tai Tsung of the Tang Dynasty commanded an army of ten thousand chariots, and still refused to celebrate his birthday. But simple folks in the villages often turn an extra dozen bushels of grain at harvest-time into an occasion for a party. They take any excuse to make merry and to feast non-stop. Certainly there is not such we can do about such habits. Even so, if on auspicious occasions, we sponsor vegetarian meal-offerings, recite *suttas* and cultivate doing charitable and philanthropic deeds, it will really be a good Buddhist celebration.

Every family feels grieved when they have no posterity. And when children come, they are delighted. But few people think on behalf of the animals and birds, who by rights, also love their children. If we congratulate someone on the birth of a son, then it is hard to imagine that we feel comfortable in our hearts when, to celebrate the births of our own children, we accumulate blessings for it, but instead increase its bad karma by killing to commemorate its birth, it would simply be very foolish. Yet the entire world is in the habit of killing and we do not consider it wrong. This is the second cause for tears and

sobbing, for wails and cries, for deep regrets, and mournful sighs. According to a Buddhist story¹⁰⁵, a hunter got drunk one evening and, in his stupor,, thought that his little boy was a buck deer. He snatched up a sharp knife and killed the child. His wife cried and pleaded with him to stop, but being drunk, he would not listen. Only after cutting open the boy's abdomen and extracting his intestines did he finally halt the carnage and fall into a drunken sleep.

He awoke at dawn and called for his son to get ready for a trip to town to sell the venison at the market. His wife sobbed, "But you killed your son last night!" The hunter saw what he had done and clubbed himself so viciously in his grief that his internal organs ruptured, and he died. Although animals and humans are different, our love for our children comes from one identical heart. Therefore, it should be inconceivable to kill any kind of living creatures.

When we make offerings to our ancestors we should not kill. On the days when we remember our ancestors' passing, as well on the days of the Spring and Autumn observances, the Chinese festivals such as Ching Ming (Clear and Bright), and so forth, we should all avoid killing. People kill to make sacrifices, hoping to increase their ancestors' blessings in the Nether Realms. But this killing, on the contrary, only increases their evil karma. It is hard to imagine a positive karma while offering and eating the bodies of animals. To try to send them meat sacrifices is not only un-beneficial, it is downright

¹⁰⁵ Chue-min (ed&tr.) Sūtra of Medicine, Fo Guang Shan: Taiwan, Buddha Light Association, 1992: 193ff.

harmful. Wise people will not do such a thing. But it happens nonetheless, because the entire world is in the habit and doesn't recognize it as evil. Truly, "this is a cause for tears and sobbing, for wails and cries, for deep regrets, and mournful sighs." The Martial Emperor of Liang used noodles as a gift to the spirits, wishing to avoid giving meat, and everyone ridiculed him, saying that his parents and ancestors would have no flesh and blood to eat. Alas! Eating blood is not necessary; we should not consider it a special treat. What is more, vegetarian food can in no way be considered evil. As children of our parents, it is important to prudently cultivate our own persons, and to avoid humiliating our ancestors. If we can do this much, it is already good enough. Thus, it is foolish to take others' blood as a necessary offering. The Ywe Ritual (an ancient ceremony used for sacrificial occasions) with its musical offering, far surpassed any merit gained by killing cows. The Book of Changes contains clear instructions regarding the use and purpose of such ceremonies. It says that raising animals to slaughter for sacrifice is an unfilial deed. Since the Sages left us such clear guidelines about this, we should not insist on making offerings of blood. Thus, there is no value in offering blood.

The fourth point is that it is not right to kill to celebrate a wedding. In the customary course of a marriage, starting from the go-between's suggesting names, through receiving the dowry, up to entering the engagement, the lives of a large number of animals are taken. Since marriage is the beginning of a process leading to giving birth, if we kill in order to commemorate the occasion, it is just the

opposite of the intended meaning. Further, when we get married, it ought to be very auspicious ceremony. On a very lucky day, to do something evil and barbaric seems cruel and unreasonable. The entire world is in the habit, however, and we don't find it unusual. This is a cause for tears and sobbing, for wails and cries, for deep regrets, and mournful cries. When people get married, the wedding party wishes to congratulate them, and hopes that the husband and wife will be compassions into old age. It is quite unreasonable to expect that births and beasts die first in order to make this happen. The family of the bride keeps candles lit for three days, hoping that she will be able to make a successful departure from her first home. Knowing that this separation from the family is a painful experience, it is wrong to assume that a similar departure from their families would be a source of joy for birds and beasts. Obviously, marriage is not a proper time to kill.

Killing for feasts is also totally unethical and wrong. At this great event, picture the happy, generous hosts and their honored guests. With vegetarian food and soups on the table, nothing obstructs this pure occasion. There is no need to cruelly wrench the life from many living creatures so that every dish we serve can be rich, fatty food. Yet the entire world is in the habit of killing, and we don't feel that it is wrong. This is the fifth cause for tears and sobbing, for wails and cries, for deep regrets, and mournful cries. Since we know that the meat on the plate came from the butcher's chopping-block, amid screams of outrage and pain, to swap the animal's extreme misery for my extreme happiness simply makes this food unpalatable.

It is not right to kill when we are seeking for spiritual aid. When people get sick, we kill living creatures and make offerings to spirits, seeking their aid blessings. We fail to think logically that our purpose for an offering to spirits is to avoid death and to prolong life, thus by taking other creatures' lives to prolong our own become most illogical and irrational. Spirits are the most proper and straightforward of all beings. It is hard to imagine that a spirit would have the slightest selfishness or prejudice. Taking other's life to make offerings to such spirits not only fails to prolong our life, but actually creates more evil karma of killing. The principle is the same with all form of improper deeds done in the name of sacrifice. And yet the entire world is in the habit of killing, and does not consider its wrong.

The Sūtra of Medicine says, "It will not prolong your life to take the lives of other living creatures in hope of appeasing spirits. Nor will your life span increase by calling mountain vampires (Wang Liang Ghosts) and beseeching their spiritual aid and blessing."¹⁰⁶ That is to say, our lives do not lengthen as a result of killing. Instead, we create more evil karma of killing. And so it is with many improper sacrifices, such as those done by people who kill hoping to gain children, or those who kill seeking for wealth, or those who kill seeking appointment to official positions, and so forth. Even if they do get sons or wealth or appointments, such things come to these people as part of their rightful destiny. This is not something that spirits and ghosts can

¹⁰⁶ Chue-min (ed & tr.) Sūtra of Medicine, Fo Guang Shan: Taiwan, Buddha Light Association, 1992: 98.

effect in any way. Furthermore, if we should by chance, get our wishes fulfilled, we might make the wrong conclusion that it came even more solid. It would be most pitiful if our sacrificial killing then grew even more vigorous, as our deviant views flourished.

It is wrong to kill to make a living. For the sake of clothing and food, and in order to sustain their livelihood, some people go hunting or fishing, or slaughter cows, sheep, pigs, dogs, and the like. Yet as I observe, those people who do not work at these jobs have clothes to wear and food to eat all the same. I've never seen them die of hunger or freeze to death. To kill a life in order to sustain a life is something that gods most abhor. One cannot find one person out of a hundred who becomes prosperous because of the act of killing. All those people who kill, however, do deeply plant cause for rebirth in the hells, and receive the evil retribution in their future lives. There is no heavier offense than this. All those following bloody and cruel occupations (*kurūrakammantā*) such as a butchers, fowlers, hunters, fishermen, bandits, executioners, and jailers are looked down upon by Buddhism.¹⁰⁷ Similarly, professions involving cutting, flogging, binding, highway-robber, and plundering are seen as extremely heinous and violent. A cattle-killer is condemned to suffer for “many hundred thousands of years in purgatory.” “One neither sees or hears of a butcher slaughtering and selling cattle-rams, pigs...or beasts of the forest and living in the abundance of great wealth.” The consequences of the evil kamma accumulated as a result of a man's

¹⁰⁷ KS.II.171, A.III.383; Pug.56; PugA.233; PvA.

actions which he brings upon himself by committing injury to a life are “suffering in an unpleasant state for a long period, and rebirth in some lower form of being. If born again as man, he may be infirm, ugly, unpopular, cowardly, divested of compassion, subject to disease, dejected and mournful, separated from the company of loved ones, and unable to attain to ripe age¹⁰⁸.”

If we can resolve to completely put an end to all meat-eating, there could be no greater goodness. If people cannot abandon all seven reasons for their meat-eating, then they should end as many category of killing cast away eradicates one form of karmic-debt. Reducing killing by as little as one instance eliminates one potential for future vengeance. If we cannot completely cut out the stinky flesh in our diet, then we can at least reduce the meat we eat to portions bought in the market-place. Thus we need not kill it ourselves. This avoids the heaviest penalties, and as our thoughts of kindness accumulate that little bit, our entire state of being gradually ascends. If one can convince even one person to refrain from an act of killing then it is the same as having saved one million lives. If one can similarly exhort ten or one hundred or ten million people, the hidden merit and virtue involved is vast and great, and the resulting good karma is incalculable.

“Just so must he support himself by the physic that is always useful: but even then not with fish or flesh, because it is forbidden in the Lankāvatāra Sūtra. For thus it is said: “No flesh must be eaten; so I

¹⁰⁸ H. Sadhatissa: *Buddhist Ethics: Essence of Buddhism*, New York: G. Braziller, 1970: 89.

say to the pitiful Bodhisattva... Because of kinship, because of its wrong, because it is produced by semen and uterine blood, the devotee should avoid flesh as improper for living creatures. The devotee should always avoid flesh, onions, intoxicants of different kinds, garlic of all sorts. He should avoid oil for anointing; he should not sleep on beds with hollow posts or holes or where there is danger for living creatures... For gain a living creature is killed, for meat money is given: both these sinners are burnt in the Raurava Hell and other hells.”¹⁰⁹ And so on to this: “He that eats flesh in transgression of the words of a sage, the man of evil mind, for the destruction of the two worlds, after being dedicated under the gospel of Sākya, those sinners go to the most awful hell; the flesh-eaters are burnt in terrible hells like Raurava. Flesh free from the three objections, not prepared, unasked, unsolicited, there is none: therefore one should not eat flesh. A devotee should not eat flesh, which is blamed by me and by the Buddhas: members of a family that eats carrion flesh, devour each other.” And so on to this: “Ill-smelling and abominable, mad, he is born in a Candāla, or Pukkasa family, amongst low-caste again and again. He is born to one sprung of a female imp, in a flesh-eating family, he is born to a she-bear or a cat, the vile wretch. In the Hastikashya, the Nirvāna, the Angulimalika, and the Lankāvatrara Sūtra, we have reproved the eating of flesh. “By Buddhas and by Bodhisattvas and by religious persons it has been reprehended; if one eats it, he is always born shameless and mad. But by avoiding those who eat flesh men are

¹⁰⁹ “On Not Eating Meat” the Siksha-Samuccaya, compiled by Shantideva, tr. From the Sanskrit by Cecil Bendall and W.H.D. Rouse, p. 23ff.

born among brahmins or in a family of devotees, and one is intelligent and wealthy. In suspicion touching things seen and heard one should avoid all meat; philosophers understand nothing if members of a family that eats carrion flesh. As passion would be an obstacle to deliverance, so would be such things as flesh, or intoxicants. In future time, blameless, praised by the Buddhas. But the pious should take his morel in moderation, against the grain, like a useful physic, as though it were the flesh of his own son. I who abide in kindness have always reprehended this food; (such an one) should keep company with lions and tigers and other beasts. Therefore one should not eat flesh, which disturbs men's natures because it hinders deliverance and righteousness: this is the work of the noble."

The second of three sons, born in Purusapura (now Peshawar, Pakistan), into the Kausika family of Indian Brahmins. All three sons were called Vasubandha and all three became Buddhist Bhikkhus. His older brother was known as Asanga and his younger brother as Virincivatsa. He is known simply as Vasubandhu. In his youth he adhered to the Hīnayāna teachings of the Sautrāntika School and wrote the Abhidharmakosa, perhaps the most well-known of all treatises on the Abhidharma. He was converted to the Mahāyāna by his older brother the Bodhisattva Asanga. After his conversion, he wrote many celebrated works on the consciousness-only and the Thirty Verses on Consciousness-Only.

“Asanga, teacher of the Law (Dharma), saw that his younger brother was endowed with an intelligence surpassing that of others, his knowledge being deep and wide, and himself well-versed in esoteric and exoteric doctrines. He was afraid that the latter might compose a satra and crush the Mahāyāna. He was living then in the land of the Hero (Purusa-pura) and sent a messenger to Vasubandhu in Ayodhya with the following message: “I am seriously ill at present. You had better attend to me quickly.” Vasubandhu followed the messenger to his native land, saw his brother and inquired what was the cause of his illness. He answered: “I have now a serious disease of the heart, which arose on account of you.” Vasubandhu again asked: “Why do you say on account of me?” He answered: “You do not believe in the Mahāyāna and are always attacking and discrediting it. For this wickedness you will be sure to sink forever in a miserable Life. I am now grieved and troubled for your sake to such an extent that my life will no longer survive. On hearing this Vasubandhu was surprised and alarmed and asked his brother to expound the Mahāyāna for him. He then gave him a concise explanation of the essential principles of the Mahāyāna. Thereupon the Teacher of the Law (Vasubandhu), who was possessed of clear intelligence and especially of deep insight, became at once convinced that the truth of the Mahāyāna excelled even that of the Hīnayāna.”¹¹⁰

“He then fully investigated, under his brother, the principles of the Mahāyāna. Soon after he became as thoroughly acquainted with the

¹¹⁰ J. Takakusu, The life of Vasubandhu, Berkeley, 1906, pp.290.

whole as his brother was. When its meaning was already clear to him, he would meditate on it. From the beginning to the end everything was perfectly in accordance with the truth, there being nothing contradictory to it. For the first time he realized that the Hīnayāna was wrong and the Mahāyāna right. If there were no Mahāyāna, then (he thought) there would be no path (mārga) and no fruition (phala) of the Triyāna (Three Vehicles). Since he formerly did harm by speaking ill of the Mahāyāna, in which he then had no faith, he was now afraid that he might fall into a miserable life on account of that wickedness. He deeply reproached himself and earnestly repented of his previous fault. He approached his brother and confessed his error, saying: 'I now desire to make a confession. I do not know by what means I can be pardoned for my former slander.' He said (further): 'I formerly did harm speaking ill (of the truth) by means of my tongue. I will now cut out my tongue in order to atone for my crime.' His brother answered: 'Even if you cut out your tongue a thousand times, you cannot wipe out your crime. If you really want to wipe out your crime, you must find some other means.' Thereupon he asked his brother to explain the means of wiping out the offence. The latter said: 'Your tongue was able to speak very skillfully and effectively against the Mahāyāna, and thus discredit it. If you want to wipe out your offence, you must now propound the Māhayāna equally skillfully and effectively.'"¹¹¹

In Buddhism adhering to a completely vegetarian diet is a natural and logical ramification of the moral precept against the taking of life.

¹¹¹ J. Takakusu, *The life of Vasubandhu*, Berkeley, 1906, pp. 290-292.

The Bodhisattva Precepts also explicitly forbid the eating of non-vegetarian food and also the eating of garlic, onions, and other related plants. In the Surangama Sutra the Buddha states: After my extinction, in the Dharma-Ending Age, these hordes of ghosts and spirits will abound, spreading like wildfire as they argue that eating meat will bring one to the Bodhi Way. You should know that these people who eat meat may gain some awareness and may seem to be in samādhi, but they are all great rākshasas. When their retribution ends, they are bound to sink into the bitter sea of birth and death. They are not disciples of the Buddha. Such people as these kill and eat one another in a never ending cycle. How can such people transcend the triple realm?

Question: “When you eat one bowl of rice, you take the life of all the grains of rice, whereas eating meat you take only one animal’s life.

The Master: On the body of one single animal are a hundred thousand, in fact, sever million little organisms. These organisms are fragments of what was once an animal. The soul of a human being at death may split up to become many animals. One person can become about ten animals. That’s why animals are so stupid. The soul of an animal can split up and become, in its smallest division, an organism or plant. The feelings which plants have, then, are what separated from the animal’s soul when it split up at death. Although the life force of a large number of plants may appear sizeable, it is not as great as that of a single animal

or a single mouthful of meat. Take, for example, rice: tens of billions of grains of rice do not contain as much life force as a single piece of meat. If you open your Five Eyes you can know this at a glance. If you haven't opened your eyes, no matter how one tries to explain it to you, you won't understand. No matter how it's explained, you won't believe it, because you haven't been a plant! "Another example is the mosquitoes. The millions of mosquitoes on this mountain may be simply the soul of one person who has been transformed into all those bugs. It is not the case that a single human soul turns into a mosquito. One person can turn into countless numbers of mosquitos. "At death the nature changes, the soul scatters, and its smallest fragments become plants. Thus, there is a difference between eating plants and eating animals. What is more, plants have very short life-spans. The grass, for example, is born in the spring and dies within months. Animals live a long time. If you don't kill them, they will live for many years. Rice, regardless of conditions, will only live a short time. And so, if you really look into it, there are many factors to consider, and even science hasn't got it all straight." Mahakashyapa asked the Buddha, "Why is it that the Thus Come One does not allow eating meat?' The Buddha replied, "It is because meat-eating cuts off the seeds of great compassion."¹¹²

¹¹² CL.II.5.

‘The *Vinaya* includes all the precept-regulations, methods we use to keep watch over ourselves so that it is not necessary for anyone else to keep an eye on us.’¹¹³ According to Buddhist teachings, the monastic regulations contained in the *Vinaya* should be read only by fully ordained monks (*bhikshus*) and nuns (*bhikshunis*). The *Vinaya* School in China was founded by Vinaya Master Daul Sywan (596-667). Its roots go back to the time of the Buddha and the Venerable Upali, who was foremost among the Buddha’s disciples in the regulations for personal conduct laid down by the Buddha. “The power of vows eradicates heavy karma, wipes away all illnesses of mind and body at their karmic source, subdues demons, and can move gods and humans to respect. ‘One must make great vows. A cultivator are like a boat which can carry him or her from birth and death across the sea of suffering to the other shore of nirvana. The mind which makes great vows must be solid and durable. It must be permanent and unchanging. It must be indestructible. It must be like *vajra*.’”¹¹⁴

“Vows are very important. But you can’t make someone else’s vows. You can’t say, “I will make Avalokitesvara Budhisattva’s ten vows, or Universal Worthy Budhisattva’s ten vows, Amitabha’s forty-eight vows, or Medicine Master’s twelve vows. Those are their vows. You can’t just copy them. You must make your own vows. You could make vows even greater than those of Amitabha Buddha or Avalokiteshvara Bodhisattva, but they must be your own. You aren’t

¹¹³Vin. I. 40

¹¹⁴ UW 153-154.

them!” ‘Well,’ you might argue, ‘suppose I am a transformation of Amitabha Buddha? What is wrong with making his vows then?’ “Even if you are, you are still just a transformation; you aren’t the original. You have to make new vows. It is like metal which was one thing and then got melted down into something else. Perhaps you were a metal sculpture of a turtle, and now you’ve turned into a train. You can’t be a turtle again, not even if you want to. I won’t argue with you about whether or not you are Amitabha’s transformation-body, but you still need to make brand new vows, no old ones. “There are some old vows which everyone can make; they are standard vows that very Bodhisattva makes, and that is all right:

I vow to save the boundless numbers of beings.

I vow to cut off the inexhaustible afflictions.

I vow to study the endless Dharma doors.

I vow to realize the supreme Buddha Way.

“When Amitabha Buddha was on the causal ground, he was a Bhikshu by the name of Fa-Dzang (Skt. Dharmakara). He made forty-eight vows which he used to cultivate in every lifetime. He made those vows in every life for who knows how many great aeons before he became a Buddha and created the Land of Ultimate Bliss. One should make vows right at the beginning when you start cultivating. Even if you are an old-timer and have been cultivating for quite a while, you should make solid vows. Perhaps some of you have been planting Buddha-seeds throughout many life times, many aeons. And now as a result you have encountered this opportunity. You are able to put all of your energy into practicing the Buddhadharma.

“Once you have made your vows, even if you would like to slack off in your cultivation, you won’t dare, because you made the vows to cultivate! Vows are extremely important.”¹¹⁵ During the reign of emperor Wu of the Liang dynasty, when Buddhism flourished in China, people would always invite monks to recite *sūtras* at weddings and funerals. Times have changed, and now monks are invited to recite *sūtra* only at funerals. No one asks them to recite sutras at weddings or baby showers. Actually, this is wrong. Whether it is an occasion for rejoicing or mourning, left-home people should be asked to recite *sūtras* and transfer the merit, on the one hand to save the deceased, and on the other to increase the blessings of the living. During Emperor Wu’s time, there was a high monk called the Venerable Zhi. Having attained the Five Eyes and the Six Spiritual Penetrations, he could clearly discern causes and effects. One time, a rich man asked him to recite *sūtas* at a wedding. Upon entering the house, he sighed and said:

How strange! How very strange indeed!

The grandson marries the grandmother.

The daughter is eating her mother’s flesh,

And the son is beating on a drum stretched with his father’s skin.

Pigs and sheep are sitting on the couch,

And the six kinds of relatives are cooking in the posts.

People have come to offer congratulations,

¹¹⁵ DFS VII 1195-1197

But I see that it is truly suffering!¹¹⁶

What does this mean? The grandson marries the grandmother. Would you say this is stranger or not? Right before she dies, the grandmother of the family had held her grandson's hand, not being able to part with him. She said, "you all have your own families, but this little grandson of mine has no one to take care of him. Ah! What is there to be done?" Then she dies. When she arrived at King Yama's court, King Yama gave her the following verdict, "Since you love your grandson so much, you might as well go back to be his wife and take care of him." And so the grandmother was reborn as her grandson's future wife. The workings of the law of cause and effect in this world can be quite frightening. The daughter is eating her mother's flesh. Outside the house, a girl was eating a pig's foot with great relish, not realizing that the pig had been her mother in its previous life. And the son is beating on a drum stretched with his father's skin. Venerable Zhi then took a look at the musicians who were beating drums and blowing on their trumpets and flutes. What excitement! One man was banging away vigorously on a drum stretched with mule-hide, not knowing that the mule had been his father in a previous life.

Venerable Zhi looked at the people sitting on the couch and said: Pigs and sheep are sitting on the couch. Then he looked in the pots and said: And the six kinds of relatives are cooking in the pots. All the former pigs and sheep that had been slaughtered before were now getting even and eating the people who had eaten them before! The

¹¹⁶ Ibid.1198.

six kinds of relatives who had eaten those pigs and sheep were now being chopped up and cooked in the pots to pay off their debts. People have come to offer congratulations, / But I see that it is truly suffering! Everyone thought it was a happy occasion, but the Venerable Zhi only sighed and said, “This is really suffering!” Ironically people take suffering to be joy.

After hearing this story one can understand the horror of killing and eating meat. It may be interesting to look at the Chinese character for meat. Two people are inside the character for meat. The people inside is linked to the one outside. Living beings eat the flesh of living beings. If you really think about it, it is people eating people. Thus it is best to be vegetarian. However, we shouldn't use names such as “vegetarian chicken,” “vegetarian duck,” and “vegetarian abalone” for vegetarian dishes. If we are vegetarians, then we must forget about meat. The mere use of such names plants seeds of defilement. Vegetarian dishes should not be called by non-vegetarian names. Some people who came to the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas this time have vowed to become lifelong vegetarians. This is a very good thing, because this way one severs unwholesome affinities with living beings in the six paths. Because vegetarian food is not as tasty as meat, one takes a loss by being vegetarian during his life. However, if one does not keep a vegetarian diet, then one will take a loss after death. It is like a scale. One has to figure out for oneself as to which side is heavier and which is lighter. There is a verse:

For hundreds of thousands of years,

The stew in the pot has boiled up
A resentment very hard to level.
If you want to know why
There are wars in the world,
Just listen to the haunting cries that come
From a slaughterhouse at midnight.¹¹⁷

The grief and hatred brewed up in a pot of meat stew is as deep as the ocean. It could never be fully described. The wars and massacres in the world are brought about by the convergence of the evil karma of living beings, causing beings to undergo retribution at the same time. If you listen carefully to the cries of misery coming from a slaughter-house in the middle of the night, you will realize the horror of the ceaseless killing that goes on in there.

Scientists have discovered that people who eat a great deal of meat tend to get cancer. This is because the resentful energy in the bodies of slaughtered animals accumulates in the bodies of those who eat meat and eventually turns into a harmful toxin. We should cut off this relationship of causes and effects with animals and stop the vicious cycle of creating offenses against cows, sheep, chickens, and other animals. Then we will gradually be able to lessen the inauspicious energy in the world. At the city of Ten Thousand Buddhas, we want to uphold the Proper Dharma and avert the crisis of killing in the world. We want to slowly and imperceptibly avert this disaster. Therefore we advocate: not killing, not stealing, not

¹¹⁷ Sutra of Medicine. 239.

engaging in sexual misconduct, not lying, drinking, and not taking drugs. At the very least, we should observe the Five Precepts and maintain our purity in that regard.

People who study the Buddha-dharma should not hurt for bargains. That is what worldly people do they are always looking for the easy way out. But people who study the Buddha-dharma should act in exactly the opposite way. The worst thing about meat is that it is not good after one digests it, it smells worse than any other type of food. It makes one's body stink. Second is that one also form a company with whatever kind of meat one eats. Cows set up condition with cows, pigs congregate with other pigs and one forms a big corporation with whatever type of animal one eats. For example, if one eats a lot of pork, one will become tied up into a company of pigs. So, one must figure it out: in the future will one or will one not have to become a pig. The same applies to cows, chickens, sheep, fish and so forth, You get involved in the karma that those creatures create when you eat their meat; you get all mixed up together with them. The karma you create as a person gets all mixed up with the pig, and the karma the pig creates gets all mixed up with you. In a few years you have a big corporation on your hands. And so obviously the next step that follows is that you will eventually become the type of animal whose flesh you were most fond of eating. If you ate pig meat, you will have to become a pig. If you ate cow meat, you will have to become a cow. And it won't be a simple matter of replacing the meat you ate. True enough, you will have to pay that back, but not as a person you

yourself will have to become a cow, you'll have to be a pig, in order to pay back those debts.

People who eat meat take a loss after they die, while people who do not eat meat take a loss while they are still alive. If you do not eat meat, you miss out on delicious flavors, and the food you eat is probably quite bland and not so exciting. But if you take this little bit of loss while you are still alive, when you die, you would not have to become a pig, or a cow, or a sheep, and you will not have to fall into the hells.

For hundreds of thousands of years, the stew in the pot
Has boiled up a resentment very hard to level.

If you want to know why there are calamities and wars in the world,

Just listen to the sounds from a slaughter house at midnight.¹¹⁸

This poem is directed toward those who eat meat and drink bouillon made from mutton, or beef, or pork. Or maybe it's cat broth or dog soup, or rat soup. Or maybe it' made from ants or mosquitoes. At any rate, the reason for the ingredients of these different kinds of broth is that for a very long time, people have assumed that they have the right to take the lives of other living creatures in order to enhance their own. In order to bolster their own physical strength and at the same time to enjoy the flavors of flesh, they deprive other creatures of

¹¹⁸ Ibid.247.

their lives. That is why people eat meat. But the resentment—the anxiety and hatred—contained in that broth is as deep as the sea. That is because life after life we mutually kill and eat, eat and kill—we eat each other’s flesh. We slaughter and devour each other in this way. And that is why the enmity is as deep as the sea, and the “resentment is very hard to level.”

Every living creature longs to live and loathes to die. But we participate in the “survival of the fittest,” as we use our power to take by force the lives of other creatures—we rob them of their lives. And at that moment before death, they experience tremendous hatred. Within their minds they harbour this hateful thought of vengeance: “You are killing me now? Well, in the future, I’ll kill you. You are going to eat my flesh? In the future, I will eat yours.” And they hold onto this resentment, until it becomes as deep as the sea and the mutual antagonism is very hard to level. There is no way to resolve those feelings of resentment.

So, “If you want to know why there are calamities and wars in the world”—people all over the world wonder why there are countries that fight with other countries on a world-wide scale. There are man-made wars involving weapons and troops and there are natural disasters of water and fire. Such Vietnam at war; now it is Argentina and Great Britain bombing each other. It is because of too much killing karma—there is such a long history of mutual slaughter which has become so complex that there’s no way to clearly reckon the books. So, people

just strike out at their fellow beings, using modern weaponry, tanks, guided missiles, trying to overpower the strength of the opponent. So, “If you want to know why there are wars and calamities in the world, just listen to sounds from a slaughterhouse at midnight.” You’ll hear the pigs crying and the cows moaning and the sheep bleating, screaming and wailing, beseeching people to spare them their lives. And when you hear those sounds, you will have a good idea of where the wares and weapons come from.

The Chung Wen character for meat is a picture of a mouth—an open mouth, since the horizontal stroke at its base is missing—and inside the mouth is a picture of a person, while outside the mouth is a picture of another person waiting. The person outside the mouth has not gone in yet. The person inside the mouth would like to escape, but cannot. He is stuck inside the mouth. The one inside has grown while inside the mouth, so although the enclosure is only three-sided, he cannot get out. Basically this is a pictograph of a person being eaten by another person. The one who is eating the meat is on the outside—he still resembles a person. But the one on the inside is already no longer a person. He has turned into an animal. Not only has he turned into an animal, but he’s been trapped—detained there. He can’t go up and he can’t go down; he is stuck right in there. He is as cooped up as if he were in a pen. The pen could be a pig pen, or a sheep pen, or a cow pen. The person on the outside is keeping watch over the pen so that the animal cannot escape. He intends to eat that animal’s flesh. So the poem read: “In the character for meat are two people.” And

there's another obvious thing about this character: those two people have an irrevocable connection between them. The one eating and the one being eaten have an involvement with each other that cannot be severed because they are bound up in resentment. They would really like to get at each other.

In this way living beings eat the flesh of other living beings. Thus, we people are living beings and what we eat is other living beings. So this is a case of living being eating other living beings. Horses, cows, pigs, sheep, chickens, and dogs are all animals. And all other creatures are also living beings. There are those who say, "well, those creatures have been put here by God just for people to eat." It cannot be said that creatures were put here by the gods specifically for people to eat. It is just survival of the fittest. People are more clever and more strong, and they rely on those qualities to usurp the lives of other living creatures by force.

It may be interesting to notice two striking examples of animals acting with more humanity than most humans. My point is not that animals are more human than humans, but that there is dramatic evidence that animals can act in ways that do not support certain Western stereotypes about their capacities. About fifteen years ago there was an Associated Press article with a dateline from a northern Japanese fishing village. Several people from a fishing vessel were washed overboard in a storm far at sea. One of the women was found still alive on a beach near her village three days later. At the time a

giant sea turtle was briefly seen swimming just offshore. The woman said that when she was about to drown the turtle had come to rescue her and had carried her on its back for three days to the place where she was found. In February 2001, also according to the Associated Press a man lost at sea was saved by a giant stingray:

A man claims he rode 450 miles on the back of a stingray to safety after his boat capsized three weeks ago, a radio station reported yesterday. Radio Vanuatu said 18-year-old Lottie Stevens washed up Wednesday in New Caledonia. It said Stevens' boat capsized January 15 while he and a friend were on a fishing trip. The friend died and after four days spent drifting with the overturned boat, Stevens decided to try to swim to safety, Radio Vanuatu reported. There are sharks in the area, but stingray came to Steven's rescue and carried him on its back for 13 days and nights to New Caledonia, the radio said.¹¹⁹

Unlike the Judeo-Christian tradition, Buddhism affirms the unity of all living beings, all equally possess the Buddha-nature, and all have the potential to become Buddhas, that is, to become fully and perfectly enlightened. Among the sentient, there are no second-class citizens. According to Buddha teaching, human beings do not have a privileged, special place above and beyond that of the rest of life. The world is not a creation specifically for the benefit and pleasure of human beings. Furthermore, in some circumstances according with

¹¹⁹ AP, San Francisco Chronicle, Feb. 8, 1990.

their kamma, humans can be reborn as humans and animals can be reborn as humans. In Buddhism the most fundamental guideline for conduct is ahimsā-the prohibition against the bringing of harm and/or death to any living being. One should refrain from killing because it is because all beings have lives; they love their lives and do not wish to die. Even one of the smallest creatures, the mosquito, when it approaches to bite you, will fly away if you make the slightest motion. It will fly away for the simple reason that it fears death. It figures that if it drinks your blood, you will take its life. We should nurture compassionate thought. Since we wish to live, we should not kill any other living being. Furthermore, the karma of killing is understood as the root of all suffering and the fundamental cause of sickness and war, and the forces of killing are explicitly identified with the demonic. The highest and most universal ideal of Buddhism is to work unceasingly for permanent end to the suffering of all living beings, not just humans.

The Buddha in a former life was reborn as a Deer-king. He offers to substitute his own life for that of a pregnant doe who is about to give birth. In another previous lifetime, the Buddha sacrificed his own life to feed a starving tiger and her two cubs, who were trapped in the snow. He reasoned that it would be better to save three lives than to merely preserve his own. It is better to lose one's own life than to kill another being.

The following selections from the Ta Chih Tu Lun make an interesting study:

Question: if it is not a case of my being attacked, then the thought of killing may be put to rest. If, however, one has been attacked, overcome by force, and is then being coerced (by imminent peril), what should one do then?

Reply: One should weigh the relative gravity (of the alternatives). If someone is about to take one's life, one (should) first consider whether the benefit from preserving the precept is more important or whether the benefit from preserving one's physical life is more important and whether breaking the precept is more important or whether the benefit from preserving one's physical life is more important and whether breaking the precept constitutes a loss or whether physical demise constitutes a loss. After having reflected in this manner one realizes that maintaining the precept is momentous and that preserving one's physical life is (relatively) unimportant. If in avoiding (such peril) one is only (able to succeed in) preserving one's body, (then) what (advantage) is gained with the body? This body is the swap of senescence, disease and death. It will inevitably deteriorate and decay. If, (however), for the sake of upholding the precept, one loses one's body, the benefit of it is extremely consequential.

Furthermore, one (should) consider (thus): “From the past on up to the present, I have lost my life an innumerable number of times. At times I have incarnated as a malevolent brigand, as a bird, or as a beast where I have lived merely for the sake of wealth or profit or all manner of unworthy pursuits. Now I have encountered (a situation where I might perish) on account of preserving the pure precepts. To not spare this body and sacrifice my life to uphold the precepts would be a billion times better than and (in fact) incomparable to safeguarding my body (at the expense of) violating the prohibitions.” In this manner one decides that one should forsake the body in order to protect (the integrity) of the pure precepts.

For example, there once was a man who was a sotāpanna born into the family of a butcher. He was on the threshold of adulthood. Although he was expected to pursue his household occupation, he was unable to kill animals. His father and mother gave him a knife and a sheep and shut him up in a room, telling him, “If you do not kill the sheep, we will not allow you to come out and see the sun or the moon or to have the food and drink to survive.” The son thought to himself, “If I kill this sheep, then I will (be compelled to) pursue this occupation my entire life. How could I commit this great time (simply) for the sake of this body?” Then he took up the knife and killed himself. The father and mother opened the door to look. The sheep was standing to one side whereas the son was (laying there), already expired. At that time, when he killed himself, he was born in the heavens. If one is like this, then this amounts to not sparing (even one’s own) life in safeguarding (the integrity of) the pure precepts.

The Rite of Liberating Living Beings is a Buddhist practice of rescuing animals, birds, fish and so forth that are destined for slaughter or that are permanently caged. They are released to a new physical and spiritual life. The practice exemplifies the fundamental Buddhist teaching of compassion for all living beings. A disciple of the Buddha must maintain a mind of kindness and cultivate the practice of liberation beings. He should reflect thus: “All male beings have been my father and all females have been my mother. There is not a single being who has not given birth to me during my previous lives, hence all beings of the Six Destinies are my parents. Therefore, when a person kills and eats any of these beings, he thereby slaughters my parents. Furthermore, he kills a body that was once my own, for all elemental earth and water previously served as part of my body and all elemental fire and wind have served as my basic substance. Therefore, I shall always cultivate the practice of liberating beings and in every life be reborn in the eternally—abiding Dharma and teach other to liberate beings as well.” Whenever a Bodhisattva sees a person preparing to kill an animal, he should devise a skillful method to rescue and protect it, freeing it from its suffering and difficulties. In China the Rite of Liberating Living Beings was very popular and has continued to be so to the present day. It also is practiced in the United States at the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas in Mendocino County and at other Buddhist centers.

All beings-human or beast-

Love life and hate to die.

They fear most the butcher’s knife

Which slices and chops them piece-by-piece.

Instead of being cruel and mean,

Why not stop killing and cherish life?

In Buddhism adhering to a completely vegetarian diet is a natural and logical ramification of the moral precept against the taking of life. The Bodhisattva Precepts also explicitly forbid the eating of non-vegetarian food.

Student: “...when you eat one bowl of rice, you take the life of all the grains of rice, whereas eating meat you take only one animal’s life.”

Master Hua: “On the body of one single animal are a hundred thousand, in fact, several million little organisms. These organisms are fragments of what was once an animal. The soul of a human being at death may split up to become many animals. One person can become about ten animals. That’s why animals are so stupid. The soul of an animal can split up and become, in its smallest division, an organism or plant. The feelings which plants have, then, are what separated from the animal’s soul when it split up at death. Although the life force of a large number of plants may appear sizable, it is not as great as that of a single animal or a single mouthful of meat. Take, for example, rice: tens of billions of grains of rice do not contain as such life force as a single piece of meat. If you open your Five Eyes you can know this at a glance. If you haven’t opened your eyes, no matter how one tries to explain it to you, you won’t

understand. No matter how one it's explained, you won't believe it, because you haven't been a plant!

“Another example is the mosquitoes. The millions of mosquitoes on this mountain may be simply the soul of one person who has been transformed into all those bugs. It is not the case that a single human soul turns into a single mosquito. One person can turn into countless numbers of mosquitoes. At death the nature changes, the soul scatters, and its smallest fragments become plants. Thus, there is a difference between eating plants and eating animals. What is more, plants have every short life-spans. The greats, for example, is born in the spring and dies within months. Animals live a long time. If you don't kill them, they will live for many years. Rice, regardless of conditions, will only live a short time. And so, if you really look into it, there are many factors to consider, and even science hasn't got it all straight. Mahakashyapa asked the Buddha, “Why is it that the thus come one does not allow eating meat? Then Buddha replied, “It is because meat-eating cuts off the seeds of great compassion.

Although the following guidelines for working on animal rights issues follow clearly from fundamental Buddhist teachings, they are by no means exclusively Buddhist. One only hopes that these shall help in saving the lives of hapless animals.

- 1) We should reduce the fear, hate, and thoughts of revenge generated by the torturing and killing of animals.
- 2) We should not be prey to negative emotions or violence. They compound the problem. Real solutions come from changing

people's minds rather than from creating confrontation and friction.

3) We should not limit our compassion to the animals and to those of like mind, but extend it to all living beings, even if we feel that some are clearly in the wrong. Compassion should be the basis of all our interactions with others, regardless of their views and actions in the area of animal rights. Still, even against this attempt to establish ecological ethics on the intermundane level, one serious objection can be raised: the objection that the positive evaluation, in the “hermit strand”, of (wild/intact) nature as an ambiance might seem to have, more or less, lost sight of suffering in nature. The more so since in many canonical texts, and mostly in those which may be characterized as rational discourse, animals and existence as an animal are so negatively evaluated that efforts to preserve them appear highly problematic.

According to these texts, animals are, firstly, intellectually inferior. Though they have some capacity for thinking (*manasikāra*), they lack the faculty of insight (*prajñā*). Hence, they cannot understand the Buddhist doctrine and cannot attain liberation, unless they are, in a later existence, reborn as men, which is regarded to be possible but very rare. Secondly, animals are not just subject to suffering like man, but subject to much more suffering; their existence is considered to be extremely unhappy¹²⁰, not only because they are exploited and

¹²⁰ M III 169f; s.v.235f.; 476; A I 37. For copious evidence, from Buddhist as well as Hindu and Jaina sources, for the idea that rebirth as a human is difficult to attain cp. M HARA, “A Note on the Hindu Concept of Man”, *Journal of the Faculty of Letters, The Univ. of Tokyo, Aesthetics*, 11/1986, 45 ff.

tortured by man¹²¹ but also in nature itself, where the weaker one is threatened and devoured by the stronger, and, moreover, because at least many of them live on disgusting food or in uncomfortable places. In contrast to rebirth as a human, rebirth as an animal is hence usually regarded as an evil rebirth. Thirdly, animals are considered to be (for the most part at least) morally inferior or even wicked, because of their promiscuity including even argument is, by the way, adduced as a reason why rebirth of an animal as a human is so rare. Such a negative evaluation of animals and animal existence is no doubt extremely unfavorable as a basis for an active ecological ethics. To be sure, the commitment not to take life prevents Buddhist from killing animals once they are there. But if animal existence is in fact such an unhappy state, why should we make any effort to perpetuate it? If the presence of many animals and few humans means that the world is in a bad condition¹²², should we not welcome the present growth of human population and decrease of (at least wild) animals, and should we not be glad if, for some reason or other, animals were to disappear entirely from this world, just as there are none (at least no ones) in the later Buddhist paradise Sukhavati? Would it not be rather cruel and selfish to preserve them for our own spiritual progress, let alone our happiness, if even by an increase of our spiritual perfection we cannot essentially ameliorate their sombre situation because it is inherent to their status? On the one hand, one could, from the traditional Buddhist point of view, rejoin that the number of beings to be born as animals cannot depend on external factors like man-made pollution or

¹²¹ Yogacarabhmi, ed. V. Bhattacharya, 1987, 14-16.

¹²² Thus quite clearly in the Story of the Elder Māleyyadeva (see fn. 229), 43,1 and 84.

deforestation, etc., but is solely determined by the previous karma of those beings themselves. This would mean that a decrease in the total number of animals would have to be either merely apparent or somehow the result of a preceding large-scale moral and spiritual improvement, and can also in future be achieved only in this way. Hence, at least as long as such a large-scale improvement has not taken place, there may be good reason to argue that in the sense of the Golden Rule it is part of everybody's moral duty to preserve the world in an agreeable condition not only for future generations of humans but also for the beings to be reborn as animals. This would, by the way, even coincide with one's own interests since—in view of the complexity of karmic processes—few person can excluded the possibility that either they themselves or their friends and relatives may be reborn in on of these groups, so that protection of intact ecosystems would even amount to protecting what may be one's own future abode. On the other hand, apart from this, the idea of the extreme unhappiness of animals would, it too, seem to be a widespread preconception of the peasants and townsmen of those days, met with in Jainism and Hinduism as well—a preconception which may be rooted in frequent bad treatment of domestic animals and in the civilization strand's fear of wilderness. To that strand we can probably also attribute the idea of the wickedness of (at least certain wild) animals. Both of these ideas seem to have been adopted or utilized by Buddhism for didactic purposes. Their main aim is not make a statement on animals but to warn against the evil consequences of bad karma and to underscore the necessity of

maximum moral and spiritual effort. I suggest that in an age where establishing an ecological ethics has become imperative, they ought to be de-dogmatized by being relegated to their specific didactic contexts. For, though animals have doubtless to suffer, the assumption that they have to suffer more than man appears unwarranted, at least as long as their natural situation is not additionally aggravated by man. Actually, in another strand of the Buddhist tradition—in the Jātaka (together with its commentary) and related texts—animals are often viewed quite differently. It may be admitted that this view is a more popular one and not specifically Buddhist either, but it is not therefore necessarily less appropriate, and it has exercised a considerable influence on the feelings and attitudes of lay Buddhists. As is well-known, in these texts animals are described as being both unhappy and happy, stupid and prudent, bad and good. They are even susceptible to religious admonition¹²³. To be sure, these texts largely anthropomorphize animals. But in not regarding them as particularly unhappy and wicked creatures they seem to come closer to the truth.

The evaluation of animals in these texts shows some affinity to the hermit strand. In fact, this strand stands out quite frequently in the Jātaka and related texts; in a pre-Buddhist setting, to be sure, but

¹²³ Cp., e.g., the story of the furious elephant Nālāgiri tamed and admonished by the Buddha (Vin.II.195), or J.II.53. A famous example from another Buddhist tradition is, of course, the Tibetan Yogin Milarepa who is reported to have not only enjoyed the beauty of landscape, vegetation and animal life—in a detached way due to his awareness of their ultimate emptiness (rNay 'byor Mi la ras pa' l rnam mgur (Xining: Qinghai munzu chuban 1980) 249 f.; 441)—, but also to have preached to wild animals and pacified them, so that in his presence the frightened stag becomes fearless and the fierce hunting dog peaceful (ibid. 430 ff.; H. Hoffmann, *Mi-la ras-pa: Sieben legenden*, Mmnchen-Planegg, 1950, 87 ff.; Garma C.C. Change, *The Hundred Thousand Songs of Milarepa*, Milarepa, Boulder: Shambhala 1977, I 275 ff.)

nevertheless mostly in connection with ascetics exemplifying such virtues as the Buddhist compilers too wanted to inculcate. In some passages, nature around the hermitage (*assama*, *aśrama*) is described as, and expressly called, lovely and beautiful, abounding in a variety of blossoming and fruit-bearing trees spreading delicate odors and inhabited by various kinds of birds and quadrupeds, and embellished by ponds and rivers with clear water and full of lotus-flowers, fishes and other aquatic animals. The emphasis on variety of species (which are enumerated in great detail)¹²⁴ is conspicuous. This kind of description of nature around the hermitage is obviously closely related to the romanticizing strand of nature description in secular poetry mentioned above. It is current in non-Buddhist literature as well, and in the *Jātakas* similar descriptions can also be found of the forest inhabited by animal heroes. There can be little doubt that it too depicts nature mainly from a human aesthetic point of view. Even the inclusion of fierce animals like lions, tigers, bears, boars and crocodiles does not contradict this since they would rather appear to be envisaged—from afar, so to speak—in their majestic beauty. Hence, a positive evaluation of intact nature and bio-diversity, but tacit omission of the violence and suffering involved in nature as it actually is. Yet, some passages show that suffering and violence in nature may not simply have been ignored. One passage, e.g., stresses that in the forest around the hermitage there is plenty of food also for

¹²⁴ Alsdor (Kleine Schriften, ed. A. Wezler, Wiesbaden 1974, 333 f., is certainly right in identifying these descriptions, in the *Vessantara-Jātaka*, as an obstruction in the denouement and in regarding the description of nature by means of a mere enumerations of species of plants and animals as rather primitive from the artistic point of view, but it may be “intolerably boring” only for readers who are unacquainted with the species enumerated and for whom they remain mere names, but not for those in whom each name evokes a colourful vision of the corresponding reality.

the animals (thus suggesting that in nature food is often scarce). As for violence, the idea is rather that around the hermitage there is an exceptional situation in that violence has been neutralized or overcome by the (non-violent) spiritual power or irradiation of the hermit, especially by his practice of friendliness or loving kindness (*mettā*). Not only in the sense that by practicing loving kindness the hermit protects himself from the aggressiveness of dangerous creatures, i.e., renders them non-aggressive towards himself. Rather, by his spiritual powers and irradiation of friendless or loving kindness the hermit affects, so to speak, the animals around him so that they abandon even their natural mutual enmities and to become friendly and non-aggressive even towards one another. Thus peace not only with nature but also within nature¹²⁵. To be sure, this is a vision of an ideal state of nature, disclosing dissatisfaction with nature as it actually is, i.e., as involving violence and suffering. But at the same time it does not animals as hopelessly miserable. It presupposes that as animals they may be happy and good, and may even advance spiritually, at least under the influence of human spiritual perfection. Such a view of animals would tally well with arguing for ecological ethics for the sake of maximum spiritual progress and intra-mundane happiness of all living beings, not merely of human beings. It is difficult to know to what extent a modern Buddhist is ready to subscribe to such a view of animals; but it would anyway be sufficient to abandon the idea that animals are wicked and the idea of their irremediable, extreme unhappiness, and to admit that under natural conditions

¹²⁵ Cp. Also E. Denis (ed.) and S. Collins (transl.), "The Story of the Elder Māleyadeva", in *Journal of the Pāli Text Society* 18/1993, 50 and 88.

animals, though, to be sure, not living in a paradise and by no means free from suffering, may, after all, not be so extremely unhappy, at any rate not more than an average human being.

CHAPTER: 6

CONCLUSIONS: PEACE BEGINS IN THE KITCHEN

Mahatma Gandhi, a great admirer of the Buddha, point out in his autobiography: “To my mind the life of the lamb is no less precious than that of a human being. I should be unwilling to take the life of the lamb for the sake of the human body. I hold that, the more helpless a creature, the more entitled it is to protection by man from the cruelties of man.” For centuries humans have made use of other species to meet their needs for food, clothing, transportation, sport, companionship, medical research, and entertainment. Most animal rights activists now believe that animals should be guaranteed certain rights by law like the humans. In our opinion, animals have three basic rights:

1. EACH SPECIES HAS THE RIGHT TO EXPRESS THE NATURAL BEHAVIOURS OF ITS KIND

Every animal has behaviours that are natural to it. For example, calves have an urge to chew their cud, partially digested grass or hay. Chickens need to peck and scratch for their food. Animal rights advocates want to stop any human practice, such as feeding veal calves only liquid formula or raising chickens in cages high above the ground, that interferes with these behaviours.

2. ALL ANIMALS HAVE THE RIGHT TO A NATURAL LIFE SPAN WITHOUT SUFFERING NEGLECT OR CRUELTY

Current animal welfare laws protect many animals from neglect and cruelty. Animal rights advocates want to expand the definition of cruelty to include fear, suffering, or early death caused by humans. This is perhaps the most controversial idea of all because to respect this right, people must not eat meat, hunt, conduct experiments on animals, or wear clothes made from animal products.

3. EVERY ANIMAL HAS THE RIGHT TO A HUMANE DEATH

Some activists think animals should not be killed for any reason. These people even oppose the humane killing of animals suffering from incurable diseases. Animal rights advocates do believe, however, that when animals are killed, whether they are put to sleep, slaughtered for food, or killed during scientific experiments, death should be as painless and free of fear as possible.

We believe that a person should be punished for being cruel to animals, if he/she

- 1. Tortures or seriously overworks an animal;**
- 2. Fails unreasonably to provide necessary food, care, or shelter for an animal in his/her custody;**
- 3. Abandons unreasonably an animal in his custody;**
- 4. Transports or confines an animal in a cruel manner;**

5. Kills, injures, or administers poison to an animal, other than cattle, horses, sheep, swine, or goats, belonging to another without legal authority or the owner's effective consent;
6. Cause one animal to fight with another; or
7. Uses a live animal as lure.

“The thinking man must oppose all cruel customs no matter how deeply rooted in tradition and surrounded by a halo. When we have a choice, we must avoid bringing torment and injury into the life of another, even the lowliest creature; to do so is to renounce our manhood and shoulder a guilt which nothing justifies.”¹²⁶ It goes without saying that non-violence leads to the highest ethics, which is the goal of all evolution. Until we stop harming all living beings, we are still brutes. Horse-drawn tongas may appear romantic and innocent, but for the poor horse the case is quite the opposite. The horse is forced to work up to sixteen hours a day without rest and with little or no food or water. With their noses at mobile tailpipe level, they breathe exhaust fumes that, over the long run, cause respiratory infections. Some collapse and die of exhaustion in the heat, as the pavement temperatures are usually 5-10 degrees higher than the ambient temperature. Two weeks after completing the movies *Every which Way But Loose*, Buddha (a.k.a. Clyde), the movie's celebrated orangutan “star” was found dead with blood oozing out of his mouth, allegedly beaten to death by his handlers. The sworn affidavit of a worker at the compound described a session of “hitting and

¹²⁶ Albert Schweitzer; *Civilization and Ethics*, Pelican, 1976: 113.

pounding” he witnessed one day during the filming, and other employees stated that an autopsy revealed Buddha’s death was due to a cerebral hemorrhage. Orangutans are strong but otherwise naturally isolative, intelligent forest-dwellers who are happy in Borneo, not on the set.

“You may love the pup-dog for his good humor, admire the fish for his face, feel like a brother to the noble horse, but no bird, beast or reptile can compare with the cow. You look into her eyes and she reads your troubles, sighs, and stops chewing her cud.¹²⁷” As pointed out by Kant, “If (man) is not to stifle human feelings, he must practice kindness toward animals, for he who is cruel to animals becomes hard also in his dealings with men. We can judge the heart of man by his treatment of animals.¹²⁸” Unfortunately, it is still virtually impossible to totally eliminate all cruelty inherent in our contemporary lifestyle, but the good news is that we can greatly reduce it by being informed consumer. “We are the species uniquely capable of imagination, rationality and moral choice, and that is precisely why we are under the obligation to recognize and respect the rights of animals.¹²⁹” It is in this sense that Bernard Shaw is known to have expressed his anguish in these words: “The worst sin towards our fellow creatures is not to hate them, but to be indifferent to them. That’s the essence of inhumanity.” Thus, a man is truly ethical only when he obeys the compulsion to help all life which he is able to assist, and shrinks from

¹²⁷ Charlton Ogburn, Jr.; *The Animals’ Voice Magazine*, February 1989.

¹²⁸ Immanuel Kant, *Lectures on Ethics*, reprint, Mentor, 1978 : 109.

¹²⁹ Brigid Brophy; *Don’t Never Forget*, New York: 1966: 21.

injuring anything that lives. An animal is as much sensible to pain as man and pain is pain, whether it is inflicted on a human or an animal; and the being that suffers it, whether man or animal, being sensible of the misery of it lasts, suffers Evil.

The term Speciesism, coined by psychologist Richard Ryder in 1973, was taken to international audiences by Peter Singer through the publication of his book *Animal Liberation* in 1975. As Peter Singer points out, extending equality to animal does not mean, e.g., that cows be allowed to vote. The principle of equality does not require equal treatment, but requires equal consideration. The well-being of a cow does not require voting rights, but cows and other nonhuman animals do have needs that deserve respect. When people think about it, they recognize that the saying “all men are created equal” is not true. Humans vary considerably in their abilities and capacities. Equality is not a fact of life, it is a moral idea, a prescription of how we should treat humans. In the same way, Singer wrote, other animals have different abilities and capacities. They are not our equals, but this lack of equality does not mean that we can mistreat them any more than we can mistreat other humans. Thus, the right that should be attributed to the animals, is the Right to Equal Consideration. An animal that is capable of suffering, is also capable of enjoying life. The capacity of suffer and enjoy, thus, are prerequisites for interests that deserve consideration. We can also see play-behaviour in mammals and birds and observe that many kinds of animals take pleasure in eating and other basic activities of life. In addition, research has

shown that these animals also have nervous systems that respond in ways similar to those of humans many animals, in fact, have more acute senses than people. So we have good reason to infer that many kinds of nonhuman animals have the capacity to suffer and to enjoy life. Peter singer rightly points out, "Pain and suffering are bad and should be prevented or minimized, irrespective of the race, sex, or species of the being that suffers."

To prevent most of today's suffering by animals would require "radical changes in our treatment of animals that would involve our diet, the farming methods we use, experimental procedures in many fields of science, our approach to wildlife, and to hunting, trapping and the wearing of furs, and areas of entertainment like circuses, rodeos, and zoos." Most animals are aware of their environment, have beliefs and desires, possess memory and expectations about the future, and are able to act intentionally, in seeking to fulfil their desires or purposes. Animals are harmed by suffering pain and also by being deprived of the pleasures of life. E. g., by confining them in zoos, cages etc. An animal's untimely death is also a deprivation-one of the most fundamental and irreversible kind. Tom Regan gives the e.g. of four humans and a dog in a boat that can hold only four. Tom Regan agrees as most people would choose to throw the dog overboard on the ground that magnitude of the harm done to each being in the life boat must be weighed. Writes Regan, "NO reasonable person would deny that the death of any of the four humans would be a greater loss, and thus a greater harm, than would be true in the case of the dog."

“No one has the right to be protected by the continuation of an unjust practice, one that violates the right of others,” writes Tom Regan, “the ultimate objective of the rights view is the total dissolution of the animal industry as we know it.¹³⁰” What we need is a new, natural, philosophy of eco-ethics. It may not be out of place to quote Mahatma Gandhi, “The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated.” An ecologically based moral framework would enable people to become more civilized and lead to a better world for people and animals alike.

Peter Singer writes that farm animals can be made to suffer in three ways: in the process of being reared, in transportation, and in slaughter. Most of the suffering is not experienced as pain but as deprivation of anything approaching a normal life. Consider chickens. The behaviour of domesticated birds is like that of their wild ancestors-the red jungle fowl of the tropical forests of India and Burma. They are social animals that form a “pecking order” when allowed to interact in a flock. Each bird yields to those above it in rank and dominates those below it. They normally forage for food on the ground. None of this behaviour makes economic sense in the most intensive forms of agribusiness. The so-called broilers, raised for food, are never outdoors. They live in small enclosures within a windowless building-a stressful condition for these social animals. They are too numerous and crowded to establish a normal “pecking order” and they tend to fight and injure each other. Peaks are chopped

¹³⁰ Tom Regan, *Animal Liberation*, New York: Beacon, 1978: 43.

off etc. to avoid this. Thus, many other horrors follow for the poor birds.

Animals' use in circuses, zoos, and racetracks is wrong and should be stopped forthwith. Hunting, trapping and raising animals for fur, food, experimentation and other forms of exploitation is also wrong. Some animal right advocates even giving up keeping pets because the human-pet relationship is selfish and exploits animals. They oppose the sale of animals in pet shops because the conditions in these shops are appalling and the stories of the capture of these creatures are worse than horror. Buying and releasing animals for jivandana—the practice extremely unBuddhist. Some do keep animals but call them “companion animals” and thus “pet” is seem as specialist term, the language, too, comes under scrutiny. Every year, hundreds of cows and other cattle are maimed and killed by our garbage and litter. Many of them swallow bits of indigestible plastic in the garbage the proves often lethal. Thus, we must always recognize that our garbage can be a trap—a potentially lethal picnic for animals in our neighbourhood.

Man alone amongst all the animals that ever lived can exterminate entire species of animals. In fact, it has the power to wipe out all life on earth. This feeling was expressed by Mark Twain in one of his characteristic epigrams, when he declared: “Man is the only animal that blushes. Or needs to.”¹³¹ Not in the too distant future the

¹³¹ Headpiece of Chapter 27 in *Following the Equator*: 67.

hunting of animals shall end for one of two rather disparate reasons: either mankind will at last come to believe that animals are worthy of preservation for their own sake or because there shall be no more living targets to shoot at. We should value animals for what they are: instinctive creatures of marvelous complexity, beauty and mystery. Each animal has its place in the evolutionary order, its own life to live, its own joy and purposes, considers that it is unethical to consume any product of animal origin. The Buddha never ate eggs. The Canon celebrates the unity and sacredness of all life.

For the most part, we observe wild life behind bars or in the circus. In the circus rings an uncomprehending public watches wild creatures perform eccentric tricks, often in violation of the anatomical structure and deepest instincts of the animal: horses dancing on their hind feet, bears roller-skating, dogs pushing prams, cats firing off cannons, tigers jumping through hoops. It is all preposterous when one really thinks about it. Furthermore, the only quick, commercially viable way of breaking the spirits of animal prisoners, according to critics and trainers who have discussed the subject, is by using whips, electric shocks, sharp hooks, loud noises, and as last resort, starvation.

The criticism often leveled against the animal rightists that they are more concerned with improving the condition of animals than of men. However, the fact is that first, the two should not be confused with each other and second, if the animals have to wait their turn until

all human affairs are perfectly adjusted, they would always be waiting. In any case, such an attitude smacks of either utter selfishness or extreme form of ignorance. Neither the movement to alleviate the suffering of the lower animals nor justice for men, should exclude the other.

Cruelty is on the increase, or at least is increasingly to be seen, because of urban growth, the arrival of masses of migrants who have desperate lives to live, with little tenderness to spare for animal kind to spare, and who easily acquire established modern Hinduistic attitude of indifference. Nor can the Brāhmanas of the North Block and Old Secretariat be excused, those privileged to live out golden years in their ivory towers. Our relationship to other-than-human beings is based on the premise that other-than-humans are often kept as slaves, toys, and cheap burglar alarms.

Why some of us should be concerned with the animals' suffering, because the government is not. Animals do not vote. All progressive legislation has always had its genesis in the mind of one person. In the long run it is the cumulative effect that matters. One can do much. And one can move mountains¹³². Anyone who cares about *animals* must stop eating animals. What strikes one most forcefully is that humankind that derives immense benefits from the different creatures, not only does not give them in return not the least protection but is in fact indifferent to them. The human view of the

¹³² Joan Ward-Harris, *Creature Comforts*, Chicago: Chiago University Press, 1973: 247.

animal world has been ambivalent, a knife-edge balancing of fear with fascination, affection with exploitation, kindness with cruelty, the whole complicated by theological explanations, of the universe and clouded by self-deceit. It is also interesting. But even more interesting would be the animals' point of view. That unfortunately is not available. However, if we were to go by what the different animal-Bodhisattas feel, then surely it may feel quite embarrassing to be a human. We do, however, know this: animals have been largely at the disposal of the human-animal since he evolved into a cunning, predatory overlord of the creatures of the earth, the only vertebrate that freely chooses to torture or kill all forms of sentient life and is able to do it. Because of his extraordinary gift of imagination and abstract thought, man has looked at animals as gods, slaves, subjects for art, moral examples, a source of food and fiber, and sometimes as companion and friend. All this has occurred without our ever really understanding the wonderful, mysterious furred and feathered creatures who are, as the entomologist and humanist Willian Morton Wheeler wrote, "Our only companions in an infinite and unsympathetic waste of electrons, planets, nebulae and stars," and a source, therefore, of "perennial joy and consolation." Thus, self-interest adds its decisive weight to the ethical obligation of trusteeship which calls upon us to treat subhuman creatures mercifully. So far as rights are concerned, they have, after all, quite as good a title to this planet as we have, if not a better one. They got here first. We cause our wild animal neighbours far more trouble than they cause us, as each day we invade thousands of acres of their

territory and demolish their homes. Where their feeding and nesting grounds once thrived, are now our barren, crew-cut lawns.

Never ever should one buy a caged bird. Birds are flock animals, not loners, who need room to fly. Wild birds make sad, lonely, and sometimes dangerous “pets”. People sell and buy birds, fishes and other animals without the smallest scruple or consideration. Most of the horrors that get committed on the hapless creatures are a result entirely due to a silly fashion and a habit of callous thoughtlessness, not on the part of the ruffianly animal catcher who has to bear the odium attaching to these cruelties, but the respectable customers who buy the captured birds and fish without the smallest scruple or consideration. We do harm to the flora and fauna through pesticides & other chemicals, Habitat destruction, “Sport” and entertainment through hunting, circus, rodeos etc., trade in animals especially exotic birds.

The struggle for animal rights is more a struggle within the self than the society. More than the society man needs to change himself. At the moment our human world is based on the suffering and destruction of non-human beings. Charles Darwin argued that humans are descendants of animals. There is no fundamental difference between man and the higher animals in mental faculties. The lower animals manifestly feel pleasure and pain, happiness and misery. Now we know that animals have social rules that guide the way they interact and communicate. Thus, animals do not act simply

by instinct, but have and use more intelligence than scientists previously believed.

The basic principle of equality does not require equal or identical treatment; it requires equal consideration. This means that our concern for others and our readiness to consider their interests ought not to depend on what they are like or on what abilities they may possess. Just as we are concerned about a child to learn to read and write, concern for the well-being of a pig may require no more than that we leave him alone with other pigs in a place where there is adequate food and room to run freely. The basic element of taking into consideration the interests of the being, whatever those interests may be, must be extended to all beings-black or white, male or female, human or non-human. Speciesism must be condemned which is an attitude of bias toward the interest of members of one's own species and against those of members of other species.

The capacity for suffering as the vital characteristic that gives a being the right to equal consideration. The capacity for suffering or more strictly suffering and/ or enjoyment or happiness. The Buddha talked exactly of the same. The capacity for suffering and enjoyment is a prerequisite for having interests at all, a condition that must be satisfied before we can speak of interests in a meaningful way. There can be no excuse for ignoring the suffering of a being. If a being suffers there can be no moral justification for refusing to take that suffering into consideration. If a being is not capable of suffering, or

of experiencing enjoyment or happiness, there is nothing to be taken into consideration. So the limit of sentience (capacity to suffer and/or experience enjoyment) is the only defensible boundary of concern for the interests of others.

Buddhist texts are replete with examples where animals are cared for. In Buddhism love of animals is not sentimentality but true spirituality. Buddhism is scrupulous even in the smallest matters where either life or well-being of beings are concerned. The Buddha found a profound rapport with all living things. Buddhism believed in the spiritual unity of all creatures. It exhorts human to befriend them. We have obligations to animals to care for them. Farm animals, plants, and the land are ours only in sacred trust. We violate this trust when we treat these living resources merely as commodities. This profane attitude is now leading to the commoditization and desacralization of the Earth and all its processes and elements. Indeed the natural world is fast becoming an industrialized, polluted, and dysfunctional wasteland. It is therefore enlightened self-interest for all of us to bring an attitude of reverence for all life to bear upon the choices we make in terms of what we eat, what foods are produced, and what farming methods are practiced. A more enlightened compassionate humanity will look back upon these times of widespread abuse of the Earth and cruelty toward animals with disbelief and sorrow. The Buddha showed a new path to humans to take a new step toward a new vision of a humane planetary stewardship which will become a reality only if we begin to make the right choices now, based upon the ethic of respect

and reverence for all life and upon ahimsā. Our attitude based upon the principles of Mettā, Karumā and Ahimsā will do much to heal the planet and ourselves in the process. We do not own the land; it is entrusted to us for the future children of the Earth.

Human relationship with other animals is based on power. We are stronger than they are. We do whatever we want, whenever we want, because non-human animals are unable to stop us. In the same way in which people holding power deny the rights of the rights of non-human animals. Animals are exploited and tortured in the laboratories because we are powerful enough to keep them there, not because it is where they belong. Once they are restrained and caged, we can burn, irradiate, infect, electrocute, poison and sacrifice them. The extent of experimentation is limited by imagination, not law. Animals are on our dinner tables because we are powerful enough to control their lives from birth. We confine them in the smallest possible spaces, breed or artificially inseminate them, take their babies away from them, give them hormones, over-feed them and finally, kill them. Animal skins, with and without their fur, are on our bodies because we are powerful enough to hunt, trap. Club, shoot or harpoon other animals.

The animals turn into things are alive and are as possessed of their lives as we are. Animals are the victims of a vast human-regulated system of slavery. They serve our desires and whims, whether for the taste of their flesh, the feel of their skin or the profit that can be made. To see this enslavement for what it is, and to

comprehend the suffering that it causes, is the first step toward understanding the meaning of animals' rights i.e. the rights that are possessed by human and non-human animals alike. Then we should respond to the call on our conscience and do something to restore the rights that naturally belong to what Henry Boston called *other nations*. Jeremy Bentham argued that pain, not intelligence or ability to communicate, was the standard that should be used to assess the ethics of animal experimentation.

Many farms in the West today are run like mass-producing factories with animals as the product. India, too, with the entry of multinationals is going to follow suit. While this has allowed farmers in the West to vastly increase meat and egg production, animal welfare has been sacrificed. By ignoring traditional animal husbandry methods such as exercise, fresh air, wholesome food, and proper veterinary care, factory farms are a breeding ground for countless infectious diseases. Factory farm conditions result in severe physiological as well as behavioural animal afflictions. Anemia, influenzas, intestinal diseases, mastitis, orthostatic, pneumonia, and scours are only the beginning of a long list of ailments, plaguing factory farm animals, overcrowding, and intensive confinement by administering continuous doses of antibiotics and other drugs to the animals. The "cost effective" practice has a significant negative impact on the health of the consumer, as well as the animal. Nearly 50% of all the antibiotics manufactured in the US are poured directly into animal feeds and now this is an accepted fact that the level of

antibiotics and other contaminants in commercially raised meat constitute a serious threat to the health of the consumer. Moreover, widespread overuse of antibiotics is resulting in the evolution of new strains of virulent bacteria whose resistance to antibiotics poses a great threat to human health. Doctors are now reporting that, due to their uncontrolled use on factory farms, these formerly life-saving drugs are often rendered useless in combating human disease.

Zoos, should be shut down. It is immoral to take animals from their wild habitats and confine them in zoos. Even the best ones are little more than fancy prisons for animals. The over-crowding and intensive confinement of animals on factory farms, coupled with the inhumane handling and transportation of livestock, constitute the most widespread abuses animals have ever faced. The life of a factory farm animals is characterized by acute deprivation, stress, and disease. Hundreds of millions of animals are forced to live in cages or crates just barely larger than their own bodies. While one species may be caged alone without any social contact, another species may be crowded so tightly together that they fall prey to stress-induced cannibalism. Cannibalism is particularly prevalent in the cramped confinement of hogs and laying hens. Unable to groom, stretch their legs, or even turn around, the victims of factory farms exist in a relentless state of distress. It is a well-known fact that when animals are intensely confined and under stress, as they are on factory farms, their auto-immune systems are affected and they are prone to infectious diseases.

The suffering these animals undergo has become so extreme that to partake of food from these creatures is to partake unknowingly of the abject misery that has been their lives. Most amongst merrily eat away, unaware of the disease and pain they are taking into their bodies with every bite. We are ingesting nightmares for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. As the human population increases, more and more animals' species are threatened by reduced land availability, pollution, and poachers. These and other factors have pushed many species of animals to the brink of extinction. Our species is on the brink of causing single handily, the worst mass-extinction in the history of the planet. The current extinction of animals and plants is occurring far more rapidly than any previous extinction. It is high time that humans act to reverse the trend toward mass extinction. If zoo visitors were made aware of the suffering of the animals, then most of the zoos in India would be demolished and the animals liberated by a compassionate humanity. The zoo scientists have too little knowledge to breed successfully many of the endangered species. In any case, animals like the cheetah are difficult or outright impossible to breed. Sanctuaries are better places for breeding where natural habitat can be provided to them. Also the natural habitats preserve much more than a single species. As zoologist Eric Pianka of the University of Texas in a brief editorial in *BioScience* (1985) said that a zoo animal is totally out of context. Just as a word taken out of a paragraph loses much of its meaning and information content, an animal extracted from the wild no longer has a natural environment. Any given word is a subject, object, noun, verb, modified, etc, with complex

relationships to other words in the paragraph in which it resides; similarly, any wild organism is either a producer or a consumer and as its enemies, predators, potential competitors, and for many, its prey. Individuals also possess meaningful relationships to other members of their own populations, such as their own offspring, potential mates, neighbours on adjacent territories, kin, and so forth. For the population biologist, and animal in a zoo has been stripped of most of what is interesting about it; it is like an isolated word out of context. Misery, heat cold, dirt, insects, stench, and above all stress is the portion of the victims who drag out their weary lives beneath the beckoning signs and tattered banners.

The altruistic roles of zoos, the ones that are paraded in front of the public, are those of educator and nurturer of endangered species. But those roles are being increasingly challenged as it becomes apparent that the full measure of a specie includes the ecosystem that moulds it. More and more people are coming to believe that animals have a right to exist in their own natural habitats, instead of being shown off for the amusement of humans. The overall effect of the zoos' attempts to be arks for endangered species may be to accelerate the loss of habitat. Zoos are giving a false impression that species can be saved, even if the wild is destroyed. In the West, now most zoos recognize the symptoms of "cage fatigue" and have advanced beyond white-tile caging to provide rudimentary habitat facilities Zoo critics see these places of amusement as just another instance of man's willingness to deplete the natural world for a shallow pleasure, all

done in the name of education. What is the sense in imprisoning these poor creatures to gratify the curiosity of idle gazers? By such actions of the zoos where they exhibit imprisoned animals neither public taste, education, nor morals are benefitted. “We cannot glimpse the essential life of a caged animal, only the shadow of its former beauty.”¹³³

Honestly it would be less cruel to put a human being in one of the cages at the zoo than the animals, because the animals can know only raw terror, while a human under such circumstance could read a book, reason and reflect upon his misfortune, and write to his MP about it. Zoo animals invariably share the consequences of violence when human affairs go awry. The French, starved out by the German army during the siege of Paris during the Franco-Prussian war, ate most of the animals from the zoological gardens! The story of some of the zoos in war and strife torn countries in Africa is too well known. The hard fact is that the Earth already is losing plant and animal diversity-and habitat-at a staggering rate. Human birth rate, hunger, poor land use, and bad politics are primarily responsible for this. Putting animals in zoos involves taking animals out of their native habitats, transporting them great distances and keeping them in alien environments in which their liberty is severely restricted. In being taken from the wild and confined in zoos, they are prevented from gathering their own food, developing their own social orders and generally behaving in ways that are natural to them. These activities

¹³³ Julia Allen Field, “Reflections on the Death of an Elephant, Defenders 42, Spring 1967: 23-24

all require significantly more liberty than most animals are permitted in zoos.

Four main reasons are given for keeping animals in the zoo: amusement, education, opportunities for scientific research, and help in preserving species. Most curators and administrators reject the idea that the primary purpose of zoos is to provide entertainment. Indeed, many agree that the pleasure we take in viewing wild animals is not in itself a good enough reason to keep them in captivity. Some curators see baby elephant walks, e.g., as a necessary evil, or defend such amusements because of their role in educating people, especially children, about animals. It is sometimes said that people must be interested in what they are seeing if they are to be educated about it, and entertainments keep people interested, thus making education possible. As far as the role of zoos in education is concerned, there is little evidence to show that they educate people about animals. It has been shown by various studies in the West¹³⁴ indicate that zoogoers are much less knowledgeable about animals than backpackers, hunters, fishermen, and others who claim no interest in animals, and only slightly more knowledgeable than those who claim no interest in animals at all. Even more disturbing, zoogoers express the usual prejudices about animals; 73% say they dislike rattlesnakes, 52% vultures and only 4% elephants. One reason why some zoos have not done a better job in educating people is that many of them make no real effort at education. In the case of others, the

¹³⁴ E.g. Stephen Kellert, "Zoological Parkes in American Society," lecture delivered at the annual meeting of the Association of Zoological Parks and Aquariums in 1979.

problem is an apathetic and unappreciative public. The typical zoo-goer stops only to watch baby animals or those who are begging, feeding or making sounds. Of course, it is understandable that some education occurs in some zoos. But this very fact raises other issues. What is it that we want people to learn from visiting zoos? Facts about that physiology and behaviour of various animals? Attitudes toward the survival of endangered species? Compassion for the fate of all animals? To what degree does education require keeping wild animals in captivity? Couldn't most of the educational benefits of zoos be obtained by presenting films, slides, lectures and so forth? Indeed, couldn't most of the important educational objectives better be achieved by exhibiting empty cages with explanations of why they are empty? Many zoos talk about conservation, but often they are only just talking about it. Even if they do breed rare animals there are very many problems involved in returning them to the wild. Wouldn't the money and expert knowledge be better spent in conserving animals in the wild? This would not only be better for the animals, it would be better for us—we might begin to understand that human beings share the earth with many thousands of other species who have just as much right to live their own lives as we have. A third reason for having zoos is that they support scientific research. Very few zoos do any research at all. A fourth reason for having zoos is that they preserve species that would otherwise become extinct. There is some reason for questioning the commitment of zoos to preservation: it can be argued that they continue to remove more animals from the wild than they return. It is also important to note that lack of genetic diversity

among captive animals is a serious problem for zoo breeding programmes. In some species the infant mortality rate among inbred animals is six to seven times that among non-inbred animals. What is most disturbing is that zoo curators have been largely unaware of the problems caused by inbreeding because adequate breeding and health records have not been kept. It is hard to believe that zoos are serious about their role in preserving endangered species when all too often they do not take even the minimal step. Zoo breeding also created another problem: unwanted animals in some species. As a result either some animals are killed or gifted to dubious organizations. Even if all these difficulties are overlooked, the importance of preserving endangered species does not provide much support for the existing system of zoos. Most zoos do very little breeding or breed only species which are not endangered. Many of the major breeding programmes are run in special facilities which have been setup for that purpose. If our main concern is to do what we can to preserve endangered species, we should support such large-scale breeding centres rather than conventional zoos, most of which have neither the staff nor the facilities to run successful breeding programmes. Captivity does not just deny animals liberty but is often detrimental to them in other respects as well. The history of chimpanzees in the zoos of Europe and America is a good example. When chimpanzees are taken from the wild the usual procedure is to shoot the mother and kidnap the child. The rule of thumb among trappers is that ten chimpanzees die for every one that is delivered alive to Europe or America. On arrival many of these animals are

confined under abysmal conditions. Zoos teach us a false sense of our place in the natural order. The means of confinement mark a difference between humans and animals. They are there at our pleasure, to be used for our purposes. Morality and perhaps our very survival require that we learn to live as one species among many rather than as one species over many. To do this, we must forget what we learn at zoos. Because what zoos teach us is false and dangerous, both humans and animals will be better off when they are abolished.

“Fashionable cruelties” were often practices upon animals who liked to have their flesh cooked alive in a certain way by the smart landaus, phaetons, and victorias of the well-to-do classes. Progress in humane feelings is hard to discern during our times when half a dozen cows die daily on the street do Delhi. Poverty and frustration in human society has multiplied animals suffering. When labouring men earn less than \$2 for working a fifteen-hour day with penalties frequent and jobs scarce, little compassion remain in the weary driver of a tonga or horse-cart for the feelings of a horse that is not even his. Thus, human dilemmas have triggered many instances of cruelty. Neither the moral nor the emotional aspect of the helplessness of animal appears to have touched the public mind. Remarkable ability to imagine the psychological states of the animals pacing their narrow cages in the Delhi Zoological Garden. Most of the animals meet premature deaths from stress, malnutrition, dehydration, improper handling, illness, or general malaise. To plant or revive, the principle of compassion, in the human heart, would be a triumph greater than

the building of the Great Wall of China. The barbarities that accompany the transportation and slaughter of food animals... Take the City of Delhi, alone, and one animal, the horse. Take into consideration all the overloaded terms, the overloaded tongas and carts, the cases of fast driving, over-driving, over working, and under-feeding, neglect to water, neglect to proper shelter and protection from weather, tight check-reigns, sores worn by harness, twitching, beatings, kicking, bad shoeing, bad pavements, bad stables, bad feeding, bad harness, bad grooming, bad drivers. Then extend the estimate to the whole wide circle of dumb creatures. Let it include all the cattle Kailas, the bagging of goats, sheep and chickens, the starving at the cattle-markets, the cruel plucking of live fowls, the cruel transportation of cattle tied and heaped on top of each other, the abominable treatment of dry cows, the cruel methods of slaughtering, the unnecessary dissection of living animals.

It is an sin by the standards of any religion to abandon and let an injured animal die on the streets. That is precisely what happens daily on the streets of Delhi. One can see in every colony people donating enthusiastically for the construction of a Śiva temple, but no one gives a dam for this god's vehicle dying at the door step of the same temple! Delhi people are certainly some of the cruelest people in the world. Because there are so many degrees of cruelty and so many subtle shadings of exploitation and so many clever rationalizations men indulge in to justify doing what they want to do, the advance made by animal welfare programmes has always been a sort of two-steps-

forward, one-step-backward rhythm. For this fellow creatures man, it seems, has been the most colossal of all disasters. Cruel and messy hunting for food and fun has led to all sorts of tragic disasters for the poor creatures. It has been estimated in the US that for every clean kill two maimed animals escape to die later of gangrene, fever, starvation, or predation. In that outlandish and atavistic recreation, bow-and-arrow hunting, one authority asserts that as many as ten deer are wounded for every one that is killed outright. Many social theorists have speculated about why civilized men kill for fun: to collect trophies, bolster a wavering ego, or assert their virility. Karl Menninger considers that sexual symbolism of the impulse to kill to be too obvious for extended discussion¹³⁵. “Man is indeed ingenious when he wants an excuse for blood-lettings,” Robert and Leona Train Reinow note in their eloquent report, *Moment in the Sun*. “Our hearts bleeds for those who can see nothing in the beautiful outdoors... but something to kill.¹³⁶”

Nothing illustrates more clearly the primitive attitudes lying just below the surface of modern man’s psyche than the sale of little fish, parrots by disgruntled characters, discount houses, quick-sell merchants and urchins and to be purchased by pious Buddhists for *jivanadana*, not realizing how many in the process actually lose their lives. The sale of living creatures as toys or pets is widely condemned by the Buddha, who knew that responsible care cannot be provided.

¹³⁵ Karl A. Menninger, “Totemic Aspects of Contemporary Attitudes Toward Animals,” in George B. Wilbure and Werner Muensterberger (eds); *Psychoanalysis and culture*, New York:

¹³⁶ Ann G. Hunter, “They Have Been Dispossessed,” *Texas Council of Wildlife Protection News Bulletin*, May 1970: 2.

Our animal companions share the consequences of urban blight. Delhi dogs and cats wheeze and cough along with their human masters. Almost all the cows in Delhi are severely affected by automobile exhaust fumes from leaded gasoline.

“Man is not a god, nor is he in any imminent danger of becoming one. But he is plastic, still unfinished, and able to modify his social code if he wishes to. Let us remember with humility the loneliness of being man in a universe we do not understand and the vulnerability of the human condition. The animals could do very well without us, but we cannot do without them.¹³⁷” We should also remember as Henry Beston points out: “In a world older and more complete than ours they move finished and complete, gifted with extensions of the sense we have lost or never attained, living by voices we shall never hear. They are not brethren, they are not underlings; they are other nations, caught with ourselves in the net of life and time, fellow prisoners of the splendour and travail of the earth.¹³⁸” Thus, as Henry Seston pointed out, man is “a kind of cosmic outlaw, having neither the completeness and integrity of the animal nor the birthright of a true humanity.” “We need to distinguish between a kind of love which respects animals for what they are and allows them to pursue their own lives according to their own natural instincts, and another selfish form of love which seeks to condition animal lives in accordance with our own human desires.” Pet-keeping represents a “false anthropomorphism” in

¹³⁷ Gerald Carson, *The Meaning of Mercy*, New York, 1972L: 214

¹³⁸ *The Outermost House*, New York: 1967: 26.

which we seek to “humanise” animals and “regard them as intensions of our own egos.”

A considerable body of scientific data suggests positive relationships between vegetarian diets and risk reduction for several chronic degenerative diseases and conditions, including obesity, coronary artery disease, hypertension, diabetes mellitus, and some types of cancer. There is no single vegetarian eating pattern. The vegetarian diet is mainly plant foods: fruits, vegetable, legumes, grains, seeds, and nuts. Eggs, dairy products, or both may be included as well. The lacto-vegetarian diet is fruits, vegetables, grains, dairy foods, and their products whereas the lacto-ovo-vegetarian diet also adds eggs. The vegan, or total vegetarian, diet completely excludes meat, fish, fowl, eggs, and diary products. Even within specific classifications of the diet, considerable variation may exist in the extent to which animal product are avoided. Therefore, individual assessment is required in order to accurately evaluate the nutritional quality of a given diet. Studies of vegetarians indicate that they often have lower mortality rates from several chronic degenerative diseases than do non-vegetarians. These effects may be attributable to diet as well as to other lifestyle characteristics such as maintaining desirable weight, regular physical activity, and abstinence from smoking, alcohol, and illicit drugs. In addition to possible health advantages, other considerations that may lead to the adoption of a vegetarian diet include environmental or ecological

concerns, world hunger issues, economic reasons, philosophical or ethical reasons, and religious beliefs.

Why do Buddhism advocate vegetarianism? The main reason is “mercy”, and because we “cannot bear to eat the flesh of living creatures”. And our belief in karma tells us that we must eventually suffer the consequences of our evil actions. A Buddhist sutra says: “The bodhisattva fears the original action; the myriad of living creatures fears the consequences.” This means that the bodhisattva knows the seriousness of the consequences and does not do evil things; neither does he think about the causes of bad consequences. Finally, I also believe that a vegetarian diet better enable one to keep a pure body and mind and this purity is an important foundation of self-cultivation. My conversation to vegetarianism was based on these three considerations.

“Mercy” is an important way of learning to be a better person. Being without mercy is simply incompatible with being a Buddhist. Having a merciful and compassionate heart will show up in all aspects of one’s life; but the simplest and most direct way is to follow a vegetarian diet. Think of the intense pain of accidentally stepping on a nail is. So how can one have the heart to eat the flesh of creatures who have suffered the pain of being slaughtered, skinned, dismembered, and cooked? Being unable to bring ourselves to eat the flesh of these poor creatures is an expression of mercy.

The pain of creatures on the road to our table is not some fanciful concoction; it is excruciatingly real. Let us cite the cooked live shrimp and crab that are so popular today as an example. Meeting their end by being cooked in water is like being sent to a boiling hell. Their desperate but doomed efforts to crawl or jump out betray the unbearable pain they experience. Finally they give their life in sorrow as they turn bright red. Frogs are put through even more suffering than shrimp and crabs. From the first made in their bodies to the time they are swallowed they go through the equivalent of eight different hells: 1. Decapitation; 2. Skinning; 3. Removing the legs; 4. Slitting of the belly; 5. Frying or boiling; 6. Salt, sugar and seasoning; 7. Chewing; and 8. Digestion and excretion. Anyone who put himself in take place of a frog would be unable to ever stomach another one.

Among the different kinds of suffering the human race can experience, the most intense is certainly that of war. Documentaries of the Nanking massacre and the Nazi holocaust leave few people unmoved and dry-eyed-and most indignant. But humans can go for years or decades without war; animals face suffering and death every day. For meat eaters, every banquet means the death of hundreds and thousands of animals. Preventing the suffering of living creatures by not using their flesh to satisfy our taste-buds and hunger is the minimal expression of compassion we can offer. We choose not to kill out of kindness, and not to eat out of compassion. It may be useful to relate two moving stories on the theme of mercy; they will be etched forever in my memory. One is recorded in the *book Record of*

*Protecting Life*¹³⁹. When a scholar named Chou Yu was cooking some eel to eat, he noticed the one of the eels bending in its body such that its head and tail were still in the boiling point liquid, but its body arched upward above the soup. It did not fall completely in until finally dying. Chou Yu found the occurrence a strange one, pulled out the eel, and cut it open. He found thousands of eggs inside. The eel had arched its belly out of hot soup to protect its offspring. He cried at the sight, sighed with emotion, and swore never to eat eel. This story tells us that the myriad living creatures are not without feeling and intelligence.

The other story is recorded in Buddhist sūtra. A king of heaven was stalemated in a war with a demon, and neither side emerged as winner. As the king of heaven was leading his soldiers back, he saw the nest of a golden-winged bird in a tree by the roadside. “If the soldiers and chariots pass by here, the eggs in the nest will certainly fall to the ground and be scattered,” he thought to himself. So he led his thousand chariots back the same road by which they came. When the demon saw the king of heaven returning, he fled in terror. The sutra’s conclusion was that “if you use mercy to seek salvation, the lord of heaven will see it.” This story tells us that mercy may not seem like much at first glance, but it is in fact extremely powerful. The Buddhist sutra frequently mention “the power of mercy,” from this we know that mercy is indeed a potent force. If a Buddhist wants to learn to use this strength of mercy, he must be like the king of heaven in this

¹³⁹ Calson, E., Kipps, M., Lockie, A., and Thomson, J.: A comparative evaluation of vegan, vegetarian and omnivore diets, 1985, *J Plant Food* 6:89.

story, and be ready to change the route of a thousand chariots rather than let a nest full of bird eggs fall to the ground.

The *Surangama Sūtra* tells us that “if we eat the flesh of living creatures, we are destroying the seeds of compassion.” That is, if we do not eat the flesh of living creatures, we are cultivating and irrigating the seeds of compassion,” and to “cultivates a compassionate heart,” I chose to become a vegetarian; and this is my written regarding cause and consequence, but the basic concept is a simple one. “Good is rewarded with good; evil is rewarded with evil; and the rewarding of good and evil is only a matter of time.” Viewed from this concept, we will have to pay for every piece of flesh we eat with a piece of flesh, and with a life for every creature’s life that we take. Viewed over the long term, eating meat is an extremely frightening prospect. Before their death, living creatures experience not joy, and not fear, but anger; not complaint, but hatred and resentment. And who receives the “reward” for taking these lives?

It would be difficult to try to prove the existence of this concept of cause and consequence, and it may even sound a bit farfetched. However, in terms of this life, the negative consequences of eating meat include arterial sclerosis, heart disease, high blood pressure, encephaloma, stroke, gall stones, cirrhosis of the liver and cancer. In all these diseases, a link has been established to animal fat and cholesterol. So the consequences of eating meat are in fact immediate and in clear view. But even if you could still make it from

day to day eating meat, the other advantages of being vegetarian-promotion of good health and being free from worry about future negative consequences-to me fully justify the decision to be vegetarian, and constitute my second main reason for doing so.

Another reason is to “purify body and mind.” This one might seem to escape logical explanation. An American vegetarian physician summed it up well when he said that “It’s good not having to worry about the conditions under which your food died.” This statement points out that animals are not always healthy themselves, and before death, they secrete toxic substances. When we eat the flesh of animals, we also ingest disease-carrying microorganisms and toxins. According to the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, our bodies contain uric acid and other toxic waste products which turn up in our blood and body tissues. Compared to the 65% impure moisture content of beef, protein obtained from nuts, beans and legumes is markedly purer. Vegetarian food is indeed much cleaner than meat, and it also retains its freshness better than meat. Vegetarian food is in every case cleaner and purer than meat with comparable nutritious value. We know that meat spoils easily, and fish and shrimp begin to become putrid after being left out for just half an hour. Meat and meat products begin to decay after one hour. Vegetables, on the other hand, can usually be kept for three to five days. Although beans become rancid relatively quickly, the deterioration is very easy to detect and recognize.

Vegetarianism is the practice of eating only foods from plants and avoiding all animal flesh, including red meat, poultry, and fish, and sometimes dairy products. A vegetarian diet consists of grains, beans, vegetables, and fruits, and the foods made from them, such as tofu, pasta, rice dishes, bean burritos, and even simulated meats. Vegetarians are classified into different types, depending on the acceptance of animal products. Lacto-ovo (or ovo-lacto) vegetarians consume milk or cheese, eggs, and sometimes honey, while vegans consume no animal products at all, people may choose a vegetarian diet because of a variety of religious, philosophical, and ethical beliefs. Some people abstain from eating meat for religious reasons, for example Jains, and some Buddhists and Hindus, who believe that the killing and eating of animals violates the ethical precept of ahimsa, or nonviolence. Ecological reasons motivate other people, because much less land and food outlay is required to raise vegetables and grain than livestock. Some people avoid animal products for health reasons. Vegetarians may live longer and have much lower risks for heart disease, cancer, diabetes, and other serious illnesses. They also tend to be thinner, to have lower blood pressure, and have a lower risk of osteoporosis, a condition in which the bones get weaker as a person ages. These health effects are attributed to the fact that vegetarian diets tend to be lower in fat and cholesterol and higher in fibre and certain vitamins. People may adopt a vegetarian diet due to concerns about the methods used for raising animals. Most chickens, pigs, and veal calves are raised in close confinement and are given

chemical additives in their feed, and these practices offend many people, for health and humane reasons.

In the past it was thought that vegetarians might develop protein deficiencies if they did not carefully combine their foods. It is now known that such careful planning is not necessary. Protein deficiencies do not occur if one eats a variety of plant foods and eats enough to maintain one's weight. However, most nutritionists believe that vegans should eat vitamin-enriched cereals or take a vitamin supplement for vitamin B-12, which is needed in small amounts for healthy blood and nerves.

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ABBREVIATIONS

- A** The Anguttata Nikāya, ed. R. Morris & E. Hardy, 5 vols. London: PTS, 1885-1900. Translated references are from the Book of Gradual Saying, Tr. F.L. Woodward; vols. I II & V; E.M.Hare, vols . III & IV, London: PTS, 1955-1970 (Reprints).
- AA** The Manorathapūranī: Buddhaghosa's commentary on the Anguttara Nikāya, ed. H. Walleser & H. Kopp, 5 vols, London: PTS, 1956-1973.
- Ap.** The Apdāna, ed. M.E. Lilley; 2 vols., London: PTS: 1925-27.
- ASI** Archaeological Survey of India, Government of India, New Delhi.
- B&RW** Black and Red Ware.
- BD** The Book of the Discipline, tr. I.B. Horner, 6 vols. London: PTS, 1938-1966.
- Bu** The Buddhavamsa, ed. N.A. Jayawickrama, London: PTS, 1974,
- BuA** The Maddhuratthavilāsinī, Buddhadatta Thera's commentary on the Buddhavamsa, ed. & tr. I.B. Horner, London: PTS, 1946 & 1978.

- CBT** Chinese Buddhist Tripitaka (Taisho Edition), Chinese Buddhist Electronic Text Association (CBETA), Taiwan, 1998.
- CHI** Cambridge History of India, Vol. 1, Ancient India, ed. E.J Rapson, Cambridge.
- Cnid** Culla-Niddesa, ed. W. Stade, London: PTS.
- Cp.** The Cariyapitaka, ed. N. A. Jayawickrama, London: PTS, 1974.
- ChāndogyaUp** Chāndogya Upanisad, ed. T.R. Krishnāchārya, Bombay: Nirnayasāgara Press, 1904.
- D.** The Dīgha Nikāya, ed. T.W. Rhys Davids & J.E. Carpenter, 3 vols., London: PTS: 1890-1911. Translated references are from Dialogues of the Buddha, tr. T.W. & C.A.F. Rhys Davids, 3 vols, London: SBB: 1899, 1910, 1957 (reprints).
- DA** The Sumangalavilāsinī, Buddhaghosa's commentary on the Dīgha Nikāya, ed. T.W. Rhys Davids, J.E. Carpentier & W. Stade, 3 vols, London: PTS, 1886-1971.
- DB** Dialogues of the Buddha, tr. T.W. & C.A.F. Rhys Davids, 3 vols, London: SBB: 1899, 1910, 1967 (reprints).

- Dh** The Dhammapada, ed. & Tr. Nārada Thera, Kuala Lumpur: Buddhist Missionary Society, 1978.
- Dhs** The Dhamma-sangani, ed. London: PTS: 1885; Ed. P.V. Bapat and R.D. Vadekar, Poona: The Bhandarkar Research Institute: 1940.
- DhsA** The Atthasālinī, Buddhaghosa's commentary on the Dhammasangani, ed. P.V. Bapat and R.D. Vadekar, Poona: The Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute: 1942.
- Dīp.** The Dīpavamsa, ed. & tr. With intro. B.C.Law; The Chronicle of the Island of Ceylon or the Dīpavamsa, Colombo: The Ceylon Historical Journal, 1959: 1-266.
- DPPN** Dictionary of Pāli Proper Names, ed. G.P.Malalasekera, 2 vols, London: PTS: 1937-38.
- ERE** Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, ed. J. Hastings, 12 vols., Edinburgh: 1908-21.
- GS** The Book of Gradual Saying, Tr. F.L. Woodward; vols. I II & V; E.M.Hare, vols. III & IV, London: PTS, 1955-1970 (reprints)
- IA** Indian Antiquary. Calcutta.

- IHR** Indian Historical Review, New Delhi.
- IT** Indologica Tourinensia, Turin.
- Itv.** The Itivuttaka, ed. E. Windish, London: PTS: 1889.
- ItvA.** Itivuttaka Commentary, London: PTS.
- J** The Jātaka, ed. V. Fausboll, 7 vols, London: Trubner & Co: 1977-1897. The translated references are from Cowell et al, 6 vols. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1895-1907.
- JA** Journal Asiatique, Paris.
- JESHO** Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient.
- JIH** Journal of Indian History, Trivandrum.
- JRAS** Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, London.
- Kh** The Khuddaka-pāṭha, ed. London: PTS: 1915.
- KS** The Book of Kindred Saying, tr. C.A.F. Rhys Davids and S.S. Thera, vol. I; C.A.F. Rhys Davids & F.L. Woodward vol.

II; F.L. Woodward vols. III, IV, V, London: PTS, 1950-1956.
(reprints).

- KVU** The Kathāvatthu, ed. 2 vols, London: PTS: 1894-95.
- M** The Majjhima Nikāya, ed. V. Trenckner & R. Chelmers, 3
vols, London: PTS: 1888-1896. The translated references
are from the Book of Middle Length Sayings, tr. I.B.
Harner, 3 vols, London: PTS: 1954-1959.
- MA** The Papañcasūdanī, Buddhaghosa's commentary on the
Majjhima Nikāya, ed. J.H. Woods, D. Kosambi & I.B.
Horner, 3 vols, London: PTS, 1976-1979.
- M&E** Man and Environment.
- Mhv.** The Mahāvamsa, ed. W. Geiger, London: PTS, 1908 &
1912.
- Mil.** The Milindapñha, ed. Trenckner, London: William &
Norgate: 1880.
- MLS** The book of Middle Length Sayings, tr. I.B. Horner, 3 vols,
London: PTS 1954-1959.

- Mnid.** **The Mahā-Niddesa, ed. L. de la Vallée Poussin & E.J. Thomas, 2 vols, London : PTS : 1916-17 : 1978.**
- Mv.** **The Mahāvagga of the Vinaya Pitaka.**
- PED** **Pāli-English Dictionary, ed. T.W. Rhys Davids & W. Stede, London: PTS: 1921-25.**
- Pu** **The Puggalapaññatti, ed. London: PTS: 1883.**
- PuA** **The Puggalapaññatti Commentary, ed. London: JPTS: 1914.**
- PvA** **The Petavatthu Commentary, ed. London: PTS: 1894.**
- S** **The Samyutta Nikāya, ed M.L. Feer, 5 vols, London: PTS: 1884-1898. The translated references are from the Book of Kindred Saying, tr. C.A.F. Rhys Davids and S.S. Thera, vol. I; C.A.F. Rhys Davids & F.LI Woodward vol. II; F.L. Woodward vols. III, IV, V, London: PTS, 1950-1956 (reprints).**
- SA** **The Sārattha-ppakāsinī, Buddhaghosa’s commentary on the Samyutta Nikāya, ed.F.L. Woodward, 3 vols, London: PTS, 1977.**
- SBB** **Sacred Books of the Buddhists.**

- SBE** **The Sacred Book of the East, 50 vols., ed. F. Max Muller, reprint, Delhi : Motilal Banarasidass.**
- Sn** **The Sutta-Nipāta, ed. V. Faushöll, London: PTS, 1885.**
- SnA** **The Paramatthajotikā II, the Sutta-Nipāta commentary, ed. H. Smith, 3 vols, London: PTS, 1966-1972.**
- Th.** **The Theragāthā, ed. K.R.Norman & L. Alsdorf; London: PTS, 1966.**
- ThA** **The Paramattha-Dīpani, Dhammapāla commentary on the Theragāthā, ed. F.L. Woodward, 3 vols., London: PTS: 1952-1956.**
- Thī** **The Theragāthā, ed. K.R. Norman &L. Alsdorf; London: PTS 1966.**
- ThīA** **The Therīgāthā Commentary, London: PTS: 1891.**
- Vin** **The Vinaya Pitaka, ed. H. Oldenberg, 5 vols, London: PTS: 1879-1883. The translated references are from the Book of the Discipline, tr. I.B. Horner, 6 vols. London: PTS, 1938-1966.**

Vsm. Ed. H.C. Warren and rev. D. Konsambi, The
Visuddhimagga of Buddhaghosācāriya, Cambridge, Mass:
Harvard Oriental Series. Vol 41: 1951.

VvA Paramattha-Dīpanī, Dhammapāla's commentary on the
Vimānavatthu, ed. E. Hardy, Part IV, London: PTS: 1952-
56.

