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**Each year, as an exercise of executive power, the President has granted a ‘pardon’ of the life of a turkey on Thanksgiving Day. This ceremonial ritual trivializes life of the nonhuman and reinforce the anthropocentric hierarchy of life.**

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Each Thanksgiving, the President uses his executive powers to publicly pardon the life of a turkey gifted to him from agribusiness in a celebratory press conference. I believe this rather utopian life-saving pardon reveals our collective moral tension over eating fellow animals. The bird’s pardon exists uncomfortably in a gap between the pleasure-seeking advertising of the meat industry and the critical moral rhetoric of animal rights. What does this odd ritual imply regarding American identity, attitudes, and anxieties about raising and killing billions of animals for food?

Courage?President Obama, center, with daughters Malia, far right, Sasha, second from the right, pardoning the 2009 National Thanksgiving Turkey, Courage, in a ceremony in the North Portico of the White House today with the chairman of the National Turkey Federation, Walter Pelletier. As scholars of critical media and animal studies, my colleague and I examined 20 years of White House press conference transcripts and news coverage of the Presidential Thanksgiving turkey pardoning (From Bush Sr. to Obama). While George W Bush saw it as an opportunity to pun it up, Obama is the President who expresses the most disdain for the pardon, saying: “There are certain days that remind me of why I ran for this office—and then, there are moments like this – where I pardon a turkey and send it to Disneyland.”

Being a smart guy, Obama knows the pardoning is absurd, so let’s explore why.

Its most obvious absurdity is the hypocrisy of the President saving one bird publicly while eating another bird privately (a bird someone killed for him outside the media spotlight). And Obama’s trivializing comments let people know he shares the dominant humanist bias, where we presumably find it absurd to consider the lives of nonhuman animals a serious or “Presidential” matter. Although, I argue the ceremony could be more Presidential and less trivial if he used it as an opportunity to enact the first federal laws protecting the welfare of animals on (factory) farms or requiring needed environmental standards from agribusiness. He could stop allowing the fox to guard the henhouse, which may just begin to curb the animal welfare and environmental disaster that increasingly stains the American landscape. The final absurdity is that all Presidents use the Thanksgiving ceremony to compliment Americans for being such a generous, just, and freedom-loving people, while ignoring the reality that we are complicit in legalizing the mass captivity and slaughter of billions of sentient individuals here at home. If Presidents continue to brand American identity through this hollow gesture sparing one lucky bird, it threatens the moral integrity of the values Americans claim to believe in -- freedom, life, respect, compassion, justice, accountability, honesty, and personal & social responsibility.

So what is my suggestion for the White House, then? Do I expect President Obama to kill the turkey? (that seems most likely if Perry gets in office). No, I’m not a fan of killing. But if the Presidential pardon continues to be used as an “animal sacrifice in reverse” to assuage collective guilt over the violence of our holiday meal and it continues to function as an official sanction for an unnecessary mass slaughter, then yes, stop accepting a ritual turkey. However, if the President does continue to accept and save a bird’s life, then he shouldn’t hypocritically also accept and eat a dead one. He could follow Clinton’s lead in eating a plant-based diet and become a role model for health and social responsibility by giving thanks in a genuine, meaningful way that needn’t involve animal sacrifice. Presidents could use the Thanksgiving ceremony to show public support more broadly for American-grown organic crops of the season, such as: pumpkin, squash, yams, potatoes, wheat, asparagus, green beans, soybeans, peas, apples, pecans, etc. Let’s face it, for an American male (much less the Commander in Chief) what would show more courage, leadership, or masculine self-assurance than a principled boycott of meat?

**The very idea that the president spares the life of one turkey validates the ‘legal’ slaughter of all unpardoned turkeys. This unrestricted authority justifies the infinite power of the state over the lives of its subjects**

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You can tell what a nation is like by the way it treats its turkeys.

I am not saying that this slaughter of birds for food is wrong ― not here anyway ― but only that the parallel the presidential ritual invites us to notice is revealing. To riff on Dostoyevsky’s famous line about prisoners: you can tell what a nation is like by the way it treats its turkeys. Obama’s pardoning of one randomly selected bird at Thanksgiving not only carries with it an implicit validation of the slaughtering of millions of other turkeys. It also involves an implicit validation of the parallel practice for human beings, in which the occasional death-row inmate is pardoned, or given a stay by the hidden reasoning of an increasingly capricious Supreme Court, even as the majority of condemned prisoners are not so lucky. In this respect, the Thanksgiving pardon is an acknowledgment of the arbitrariness of the system of capital punishment.

Arbitrariness is generally treated, both by supporters and detractors of the death penalty, as a mere glitch in the system, as something that could in principle be worked out. But what this understanding misses is the historical fact that, until very recently, capital punishment was explicitly arbitrary, and openly cruel: its principal reason for being was to set an example of the infinite power of the state over the lives of its subjects.

It is thus not surprising that in most of the Western world, capital punishment died away, though usually only gradually, along with the decline of absolutism and the shift to democracy. When a person is executed, a message is sent about what the state may legitimately do to its subjects, and it is a message that has proven difficult to make fit with other basic commitments of a political culture that rejects arbitrary absolutism and favors human dignity and human rights.

**Yet, the pardon does not endow freedom—the turkey is placed back in captivity and put to death shortly after.**

**Fiskesjö 3** – an associate professor of anthropology,specializing in Asian ethnopolitics and related issues. He was educated in his native Sweden as well as in China, and at the University of Chicago, USA, where he received a joint PhD in Anthropology and in East Asian Languages and Civilizations in 2000. He served, 1985-1991, in Sweden's embassies in Tokyo and Beijing, where he was cultural attaché; and in 2000-2005 he served as Director of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, in Stockholm, working with both local diversity issues, and global problems of ownership and repatriation. (Magnus, “The Thanksgiving Turkey Pardon, The Death of Teddy's Bear, and the Sovereign Exception of Guantánamo”)

This curious, apparent non-event takes place just ahead of the uniquely American, kin-centered and nationalistic Thanksgiving feast, which is celebrated each year on the last Thursday of November. This patriotic holiday is a very big deal indeed. It is anationwide homecoming celebration in which a total of 45 million turkeys perish, as their flesh is con-sumed in the course of the Thanksgiving dinner. Thisfeast is said to be performed by about ninety percentof all American households, and the turkey is the piècede resistance. The ritual pardoning of one federal turkey by the nation’s President kicks off the feasting. As thenation’s leader says, “Before I feast on one of the 45million turkeys who will make the ultimate sacrifice,let me give this one a permanent reprieve” (from theremarks at the 1999 turkey pardon by PresidentClinton). The President himself is the high priest of thepardon. It takes place annually in the White HouseRose Garden, where it has been performed since, atleast, we believe, the late 1940s. Its origins remainobscure—and regarding this mysterious obscurity, I’llhave more to say later on. The tradition is neverthe-less firmly established, cherished, and so important by now that we are safe to assume no President woulddare discontinue it. The journey undertaken by these American“National Thanksgiving Turkeys” on their way to thecenter stage of the Rose Garden is as exotic as any piece of strange ethnographica out of Africa or the Amazon jungle. If the matter at hand was the prepa-ration of some similarly sovereign foodstuff, such as,say, the rice grown at a secret location in Japan to beserved up to the gods by the emperor himself in oneof the imperial rituals there, then surely a great dealof prayers would be said along the trail of the chosenbird, and the location of the divine growth would bekept a secret.In the ostensibly secular USA, however, theprecise location of the presidential turkey hatchery isno secret. The origin of the bird is rotated amongstactive members of the National Turkey Federation. Itproudly donates and delivers two turkeys to the White House every year. The rotation within theFederation seems to be undertaken perhaps more forthe sake of advertisement exposure than for any sortof investment of ritual significance in the hatchery. The Federation chairman assumes the duty of find-ing, selecting, and setting aside a turkey from a farmin his home state. Likewise, one of his sons will oftenbe selected to serve as the turkey’s handler-in-chief atthe high moment of the ritual itself. The chosen bird is typically born in latespring. For example, the 1997 turkey was born in May of that year, alongside 2,000 other turkey poults,at the Tar Heel Turkey Hatchery in Raeford, NorthCarolina. In September, as reported by CNN, tencandidates were selected for size, feathers, telegenicposture, and docile temperament, at the tender age of sixteen weeks. In October, another “primary” wascarried out to produce four contenders. Each year, inthe days leading up to the event itself, the “National Thanksgiving Turkey” must be picked out of its flock.

A “runner-up” will also always be selected. This bird is sometimes jokingly referred to as a “vice-presidential” bird, one that is kept waiting, “in anundisclosed location...” The point is to have a back-up bird ready, incase something should happen to Bird Number One.But the real vice president, notably, has no part in theturkey pardoning ceremony. It is exclusively reservedfor the current holder of the highest office of theland—the man whose person inhabits the body natura lmust fit the tailored costume of the body politic.Let’s continue to follow the birds on their way.Both of the selected turkeys are flown to the Hotel Washington, in Washington, DC, where all of thechosen turkeys have stayed for the last 30 years. They are accompanied on their journey and at the hotel by proud Federation officials and their family members.On the big day, the “National Thanksgiving Turkey,”together with its mate, is escorted to the Rose Gardenin order to receive its pardon. Mercy will be grantedthis bird from the otherwise certain fate of being eatenlike all the millions of others. The “vice-presidential” companion, too, willreceive clemency. But not in public. Instead it is setaside and kept waiting in a van, as a backup—a precau-tion observed ever since President Ronald Reagan gotinto serious trouble with an obstinate turkey that dis-turbed the ritual by flapping its wings in his face in1984. The bird selected for the actual performance isplaced on a podium in front of attending officials andan invited audience of schoolchildren. The American people either are or could be tuned in to the event,through TV or radio broadcasts. Alternatively, thenation can receive the happy news through local chan-nels. The mass media follow up on the story eitherthrough on-site reporting, or by spinning the story out of the official White House press releases. All thatofficial material makes for eerie reading, listening, and viewing. It is available on the White House homepage in audio, video, and written formats. This is inaddition to the annual presidential proclamation of the Thanksgiving holiday, equally official and formal, which precedes the pardoning. (The proclamation hasits own history, stretching back to George Washington’s days. Sadly it is not something we canpursue here.) With the bird on the podium, the preparationsare finished, and the setting is finally complete. Inkeeping with tradition, the President directly addresses a short speech to the turkey, to the massmedia, and the cheering audience of children on handfor camera effect. This speech includes the officialpardon extended to the bird. Usually this is done with willful light-heartedness, along with jokes or playfulcomments about the bird at hand. The bird might addits voice to the exchange, thus serving as the butt of another joke. Occasionally the President will also offera few answers to journalists’ questions about the cur-rent issues of the day. This continues for a few min-utes, while the schoolchildren are invited over to petthe official turkey. And so, despite the lengthy preparations, theRose Garden ceremony is over in just a few minutes.

As soon as it is finished, the consequences of thesupreme command of a presidential pardoning comesinto play—which is, of course, always the proper way in which the sovereign overrides judiciary decisions,or the normal state of affairs Both of the birds are now done at the WhiteHouse, and they are driven to a final, fixed destina-tion. This is a so-called petting zoo, the KidwellFarm at the Frying Pan Park in Herndon, Virginia.Here, the two birds are received in a rather obscureand seldom-watched local-level sub-ritual of induc-tion, which is framed as their “enduring” a turkey “roast,” replete with “presidential poultry humor” andthe cheerful reciting of “Thanksgiving history.” While the birds are showered with greetings and,simultaneously, mocked, the children who happen tobe visiting on that day will hear the story of howthese turkeys are different from the other animals atthe petting zoo because they “belong to ourPresident.”Only after this reception may the presidentialand vice-presidential bird proceed to their shrine, which is known as the Turkey Barn. The birds arethen, in proverbial fashion, said to live happily ever after. In reality, however, they are usually killed within a year and stand-in turkeys are supplied. Thisgoes on year after year. The chosen birds are killed because they have been engineered and packed with hormones to the point that they are unfit for any other purpose than their own slaughter and consump-tion. They are fast-forward turkeys. Presidentialturkey caretakers have explained that most succumb rather quickly to joint disease—their frail joints sim-ply cannot bear the weight of their artificially enhanced bodies. The sturdiest survivors may live alittle more than a year. But the birds are always finally put out of their growing misery. Then they are buriednearby in a presidential turkey cemetery—the ritualis-tic significance of which remains to be explored. (May the archaeologists of the future excavate it!)

The task of these national turkeys, until they are out of sight, is to symbolically make way for the millions that will die (or which have already beenkilled and sold deep-frozen). Below I will discuss howthis works as a first-fruit sacrifice. In this and in sev-eral other ways, the fate of the pardoned turkey actu-ally coincides with the fate of the original “Teddy”bear, to which we shall presently turn. (As we shallsee, Teddy was publicly “pardoned,” but also suffereddeath sooner than we might have expected.)

**This annual slaughter of millions of turkeys is only a symptom of a larger system of violence. Every day, each and every one of us participates in a war which is committed to an endless genocide of the non-human. This violence is rendered invisible by the normative understanding of violence which excuses the violence against the non-human as legitimate.**

**Kochi 9** - Sussex Law School, University of Sussex, Brighton, UK (Tarik, “Species War: Law, Violence and Animals,” SAGE Journals)

7. The idea that war and violence sits at the foundation of law and operates creatively has been expressed in differing ways by Heraclitus, Machiavelli, Hegel, Freud and Walter Benjamin. Here, I am merely taking this insight and developing it by reflecting upon the primary role played by human violence carried out against non-human animals. the protagonist Elizabeth Costello draws a comparison between the everyday slaughter of non-human animals and the genocide of the Jews of Europe during the twentieth century. “In addressing you on the subject of animals,” she continues, “I will pay you the honour of skipping a recital of the horrors of their lives and deaths. Though I have no reason to believe that you have at the forefront of your minds what is being done to animals at this moment in production facilities (I hesitate to call them farms any longer), in abattoirs, in trawlers, in laboratories, all over the world, I will take it that you concede me the rhetorical power to evoke these horrors and bring them home to you with adequate force, and leave it at that, reminding you only that the horrors I here omit are nevertheless at the center of this lecture.” 9

A little while later she states: “Let me say it openly: we are surrounded by an enterprise of degradation, cruelty, and killing which rivals anything that the Third Reich was capable of, indeed dwarfs it, in that ours is an enterprise without end, self-regenerating, bringing rabbits, rats, poultry, livestock ceaselessly into the world for the purpose of killing them.” “And to split hairs, to claim that there is no comparison, that Treblinka was so to speak a metaphysical enterprise dedicated to nothing but death and annihilation while the meat industry is ultimately devoted to life (once its victims are dead, after all, it does not burn them to ash or bury them but on the contrary cuts them up and refrigerates and packs them so that they can be consumed in the comfort of our own homes) is as little consolation to those victims as it would have been – pardon the tastelessness of the following – to ask the dead of Treblinka to excuse their killers because their body fat was needed to make soap and their hair to stuff mattresses with.” Similar comparisons have been made before. Yer, when most of us think about the term “war” very seldom do we bother to think about non-human. A great deal of the contemporary discussion about the moral standing of animals and their treatment is owed to the work of Peter Singer. The purpose of my article is not to directly contribute to this debate. Rather, my focus is upon attempting to re-think some of the conceptual foundations of the Law of war by drawing the status of animal slaughter back into our legal categoryies. For this reason I will not attempt to discuss or survey the many arguments about the moral standing of non-human animals but will keep to a more historical, and perhaps sociological, discussion of the Law of war.

The term war commonly evokes images of states, armies, grand weapons, battle lines, tactical stand-offs, and maybe even sometimes guerrilla or partisan violence. Surely the keeping of cattle behind barbed wire fences and butchering them in abattoirs does not count as war? Surely not? Why not? What can be seen to be at stake within Elizabeth Costello’s act of posing the modern project of highly efficient breeding and factory slaughtering of non-human animals beside the Holocaust is a concern with the way in which we order or arrange conceptually and socially the legitimacy of violence and killing. In a “Western” philosophical tradition stretching at least from Augustine and Aquinas, through to Descartes and Kant, the ordering of the relationship between violence and legitimacy is such that, predominantly, non-human animals are considered to be without souls, without reason and without a value that is typically.

ascribed to humans. For example, for Augustine, animals, together with plants, are exempted from the religious injunction “Thou shalt not kill.” When considering the question of what forms of killing and violence are legitimate, Augustine placed the killing of non-human animals well inside the framework of religious and moral legitimacy. 12

Of relevance is the practice by which the question of legitimate violence is ordered – that is, the manner in which it is organised by philosophical, moral and cultural justifications in a way that sets out how particular acts of violence are to be understood within social-material life. Within a Western tradition the killing of animals is typically not considered a form of war because violence against animals is placed far within the accepted framework of legitimate killing. 12. Augustine, City of God against the Pagans, Dyson, R.W. tr. ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 33, I, 21. This account expresses a particular religious-cultural form of valuing the lives of non-human animals in which non-human animals are placed below humans on a Judeo-Christian and Islamic cosmic hierarchy of creation. While there are other differing cosmic conceptions, such as those found within Hinduism and Buddhism and within various indigenous cosmologies within North America and Australia and within radical utilitarian conceptions expressed by Bentham and Peter Singer focused upon “suffering,” the model of a Judeo-Christian and Islamic hierarchy of creation remains dominant within “Western” (or North Atlantic) culture and its conceptions of law. Such a hierarchy of value is further backed in the West, in differing ways, by the secular cosmology of the theory of evolution, and scientific claims about the higher mental capacities of humans over the bulk of non-human animals. Owing to these hierarchies, for Western legal systems “animal rights” still stand far below and have not been extended from human rights and while the notion of human dignity takes centre stage, notions of “animal dignity” stand at the periphery. On various approaches to the extension of moral standing to non-human animals see: Bentham, J. Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation, Burns, J.H. and Hart, H.L.A. eds. ( London: Methuen, 1982); Singer, P. Animal Liberation (New York: Random House, 1975); Regan, T. “The Case for Animal Rights” in Singer, P. ed. In Defence of Animals (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1985); Clarke, S.R.L. The Moral Standing of Animals (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977); Hursthouse, R. Ethics, Humans and Other Animals ( London: Routledge, 2000).

**This Western conception of legitimate violence is grounded upon a hierarchy of values which regards nonhuman life as ‘raw material’ for the preservation of human life. Our legal system is founded upon the sovereign’s authority to delineate between good and bare life. Those outside the conception of proper political subjects are killed under the guise of legitimate violence.**

**Kochi 9** - Sussex Law School, University of Sussex, Brighton, UK (Tarik, “Species War: Law, Violence and Animals,” SAGE Journals)

The response of the lawyer, international lawyer, politician or philosopher to the account so far might be to say that this is all very interesting but that it still has little to do with “war.” Such figures might still argue that the term “war” refers to something carried out by states and governed by “national interest,” or guided by moral ideals like freedom and human rights, or by international law. This response, however, overlooks the way in which the typical and everyday use of the term war is itself conceptually and  historically ordered in a practice that differentially values forms of life. In what follows I look more closely at how arguments about legitimate violence within two contemporary conceptions or discourses of the law of war are ordered and of how this ordering is related to the foundational moment of species war. The dominant Western conceptions of the law of war rest upon two major conceptual and historical “foundations.” The first involves the way in which the monopoly upon the legitimacy of violence is vested in the sovereignty of the state and grounded upon the principles of preservation of life, domestic peace and security from external threat. This form which sometimes expresses a reason of state or national interest approach to questions of war is often called the Westphalian system of international relations and is ambiguously historically linked to the Peace of Westphalia (1648). The second dominant narrative or form of thinking about the laws of war is represented by contemporary international humanitarian law. This approach grounds the legitimacy of war upon the maintenance of peace and  security between nations bound together with the concern for the protection of human rights and the prevention of human rights abuses, war crimes and genocide via the establishment of the United Nations (1945). While this mode of thinking about war inherits much from the Westphalian system, it is historically grounded upon an international response to “world war” and the genocide of European Jews. The natural law theories of Hugo Grotius and Thomas Hobbes are often viewed as laying down the theoretical justifications for the  modern secular state, the legitimacy of sovereign violence, and the Westphalian international order. Within the context of bloody intra-state civil wars such as the Thirty Years War (1618–48) and moments of domestic chaos such as the English Civil War (1642–51) thinkers such as Grotius and Hobbes reacted to widespread social violence often motivated by actors party to differing Christian confessions all claiming adherence to a universal  religious, moral or political truth. Grotius and Hobbes, albeit in different ways, responded by producing a de-sacralized natural law that was grounded not upon  theological conceptions of right and justice but upon more earthly, “secular,” concepts of the preservation of human life and survival. For these thinkers the chaos of civil war and intra-state civil war could be nullified if the criteria of what counted as legitimate violence were determined by an institution that guaranteed peace and security. Roughly, Grotius and Hobbes attempted to theoretically re-order  territory and space around the figure of sovereignty and inter-sovereign relations. The legitimacy of human violence is no longer grounded upon a universal conception of divine authority but is **instead located** around the figure and office of the sovereign **who maintains peace and security** over a particular, limited territory. Such an approach to the chaos of civil war can be termed the juridical ordering of the concept of war. This de-legitimisation of the right to private violence in the name of peace  creates what Max Weber later describes as the “state’s monopoly upon the legitimacy of violence.” Modern war, juridically ordered, takes on the definition of a form of violence waged between sovereigns, who hold a particular status. By this definition violence carried out by the state against a non-sovereign group is excluded from the language of “war proper” as is private violence (including rebellion, sabotage and terrorism) which is defined as crime.Grotius and Hobbes are sometimes described as setting out a prudential approach, or a natural law of minimal content because in contrast to Aristotelian or Thomastic legal and political theory their attempt to derive the legitimacy of the state and sovereign order relies less upon a thick conception of the good life and is more focussed upon basic human needs such as survival. In the context of a response to religious civil war such an approach made sense in that often thick moral and religious conceptions of the good life (for example, those held by competing Christian Confessions) often drove conflict and violence. Yet, it would be a mistake to assume that the categories of “survival,” “preservation of life” and “bare life” are neutral categories. Rather survival, preservation of life and bare life as expressed by the Westphalian theoretical tradition already contain distinctions of value – in particular, the specific distinction of value between human and non-human life. “Bare life” in this sense is not “bare” but contains within it a distinction of value between the worth of human life placed above and beyond the worth of non-human animal life. In this respect bare life within this tradition contains within it a hidden conception of the good life. The foundational moment of the modern juridical conception of the law of war already contains within it the operation of species war. The Westphalian tradition puts itself forward as grounding the legitimacy of violence upon the preservation of life, however its concern for life is already marked by a hierarchy of value in which non-human animal life is violently used as the “raw material” for preserving human life. Grounded upon, but concealing the human-animal distinction, the Westphalian  conception of war makes a double move: it excludes the killing of animals from its definition of “war proper,” and, through rendering dominant the modern juridical definition of “war proper” the tradition is able to further institutionalize and normalize a particular conception of the good life. Following from this original distinction of life-value realized through the juridical language of war were other forms of human life whose lives were considered to be of a lesser value under a European, Christian, “secular” natural law conception of the good life. Underneath this concern with the preservation of life in general stood veiled preferences over what particular forms of life (such as racial conceptions of human life) and ways of living were worthy of preservation, realization and elevation. The business contracts of early capitalism, the power of white males over women and children, and, especially in the colonial context, the sanctity of European life over non-European and Christian lives over non-Christian heathens and Muslims, were some of the dominant forms of life preferred for preservation within the early modern juridical ordering of war.

**And anthropocentrism has been a foundational model for any and every form of discrimination. Any argument which attempts to claim human superiority over the nonhuman rests on the same justifications used by White European males to subjugate other humans**

Best 7 – Associate Professor at the University of Texas in the Department of Humanities and Philosophy (Steven, “Eternal Treblinka: Our Treatment of Animals and the Holocaust, by Charles Patterson” *Journal for Critical Animal Studies*, <http://www.criticalanimalstudies.org/JCAS/Journal_Articles_download/Issue_7/bestpatterson.pdf>)

While a welcome advance over the anthropocentric conceit that only humans shape human actions, the environmental determinism approach typically fails to emphasize the crucial role that animals play in human history, as well as how the human exploitation of animals is a key cause of hierarchy, social conflict, and environmental breakdown. A core thesis of what I call “animal standpoint theory” is that animals have been key driving and shaping forces of human thought, psychology, moral and social life, and history overall. More specifically, animal standpoint theory argues that the oppression of human over human has deep roots in the oppression of human over animal.1

In this context, Charles Patterson’s recent book, The Eternal Treblinka: Our Treatment of Animals and the Holocaust, articulates the animal standpoint in a powerful form with revolutionary implications. The main argument of Eternal Treblinka is that the human domination of animals, such as it emerged some ten thousand years ago with the rise of agricultural society, was the first hierarchical domination and laid the groundwork for patriarchy, slavery, warfare, genocide, and other systems of violence and power. A key implication of Patterson’s theory is that human liberation is implausible if disconnected from animal liberation, and thus humanism -- a speciesist philosophy that constructs a hierarchal relationship privileging superior humans over inferior animals and reduces animals to resources for human use -- collapses under the weight of its logical contradictions.

Patterson lays out his complex holistic argument in three parts. In Part I, he demonstrates that animal exploitation and speciesism have direct and profound connections to slavery, colonialism, racism, and anti-Semitism. In Part II, he shows how these connections exist not only in the realm of ideology – as conceptual systems of justifying and underpinning domination and hierarchy – but also in systems of technology, such that the tools and techniques humans devised for the rationalized mass confinement and slaughter of animals were mobilized against human groups for the same ends. Finally, in the fascinating interviews and narratives of Part III, Patterson describes how personal experience with German Nazism prompted Jewish to take antithetical paths: whereas most retreated to an insular identity and dogmatic emphasis on the singularity of Nazi evil and its tragic experience, others recognized the profound similarities between how Nazis treated their human captives and how humanity as a whole treats other animals, an epiphany that led them to adopt vegetarianism, to become advocates for the animals, and develop a far broader and more inclusive ethic informed by universal compassion for all suffering and oppressed beings. The Origins of Hierarchy "As long as men massacre animals, they will kill each other" –Pythagoras

It is little understood that the first form of oppression, domination, and hierarchy involves human domination over animals.2 Patterson’s thesis stands in bold contrast to the Marxist theory that the domination over nature is fundamental to the domination over other humans. It differs as well from the social ecology position of Murray Bookchin that domination over humans brings about alienation from the natural world, provokes hierarchical mindsets and institutions, and is the root of the long-standing western goal to “dominate” nature.3 In the case of Marxists, anarchists, and so many others, theorists typically don’t even mention human domination of animals, let alone assign it causal primacy or significance. In Patterson’s model, however, the human subjugation of animals is the first form of hierarchy and it paves the way for all other systems of domination such as include patriarchy, racism, colonialism, anti-Semitism, and the Holocaust. As he puts it, “the exploitation of animals was the model and inspiration for the atrocities people committed against each other, slavery and the Holocaust being but two of the more dramatic examples.”4

Hierarchy emerged with the rise of agricultural society some ten thousand years ago. In the shift from nomadic hunting and gathering bands to settled agricultural practices, humans began to establish their dominance over animals through “domestication.” In animal domestication (often a euphemism disguising coercion and cruelty), humans began to exploit animals for purposes such as obtaining food, milk, clothing, plowing, and transportation. As they gained increasing control over the lives and labor power of animals, humans bred them for desired traits and controlled them in various ways, such as castrating males to make them more docile. To conquer, enslave, and claim animals as their own property, humans developed numerous technologies, such as pens, cages, collars, ropes, chains, and branding irons.

The domination of animals paved the way for the domination of humans. The sexual subjugation of women, Patterson suggests, was modeled after the domestication of animals, such that men began to control women’s reproductive capacity, to enforce repressive sexual norms, and to rape them as they forced breeding in their animals. Not coincidentally, Patterson argues, slavery emerged in the same region of the Middle East that spawned agriculture, and, in fact, developed as an extension of animal domestication practices. In areas like Sumer, slaves were managed like livestock, and males were castrated and forced to work along with females.

In the fifteenth century, when Europeans began the colonization of Africa and Spain introduced the first international slave markets, the metaphors, models, and technologies used to exploit animal slaves were applied with equal cruelty and force to human slaves. Stealing Africans from their native environment and homeland, breaking up families who scream in anguish, wrapping chains around slaves’ bodies, shipping them in cramped quarters across continents for weeks or months with no regard for their needs or suffering, branding their skin with a hot iron to mark them as property, auctioning them as servants, breeding them for service and labor, exploiting them for profit, beating them in rages of hatred and anger, and killing them in vast numbers – all these horrors and countless others inflicted on black slaves were developed and perfected centuries earlier through animal exploitation.

As the domestication of animals developed in agricultural society, humans lost the intimate connections they once had with animals. By the time of Aristotle, certainly, and with the bigoted assistance of medieval theologians such as St. Augustine and Thomas Aquinas, western humanity had developed an explicitly hierarchical worldview – that came to be known as the “Great Chain of Being” – used to position humans as the end to which all other beings were mere means.

Patterson underscores the crucial point that the domination of human over human and its exercise through slavery, warfare, and genocide typically begins with the denigration of victims. But the means and methods of dehumanization are derivative, for speciesism provided the conceptual paradigm that encouraged, sustained, and justified western brutality toward other peoples. “Throughout the history of our ascent to dominance as the master species,” Patterson writes, “our victimization of animals has served as the model and foundation for our victimization of each other. The study of human history reveals the pattern: first, humans exploit and slaughter animals; then, they treat other people like animals and do the same to them.”5 Whether the conquerors are European imperialists, American colonialists, or German Nazis, western aggressors engaged in wordplay before swordplay, vilifying their victims – Africans, Native Americans, Filipinos, Japanese, Vietnamese, Iraqis, and other unfortunates – with opprobrious terms such as “rats,” “pigs,” “swine,” “monkeys,” “beasts,” and “filthy animals.”

Once perceived as brute beasts or sub-humans occupying a lower evolutionary rung than white westerners, subjugated peoples were treated accordingly; once characterized as animals, they could be hunted down like animals.6 The first exiles from the moral community, animals provided a convenient discard bin for oppressors to dispose the oppressed. The connections are clear: “For a civilization built on the exploitation and slaughter of animals, the `lower’ and more degraded the human victims are, the easier it is to kill them.”7 Thus, colonialism, as Patterson describes, was a “natural extension of human supremacy over the animal kingdom.”8 For just as humans had subdued animals with their superior intelligence and technologies, so many Europeans believed that the white race had proven its superiority by bringing the “lower races” under its command.

There are important parallels between speciesism and sexism and racism in the elevation of white male rationality to the touchstone of moral worth. The arguments European colonialists used to legitimate exploiting Africans – that they were less than human and inferior to white Europeans in ability to reason – are the very same justifications humans use to trap, hunt, confine, and kill animals. Once western norms of rationality were defined as the essence of humanity and social normality, by first using non-human animals as the measure of alterity, it was a short step to begin viewing odd, different, exotic, and eccentric peoples and types as non- or sub-human. Thus, the same criterion created to exclude animals from humans was also used to ostracize blacks, women, and numerous other groups from “humanity.” The oppression of blacks, women, and animals alike was grounded in an argument that biological inferiority predestined them for servitude. In the major strain of western thought, alleged rational beings (i.e., elite, white, western males) pronounce that the Other (i.e., women, people of color, animals) is deficient in rationality in ways crucial to their nature and status, and therefore are deemed and treated as inferior, subhuman, or nonhuman. Whereas the racist mindset creates a hierarchy of superior/inferior on the basis of skin color, and the sexist mentality splits men and women into greater and lower classes of beings, the speciesist outlook demeans and objectifies animals by dichotomizing the biological continuum into the antipodes of humans and animals. As racism stems from a hateful white supremacism, and sexism is the product of a bigoted male supremacism, so speciesism stems from and informs a violent human supremacism -- namely, the arrogant belief that humans have a natural or God-given right to use animals for any purpose they devise or, more generously, within the moral boundaries of welfarism and stewardship, which however was Judaic moral baggage official Chistianithy left behind.

**The presidential pardon is a symbolic act that reinforces the power of the sovereign to exercise power and delineate between good and bare life. The belief in the inevitability of sovereign is flawed; sovereign power is contingent on our acceptance of this power.**

**Fiskesjö 3** – an associate professor of anthropology,specializing in Asian ethnopolitics and related issues. He was educated in his native Sweden as well as in China, and at the University of Chicago, USA, where he received a joint PhD in Anthropology and in East Asian Languages and Civilizations in 2000. He served, 1985-1991, in Sweden's embassies in Tokyo and Beijing, where he was cultural attaché; and in 2000-2005 he served as Director of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, in Stockholm, working with both local diversity issues, and global problems of ownership and repatriation. (Magnus, “The Thanksgiving Turkey Pardon, The Death of Teddy's Bear, and the Sovereign Exception of Guantánamo”)

The annual presidential pardoning of the Thanksgiving turkey in Washington is a full-feathered ritual. At its core, however, it consists simply of a brief public cere-mony in which the US President extends mercy to alone bird, namely, one big fluffy turkey that would oth-erwise have ended up on the Thanksgiving dinner table. But this annually recurring event in reality is pregnant with deep and terrible significance. It holds the inner secrets of sovereign power, insofar as those secrets remain hidden in the archaic rituals in which sovereign power is constituted, recreated and perpetu-ated even in our so-called modern states

We have never been modern,” writes Bruno Latour. And yes, we must admit that the visions of speed, progress, automation, social engineering, and so forth have come to show themselves more often than not as pomp, much of which is, moreover ,orchestrated by forces beyond our control.But even as all of this has begun to disinte-grate, it is still very much apparent that we cling to the belief that we are modern creatures. We still craveaffirmation that by the high noon of our own “today,” we will be standing tall, high up on the ladder of civi-lization, in total control. And we are always, so we want to believe, advancing, moving further away froma distant, “primitive” past. This delirious high oftentimes clouds our per-ception so badly that we tend to dismiss even themost central of the archaic rituals of power as child’splay or innocent games which don’t really matter. Welaugh at them as cute oddities that must have beenleft behind long ago. Not so.

Ritual Mercy for the President’s Turkey

The Thanksgiving turkey pardon is a prime example of an act that is only seemingly innocuous but actually serves to shape our modern consciousness. Masquerading as a joke, it is really a symbolic pardon-ing act which, through public performance, establishesand manifests the sovereign’s position at the helm of the state by highlighting, as an attribute of this posi-tion, his power to control matters of life and death. Alas, the etymological coincidence of the words “exec-utive” and “execution.” This symbolic pardon granted to a turkey, giv-ing it a continued lease on life, signals the very mannerin which sovereignty thrives on the exception: that state of willed emergency where raw power roams free,no longer bound by the constraints or directions of any formal law or legislature, casting aside such constraints in favor of the arbitrary. In this zone of exception, the life-and-death issues at hand are decided on the say-soof the one man whose body natural assumes the posi-tion at the helm of the body politic. And so, the timely message of the Thanksgiv-ing Turkey Pardon is that it raises the old challengesof power and governance, and, by extension, questionsabout how we want our world to be governed. Howare we to condition and constrain the inevitable, thedelegation of executive power to a sovereign?Let’s begin to answer this by taking a closerlook at the strange non-execution of Bird NumberOne, the Thanksgiving Turkey.

**The distinction between good and bare life lies at the heart of Western politics. We must challenge the hierarchy between the human and nonhuman or risk unending violence.**

**Kochi 9** - Sussex Law School, University of Sussex, Brighton, UK (Tarik “Species War: Law, Violence and Animals”)

The distinction between bare life and the good life is a legal-political distinction. It has, at least since Aristotle, resided at the foundation of Western legal and political theory. The law which holds together and  governs the political community is posited with the view of not merely sustaining the bare needs of life, but of establishing and realizing some form of the good life. However, the distinction between bare life and the good life already contains within it a prior distinction, one which arises when the survival of humans is distinguished from and affirmed against the survival of  non-human animals. At the basis of the distinction between bare life and the good life, and hence, at the basis of law, resides the human-animal distinction – a determination of value that the human form of life is good and that it is worth more or better than the lives of  non-human animals. There is a certain Nietzschean sense of the term “good” which can be drawn upon informatively here. My argument is that what occurs prior to the racial and aristocratic senses of the term “good” suggested by Nietzsche as residing genealogically with the concept of the “good life,” is more deeply, an elevated sense of life-worth that humans in the West have historically ascribed to themselves over and above the life-worth of non-human animals. Following this, when the meaning of the term “war” is explained by legal and political theorists with reference to either the concepts of survival or the good life, the linguistic and conceptual use of the term war already contains within it a value-laden human-animal distinction and the primary violence of species war. Survival   and  the  biological   imperative   (survive!)  maybe   seen  as components of a concept of “war” broadly defined. For non-human animals the killing and violence that takes place between them (and with respect to their eating of plant life) may be viewed not as species war but merely as action driven by the biological imperative. However, for humans the acts of killing and violence directed at non-human animals can be understood as species war. While such violence and killing may be thought to be driven, in part, by the biological imperative, these acts also take place within the context of normative judgments made with respect to a particular notion of the good often drawing upon a cosmic hierarchy of life-value established by religious theories of creation or scientific theories of evolution. This reflection need not be seen as carried out by every individual on a daily basis but rather as that which is drawn upon from time to time within public life as humans inter-subjectively coordinate their actions in accordance with particular enunciated ends and plan for the future. In this respect, the violence and killing of species war is not simply a question of survival or bare life, instead, it is bound up with a consideration of the good. For most modern humans in the West the “good life” involves the daily killing of animals for dietary need and for pleasure. At the heart of the question of species war, and all war for that matter, resides a question about the legitimacy of violence linked to a philosophy of value. The question of war-law sits within a wider history of decision making about the relative values of different forms of life. “Legitimate” violence is under-laid by cultural, religious, moral, political and philosophical conceptions about the relative values of forms of life. Playing out through history are distinctions and hierarchies of life-value that are extensions of the original human-animal distinction. Distinctions that can be thought to follow from the human-animal distinction are those, for  example, drawn between: Hellenes and barbarians; Europeans and Orientals; whites and blacks; the “civilized” and the “uncivilized”; Nazis and Jews; Israeli’s and Arabs; colonizers and the colonized. Historically these practices and regimes of violence have been culturally, politically and legally normalized in a manner that replicates the normalization of the violence carried out against non-human animals. Unpacking, criticizing and challenging the forms of violence, which in different historical moments appear as “normal,” is one of the ongoing tasks of any critic who is concerned with the question of what war does to law and of what law does to war? The critic of war is thus a critic of war’s normalization. Unpacking, criticizing and challenging the forms of violence, which in different historical moments appear as "normal," is one of the ongoing tasks of any critic who is concerned with the question of what war does to law and of what law does to war? The critic of war is thus a critic of war's norm-alization.

**And, we must take an absolute refusal of the hierarchy between human and nonhuman. This is not based on an ethics which refuses to acknowledge difference, but based on the rejection of designating the nonhuman as expendable. Breaking from this anthropocentric lens is critical to breaking down the logical underpinnings of biopolitical violence.**

**Pugliese 13** – Research Director at Macquarie University (Joseph, “State Violence and the Execution of Law: Biopolitical Caesurae of Torture, Black Sites, Drones,” p.95-97)

\*edited gendered language

Critically, the 'solution' to this regime of violence is not to shuffle the categories of life up or down the biopolitical hierarchy as this merely reproduces the system while leaving intact the governing power of the biopolitical cut andits attendant violent effects. Reflecting on the possibility of disrupting this biopolitical regime and its hierarchies of life, Agamben writes:

in our culture man has always been the result of a simultaneous division and articulation of the animal and thehuman, in which one of the two terms of the operation was what was at stake in it. To render inoperative the machine that governs our conception of man will therefore mean no longer to seek new - more effective or authentic- articulations, but rather to show the central emptiness, the hiatus that - within man - separates [hu]man and animal, and to risk ourselves in this emptiness: the suspension of the suspension. 21

Precisely because everything is always already at stake in the continued mobilization of biopolitical caesurae, the seeking of new articulations of life that will be valorized as more 'authentic' will merely reproduce the machine without having eliminated its capacity for violence as ensured by the re-articulation of the biopolitical cut. Looking back at the biopolitical infrastructure of the Nazi state, one can clearly see the imbrication of ecology, the regime of animal rights, and the racio-speciesist branding of Jews as collectively exemplifying the dangers of seeking more'authentic' articulations of animals and humans that are predicated on the biopolitical division and its capacity for inversions and recalibrations while leaving the violent order of the biopolitical regime intact. The Nazis effectively called for a more 'authentic' relation to nature ('blood and soil') that was buttressed by animal rights (Reich AnimalProtection laws) and the rights of nature (Reich Law on the Protection of Nature). 22 Animals and nature werethereby recalibrated up the speciesist scale at the expense of Jews. Deploying the violence of racio-speciesism, the Nazis animalized Jews as 'rats,' 'vermin' and other low life forms, situated them at the bottom of the biopolitical hierarchy, and then proceeded to enact the very cruelty and exterminatory violence (cattle car transport, herding incamps replicating stockyards and the industrialized killing procedures of animal slaughterhouses) that they hadoutlawed against animals. The Nazi state also exemplifies the manner in which the regime of (animal) rights can be perfectly accommodated within the most genocidal forms of state violence. This is so, precisely because the prior conceptof human rights is always-already founded on the human/animal biopolitical caesura and its asymmetry of power — otherwise the very categories of 'human' and 'animal' rights would fail to achieve cultural intelligibility. The paternal distribution of rights to non-human animals still pivots on this asymmetrical a priori. Even as it extends its seemingly benevolent regime of rights and protections to animals, rights discourse, by disavowing this violent a priori, merely reproduces the species war by other means

In order to short-circuit this machine, a deconstructive move is needed, a move that refuses to participate in the mereoverturning of the binarized hierarchy, for example: animal > human, and that effectively displaces the hierarchy bydisclosing the conceptual aporias that drive it. The challenge is to proceed to inhabit the hiatus, to run the risk of living the'emptiness' of an atopical locus that is neither animal nor human. This non-foundational locus is the space that Agamben designates as 'the open,' marked by the 'reciprocal suspension of the two terms [human/animal], something for which we perhaps have no name and which is neither animal nor [hujman [and that] settles in between nature and humanity.' Critically, the reciprocal suspension articulates 'the play between the two terms, their immediate constellation in a non-coincidence.' 2 \* In naming their constellation in a non-coincidence, Agamben enunciates the possibility of aLevinasian ethics that refuses the anthropocentric assimilation of the Other/animal/nature into the imperialism of the Same/human. **.**The urgent necessity of instigating the move to render inoperative this anthropocentric regime is not incidental to the violent biopolitical operations of the state. On the contrary, state violence is virulently animated by the logic of the biopolitical caesura and its 'anthropological machine' - which 'produce [s] the human through the suspension and captureof the inhuman.' 21 The anthropocentrism that drives this biopolitical regime ensures that whatever is designated as non-human-animal life continues to be branded not only as expendable and as legitimately enslaveable but as the quintessential'unsavable figure of life.' 25 The aporetic force that drives this regime is exposed with perverse irony in one of the entries of the al-Qahtani interrogation log, which documents an interrogator reading to the detainee in the course of his torturesession two quotes from the book Wlmt Makes a Terrorist and Why?: 'The second quote pointed out that the terrorist mustdehumanize their victims and avoid thinking in terms of guilt or innocence.' In the context of the post-9/11 US gulags, this biopolitical regime of state terror is what guarantees the production of captive life that can be tortured with impunity andthat, moreover, enables its categorization as unsavable. Once captive life is thus designated, it can be liquidated withoutcompunction - without having to think 'in terms of guilt or innocence.

**The standpoint of the nonhuman epitomizes the failure with the status quo. Democratic politics has not only ignored the perspective of the non-human, but also supported their abuse and imprisoned any radical dissent. We must open up to the possibility of a new form of politics. The only thing utopian is the naïve belief that the status quo will work.**

**Calarco 8** – Ph.D, SUNY Binghamton, Associate Professor of Philosophy at Fullerton University (Matthew, “Zoographies: The Question of the Animal from Heidegger to Derrida” p.95-97)

The reader who takes up careful study of Agamben’s work from this angle, seeking answers to sub questions, will be well positioned to grasp its novelty. The overarching thesis of Agamben’s work over the past decade is that there is in fact an “inner solidarity” between democracy and totalitarianism, not at an empirical level, but at a historical and philosophical level. Despite the enormous empirical differences between these two political systems, they are nevertheless united in their investment in the politics of the anthropological machine and in seeking to separate bare (animal) life from properly political (human) life. Even if democratic regimes maintaining safeguards designed to prevent many of the totalitarian excesses perpetrated against bare life (and Agamben’s references to Karen Quinlan and others make it clear that democracies are actually far from successful in such matters), they continue unwittingly to create the conditions of possibility for such consequences. This hidden implication of democracy comes to the fore especially in those instances where the rule of law is suspended, for example, in the declarations of sovereign exception of the law or in the refugee crisis that accompanies the decline of nation-states. Such states of exception are, Agamben argues (following Walter Benjamin), becoming more and more the rule in contemporary political life – and the examples one might adduce in support of this thesis are indeed becoming increasingly and troublingly commonplace. It is considerations of this kind that lead Agamben to the conclusion thatthe genuine political task facing us today is not the reform, radicalization or expansion of humanism, democracy and sovereignty but creating an altogether different form of political life.

Agamben’s work faces two important challenges at this level. On the one hand, neohumanists will (justifiably) wonder whether Agamben’s “coming community” and rejection of the humanist tradition in favor of a nonsovereign and nonjuridical politics will be better able than current democracies to guard against the injustices he condemns. On the other hand, theorists of a more deconstructionist and Levinasian orientation will lkkley see Agamebn’s project as being constituted by a false dilemma between humanist democracy and a nonessentialist thought of community. Although such theorists would share Agamben;s concerns about the problematic virtual possibilities of democratic politics and its ontology, they would be less sanguine about completely rejecting the democratic heritage. For them, the chief political task would consist in filtering through our democratic inheritance to unlock its radical possibilities, in siting on democracy’s commitment to perfectibility so as to expand democracy’s scope and to open democratic politics to its Other. This would bring democracy and its humanist commitments into relation with another though of being with Others that is similar to Agamben’s coming community.

I should say that I find neither of these critical perspectives particularly persuasive and that I believe Agamben offers us overwhelmingly persuasive accounts of the limits of current forms of democracy and humanism. Furthermore, it should be noted that there are moments throughout his work where he gives instances of how his alternative thoughts of politics *can* be actualized in concrete circumstances. But even the most charitable reading of his work must acknowledge that in terms of the kinds of questions posed by neohumanists and deconstructionists, much remains to be worked out at the theoretical and concrete political level in Agamebn’s project. And if the scope of this discussion were limited to an anthropocentric politics, I would argue that the questions and criticisms raised by neohumanists and deconstructionists are very difficult to circumvent. Humanism, democracy and human rights are complicated and rich historical constructs with the intrinsic potential for extensive and remarkably progressive reforms.

And yet, if the question of the animal were taken seriously here and the political discussion were moved to that level as well, the stakes of the debate would change considerably. Who among those activists and theorists working in defense of animals seriously believes that humanism, democracy and human rights are the sine qua non of ethics and politics? Even those theorists who employ the logic of these discourses in extensionist manner so as to bring animals within the sphere of moral and political considerability do not seem to believe that an ethics and a politics that genuinely respects animal life can be accomplished within the confines of the traditions they use.

Of this political terrain, neohumanist arguments concerning the merits of the democratic tradition have little if any weight. Even if one were to inscribe animal rights within a democratic liberatory narrative of expansion and perfectibility (as is sometimes done), such gestured can only appear tragicomic in light of the massive institutionalized abuse of animals that contemporary democracies not only tolerate but encourage on a daily basis. And in many democracies the support of animal abuse goes much further. Currently, militant animal activists in the United States who engage in economic sabatoge and property destruction in the name of stopping the worst forms of animal abuse are not just criticized (and in many cases without sound justification) but are placed at the top of the list of “domestic terrorists” by the F.B.I. and subject to outrageously unjust penalties and prison sentences. In view of the magnitude of such problems, animal activists are currently embroiled in a stricter protracted debate over the merits of reformist (welfarist) versus a stricter and more radical rightist (incrementalist) approach to animal issues and over which approach is more effective in the contemporary political and legal contexts. However, the real question seems to me to lie elsewhere – precisely in the decision to be made between the project of radicalizing existing politics to accommodate nonhuman life (an expansion of neohumanism and deconstruction) and that of working toward the kind of coming politics advocated by Agamben that would allow for an entirely new economy of human-animal relations. While Agamben’s thought is sometimes pejoratively labeled by critics as utopian inasmuch as it seeks a complete change in our political thinking and practices without offering the concrete means of achieving such change, from the perspective of the question of the animal, the tables can easily be turned on the critics. Anyone who argues that existing forms of politics can be reformed or radicalized so as to do justice to the multiplicity of forms of nonhuman life is clearly the unrealistic and utopian thinker, for what sings or sources of hope do we have that humanism and democracy (both of which are grounded in an agent-centered conception of subjectivity) can be radicalized or reformed as to include and give direct consideration to beings beyond the human?

**Our affirmative is an act of assuming a traitorous identity. The first step is to recognize the dynamics and parallels of different forms of privilege by understanding that each and every one of us are positioned as both oppressors and as oppressed. Specifically, we all share in human privilege which is complicit in violence which causes a countless number of non-human animals to suffer every day. The only solution is to adopt the position of a traitor by working against the structures of our own culture. This does not mean we deny our identity, or claim unity with the oppressed, but it does mean that we adopt an ethic that attempts to minimize our own domination**

**Plumwood 2 –** (Val, “Environmental Ethics”, p.205-6)

There are, I have suggested, multiple bases for critical solidarity with nature. One important critical basis can be understanding that certain human societies position humans as oppressors of non-human nature, treating humans as a privileged group which defines the non-human nature, in terms of roles that closely parallel our own roles as recipients of oppression within human dominance orders. Our grasp of these parallels may be based upon imaginative or narrative transpositions into locations paralleling that of the oppressed non-human other: artistic representation has an important place in helping us make such transpositions. Literature has often played such a transposing role historically, especially in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, in relation to the class system, slavery, women’s oppression, and animal oppression. In recent decades science fiction narrative that imaginatively position humans as colonized or exploited reductively as food by alien invaders have provided very powerful vehicles for such imaginative transpositions into a place that parallels that of the non-human food animal. So have those cartoonists whose ‘absurd’ humour depends upon exploiting parallels in the condition of the human and non-human oppressed. A chicken coming from a human house carrying a baby passes a women coming from a chicken coop carrying a basket of eggs, for example. A Larson elephant is outraged when he notices the ivory notes on a piano keyboard at an interspecies party and makes the connection to the fate of his own kind. The leap of recognition that is often described and explained in terms of an unanalysed and capricious emotion of ‘empathy’ or ‘sympathy’ is often better understood in terms of a concept of solidarity that is based on an intellectual and emotional grasp of the parallels in the logic of the One and the Other. Since most people suffer from some form of oppression within some dominance order or other, there is a widespread basis for the recognition that we are positioned multiply as oppressors or colonizers just as we are positioned multiply as oppressed and colonized. This recognition that one is an oppressor as well as an oppressed can be developed in certain cirvumstances to become the basis for the critical ‘traitorous identity’ which analyses, opposes and actively works against those structures of one’s own culture or group that keep the Other in an oppressed position. Traitorous kinds of human identity involve a revised conception of the self and its relation to the non-human other, opposition to oppressive practices, and the abandonment and critique of cultural allegiances to the dominance of the human species and its bonding against non-humans, in the same way that male feminism requires abandonment and critique of male bonding as the kind of male solidarity that defines itself in opposition to the feminine or to women, and of the ideology of male supremacy. These ‘traitorous identities’ that enable some men to be male feminists in active opposition to androcentric culture, some whites to be actively in opposition to white supremacism and ethnocentric culture, also enable some humans to be critical of ‘human supremacism’ and in active opposition to anthropocentric culture. “Traitorous’ identities do not appear by chance, but are usually considerable political and personal achievements in integrating reason and emotion; they speak of the traitor’s own painful self-reflection as well as efforts of understanding that have not flinched away from contact with the pain of oppressed others. What makes such traitorous identities possible is precisely the fact that the relationship between the oppressed and the ‘traitor’ is not one of identity, that the traitor is critical of his or her own ‘oppressor’ group as someone from within that group who has some knowledge of its workings and its effects on the life of the oppressed group. It depends on the traitor being someone with a view from both sides, able to adopt multiple perspectives and locations that enable an understanding how he or she is situated in the relationship with the other from the perspective of both kinds of lives, the life of the One and the live of the Other. Being a human who takes responsibility for their interspecies location in this way requires avoiding both the arrogance of reading in your own location and perspective as that of the other, and the arrogance of assuming that you can ‘read as the Other’ know their lives as they do, and in that sense speak or see as the other. Such a concept of solidarity as involving multiple positioning and perspectives can exploit the logic of the gap between contradictory positions and narratives standpoint theory applies to. The traitorous identity implies a certain kind of ethics of support relations which is quite **distinct from the ethics involved in claiming unity**. It stresses a number of counter-hegemonic virtues, ethical stances with can help to minimize the influence of the oppressive ideologies of domination and self-imposition that have formed our conceptions of both the other and ourselves. As we have seen, important among these virtues are listening and attentiveness to the other, a stance which can help counter the backgrounding which obscures and denies what the non-human other contributes to our lives and collaborative ventures. They also include philosophical strategies and methodologies that maximize our sensitivity to other members of our ecological communities and openness to them as ethically considered beings in their own right, rather than ones that minimize ethical recognition or that adopt a dualistic stance of ethical closure that insists on sharp moral boundaries and denies the continuity of planetary life. Openness and attentiveness are among the communicative virtues we have already discussed; more specifically, they mean giving the other’s needs and agency attention, being open to unanticipated possibilities and aspects of the other, reconceiving and re-encountering the other as a potentially communicative and agentic being, as well as ‘an independent creature of value and originator of projects that demand my respect’. A closely allied stance, as Anthony Weston points out, is that of invitation, which risks an offering of relationship to the other in a more or less open-ended way.

**The United States federal government should prohibit the President’s authority over the life of turkeys.**

**We affirm the resolution, but not in the normative sense, The 1AC is a critical stance which attempts to play with the law as a disused object**

Agamben 05. Giorgio Agamben, famous philosopher, The State of Exception, pg. 63

In the Kafka essay, the enigmatic image of a law that is studied but no longer practiced corresponds, as a sort of remnant, to the unmasking of mythico-juridical violence effected by pure violence. There is, therefore, still a possible figure of law after its nexus with violence and power has been deposed, but it is a law that no longer has force or application, like the one in which the “new attorney,” leafing through “our old books,” buries himself in study, or like the one that Foucault may have had in mind when he spoke of a “new law” that has been freed from all disci- pline and all relation to sovereignty.

What can be the meaning of a law that survives its deposition in such a way? The difficulty Benjamin faces here corresponds to a problem that can be formulated (and it was effectively formulated for the first time in primitive Christianity and then later in the Marxian tradition) in these terms: What becomes of the law after its messianic fulfillment? (This is the controversy that opposes Paul to the Jews of his time.) And what becomes of the law in a society without classes? (This is precisely the de- bate between Vyshinsky and Pashukanis.) These are the questions that Benjamin seeks to answer with his reading of the “new attorney.” Obvi- ously, it is not a question here of a transitional phase that never achieves its end, nor of a process of infinite deconstruction that, in maintain- ing the law in a spectral life, can no longer get to the bottom of it. The decisive point here is that the law—no longer practiced, but studied— is not justice, but only the gate that leads to it. What opens a passage toward justice is not the erasure of law, but its deactivation and inactivity [inoperosità]—that is, another use of the law. This is precisely what the force-of-law (whichkeepsthelawworking[inopera]beyonditsformal suspension) seeks to prevent. Kafka’s characters—and this is why they interest us—have to do with this spectral figure of the law in the state of exception; they seek, each one following his or her own strategy, to “study” and deactivate it, to “play” with it.

One day humanity will play with law just as children play with dis- used objects, not in order to restore them to their canonical use but to free them from it for good. What is found after the law is not a more proper and original use value that precedes the law, but a new use that is born only after it. And use, which has been contaminated by law, must also be freed from its own value. This liberation is the task of study, or of play. And this studious play is the passage that allows us to arrive at that justice that one of Benjamin’s posthumous fragments defines as a state of the world in which the world appears as a good that absolutely cannot be appropriated or made juridical (Benjamin 1992, 41).