études rurales

Études rurales

189 | 2012
Sociabilités animales

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« Un rai de lumière et puis plus rien ». Les animaux comme mouvement

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Electronic version
URL: http://journals.openedition.org/etudesrurales/9630
DOI: 10.4000/etudesrurales.9630
ISSN: 1777-537X

Publisher
Éditions de l'EHESS

Printed version
Date of publication: 5 July 2012
Number of pages: 139-153

Electronic reference
Henry Buller, « "One slash of light, then gone" », *Études rurales* [Online], 189 | 2012, Online since 03 July 2014, connection on 07 January 2020. URL : http://journals.openedition.org/etudesrurales/9630 ; DOI : 10.4000/etudesrurales.9630

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"ONE SLASH OF LIGHT, THEN GONE"

ANIMALS AS MOVEMENT

Henry Buller

THE TITLE FOR THIS PAPER comes from a poem by Ruth Padel [2004] called "Tiger Drinking at Forest Pool". In it Ruth Padel speaks of the animal as "flirting between the worlds of lost and found". The animal lies "just beyond" any purely scientific or phenomenological understanding, any hard and fast "object" or "subject", that "between" opens the door to imagination, to otherness, to myth and a multitude of different ways of knowing. It is reminiscent of Michel Serres' *"bruit de fond"* [1982] and Heidegger's *"Zwischen"* [1989]. More importantly, it reveals the animal as embodying movement, of moving away as well as towards ("flirting") or going somewhere else, beyond our framing into some physical but perhaps also meta-physical "other" place. But "flirting" also suggests something teasing and something playful in that movement, something that both enchants and provokes an emotional response. Flirting is, after all, for attracting interest and this, above all, is what animals do. As Lévi-Strauss once famously remarked, they are "good to think with". Animals move in and out of the (human) frame. They both define it and exceed it. One is reminded here also of John Berger's famous essay in which he writes:

> Animals came from over the horizon, they belonged there and here [1980: 4].

Moving and being are one. As Georges Perec wrote:

> To live is to pass from one space to another [1974: 6].

In a recent video clip, taken at the Kruger National Park in South Africa and posted on the internet, a crocodile emerges from a lily-covered pool to seize a young elephant by the trunk. The elephant struggles to prevent itself being dragged into the water by pushing its legs out before it, shifting its centre of gravity and arching its back. A second video clip, also posted on the internet, shows a gorilla running on its hind legs in the rain. As he runs, he lifts his hands over his head to protect himself from the falling raindrops. Both of these gestures are, in many ways, highly familiar to many human beings too. In these embodied responses and in these shared movements, there is the potential for communication and understanding that arguably crosses and hence challenges more foundational barriers of difference and denomination. As humans, we might not share verbal language with non human animals but through our bodies and the movement of our bodies, we do partage, as Darwin pointed out many years ago [1899], worldly forms of expression, emotion, response and, thereby recognition that can both facilitate cross-species

knowledge and critically, provide the basis for a different ethical engagement born of a shared corporeal and fleshy communality.

Philosophical engagement with the non-human has been predominantly autobiographical, the animal acting as foil to human exceptionalism and witness to our ontological distinctiveness. Recent years have seen a "post-human" embrace of the non-human; not as a rejection of the human but rather as part of what has been a continual act of de-centring. Drawing largely upon the twin theoretical heritages of, on the one hand, "the metaphysics of subjectivity" (from Heidegger to Deleuze and beyond) and, on the other, "the nature-culture hybridity" of science studies (from Bruno Latour and beyond), this has both considerably raised the profile and legitimacy of non-human accountings and encouraged us to find ways to, in Giorgio Agamben's words "smash the anthropological machine" [2004]. Nevertheless, a good deal of this post-human, or more-than-human, endeavour retains its conceptual and theoretical attachment to what is essentially philosophical and conceptual positioning in which the animal remains only "good to think with". Even Derrida, whose work underscores so much of contemporary human-animal studies, was not curious enough for Donna Haraway:

> Why did Derrida not ask, even in principle, if a Gregory Bateson or Jane Goodall or Mark Bekoff or Barbara Smuts or many others have met the gaze of living, diverse animals and in response undone and redone themselves and their sciences? [2008: 21]

Arguably, what is needed are new, or different, ways of knowing; "positive knowledge" as Donna Haraway calls it [2008]. Cary Wolfe in his argument for a refocusing of the post-humanist agenda argues that the principal challenge is one of epistemology:

> [It] forces us to rethink our taken-for-granted modes of human experience, including the normal perceptual models and affective states of Homo sapiens itself, by recontextualising them in terms of the entire sensorium of other living beings and their own autopoietic ways of "bringing forth a world" ways that are, since we ourselves are human animals, part of the evolutionary history and behavioural and psychological repertoire of the human itself [2010: xxv].

Wolfe's call for a broader sensorium of affective engagement with the non-human animal articulates well with current social science interest in moving beyond the primacy of (uniquely human) language, words and representations as the sole vectors of communication, understanding and knowing *[ibid.]*. At a wider scale, the shift to a more-than-human(ism) accompanies an associated shift from "meaning" to "affect" and from "discourse" to "practice" [Whatmore 2006: 603-604]. In this "counter-linguistic turn" [Weil 2006], other forms of subjectivity are potentially revealed not through rational thought but through corporeal, haptic and sensory performance. In her perceptive paper, Simone Weil draws in both the autobiographical writings of the veterinarian Temple Grandin, whose autism has given her a unique insights into farm animal behaviour, and the poetry of

Rilke to claim that, in our approach to understanding animals, humans are:

> [...] disadvantaged by their consciousness and unable to perceive "the open" that is available to animal eyes [2006: 88].

Jakob von Uexküll used the term *"Merkmal"* or "perception mark" [O'Neil 2010] to denote those features of the world the perception of which constitutes an animal's subjective world *(Umwelt)*. Might our own "perception marks" of these non-human subjectivities be arguably too constrained, and limited, not just by our linguistic orderings and scientific methods but also by our guilty conscience. Donna Haraway again:

> What if work and play, and not just pity, open up when the possibility of mutual response, without names, is taken seriously as an everyday practice available to philosophy and to science? [2008: 22]

In this paper, I want to explore the idea of studying, observing, practicing and sharing embodied movement as a means to experiment with a new mode of connectivity and "being" with non-human animals:

> [For movement] provides a physical mechanism to bridge the theoretical gap that separates human from non-human [Lulka 2004: 439].

The article works towards a more pragmatic "epistemology of movement". In the first section, I review the way in which animal movement, the potential of movement, motility and the resultant agency has provided a focus for both philosophical and representational accounts of the non-human animal. In the section that follows, I consider the use of movement as a mechanism (to borrow Lulka's phrase) for developing a more generous and inclusive notion of animality; one that opens the potential for a common lexicon of human and non-human understanding, a way of seeing and articulating with the animal world in a more ethical and less hierarchical, more vital, affective and relational sense. As Tim Ingold writes:

> Wherever there is life, there is movement [2011: 72].

Animals as Movement

Animals have always been known through movement. Animals are movement. Aristotle wrote around 350 BC:

> Some animals fly, some swim, some walk, others move in various other ways.

"Most animals are motile" which means the power to make themselves move the dictionary reassures us. The Linnaean classification of plants and animals turned largely (but not exclusively) on the "movement" of the latter and the fixity of the former. As Foucault writes in *The Order of Things:*

> If living beings are a classification, the plant is best able to express its limpid essence; but if they are a manifestation of life, the animal is better equipped to make its enigma perceptible [2004: 302].

Animals make themselves known to us through their movement. The spaces they trace and occupy invite our orderings [Philo and Wilbert 2000].

Foucault, however, goes further in ascribing to the late 18th century palaeontologist, Georges Cuvier, a fundamental step in the understanding of animal locomotion. Rejecting the static and ordered "deployment of the visible" [Foucault 2004: 292] employed in classical taxonomy, both Cuvier and Buffon sought a more dynamic and functional comprehension of animal bodies, their movement, their responsiveness and their being. For Buffon, and the artists of the "Jardin du Roi":

> [Animal movement, and its representation, offered] a formidable and sustained challenge to the hegemony of the Cartesian animal-machine [Liebman 2010: 667].

The resultant 19th century shift from the taxonomic ordering of the animal kingdom to a more vitalist acknowledgement of individual, motile life was, in Foucault's eyes, a moment of epistemic change, one that arguably led to the later separation of ethology from comparative anatomy [Jaynes 1969]. More recently, the British geographer Sarah Whatmore offers, "in place of the rigid counters of the flat maps and species inventories of conservation science" [2006: 33], a more fluid interpretation of formerly impermeable categorisations. Animal mobilities, she argues, and the "spaces of motion" they form, are "relational achievements" that reach far beyond mere biology and the simplicity of Nikolaas Tinbergen's "four Why's" [1963].

"Animal": the etymology is unequivocal, *"anima":* to breathe, to have spirit. To be "animate" is to be alive, to move. To be "inanimate" is to be still. One "animates" by making move, one obviously thinks of "animation". One "re-animates" by re-starting motion. From the primary somatic movement of the heartbeat, respiration and circulation, flow other movements which collectively become the animal (human or otherwise). One might begin to think of the animal as an achievement of multiple motions in space, but an achievement that, in motion, is constantly changing, never fixed. Without being random or irrational, this spatialisation through movement is, to use Deleuze and Guattari's phrase "nomadic" and "vibratory", constructed from, and in response to, the ever-shifting and chaotic surrounding world and its affordances [Lorraine 2005]. This is a surface defined through presence and the performance of movement a territorialisation, that Deleuzian combination of milieu and rhythms.

Movement appears in Derrida's definition of animality in terms of "auto-motricity":

> A spontaneity that is capable of movement, of organizing itself and affecting itself, marking, tracing and affecting itself with traces of its self [2008: 49].

Before Derrida, Bergson, in *Creative evolution* argued that:

> What constitutes animality is the faculty of utilizing a releasing mechanism for the conversion for as much stored-up potential energy as possible into "explosive" actions [i.e. movement and what he famously referred to as the *"élan vital"*] [1998: 132-133].
>
> In the animal [...] all points to action, that is to the utilization of energy for movements from place to place [*ibid.:* 133].

Ultimately, for Bergson "movement is reality itself" [*ibid.:* 171] leading us to suggest: Reality = Life = Movement = Animal, where the distinction between the object-agent and its movement collapses [Boundas 1996]; a world whose reality is defined by movement. If we think of animal movement as a "process" then we rejoin Alfred N. Whitehead and his "process philosophy" as well as Deleuze and "becoming" as imminence. Holmes Rolston III writes:

> Wildlife is organic form in locomotion [1987: 187].

Perhaps the most well known portrayal of animal movement is the work of Muybridge in the latter decades of the 19th century. It comes as no surprise that Muybridge's experiments with moving film images should have begun with animals. As Akira Lippit, commenting on Muybridge's work, remarks:

> The figure of the animal has always been destined to serve as the symbol of movement itself [2000: 185].

Muybridge's film of the horse, in particular, has since become iconic. Muybridge gave the name "zoopraxography", as the study of animal movement and invented the "zoopraxiscope" to display individual images of animals as a continuous movement. For Muybridge and his *zoopraxiscope,* like the French photographer Étienne-Jules Marey and his *fusil photographique,* the new technologies of deconstructing animal movement, paralleling the new biological sciences which were busy deconstructing animal bodies, created a new animal ontology. As Stephen Guidry puts it:

> In these early attempts to make the movement-being of animals legible, the bodies of the animals and, ultimately, the animals themselves are simplified and stripped down to what is commonly seen as their essence: moving parts. The animals are understood as real because their movement over time can be understood within the duration of the filmic event. Conversely, the filmic image is understood as representing reality because the animals are understandable as moving, as existing in real space and time and doing what it is that animals do, namely, moving about [2005: 60].

Yet, of course, these were not a continuous movement. Jonathan Burt points out in a recent paper [2006] that Muybridge's films are made up of individual images, independently taken. Were we to take a Bergsonian or Deleuzian stand on this, we might argue that real movement can never be simply a sequence of static points:

> Movement cannot be reconstituted on the basis of instants any more than being can be constituted on the basis of presents [Boundas 1996: 83].

Movement is something more, in movement there is life.

Animals also move away. The irony, as Akira Lippitt points out [2000], as did John Berger before him [1980], is that the growing appearance of animals in film offered a counterpoint to their growing dis-appearance in the real world. Berger wrote:

> Everywhere, animals disappear [1980: 12].

Animals move away, and there are today legions of examples of such disappearance.

They have become “spectral”, existing in film or in other forms of technological resurrection, or indeed in zoos, which Berger defines as monuments to loss and absence. Even those animals that are present in zoos can confound us by being still, by not performing the movements we have come to associate with them, often entirely wrongly. As a result, animal movements become engineered into spectacle, whether it be through the design of enclosures which oblige animals to move in certain “iconic” ways.

Most notably this is found in confinement and restraint. Farm animals exemplify this and particularly intensively reared farm animals; sows in farrowing crates, egg-laying hens in batteries, veal calves in crates and so on. They are denied movement, mobility and motility; and consequently, we refer increasingly to such practices as unnatural and, paradoxically, inhuman. For a long time, they were (and often still are) denied subjectivity and feelings. The movements that counted most were from the slaughterhouse, the movements of international trade, as objects, bodies and body parts, sites of accumulation [Shukin 2009]. Domestication is first and foremost, an act of corralling, of denying “free” movement to animals and, as we have got better at it, that physical denial of movement has expanded into new forms; constraining genetic movement through breed controls, constraining of somatic and psychological movements through the use of drugs and other interventions. For many advocates of higher levels of farm animal welfare, it is so often the lack of free movement that has come to symbolise the unacceptable practices of contemporary animal husbandry. Significantly, the most successful animal welfare gains over the last decade have been in the area of “free-range” production, with “ranging free” be the expression, through motility, of animal subjectivity and therefore the right for moral consideration.

Finally, in movement lies agency. Through movement, non-human (and human) animals define not only themselves but also both space and time as their own [von Uexküll 2010]. It is principally through movement that animals have been seen to have agency in our anthropocentric world. That physical, corporal and motile agency that attracts our attention, whether it be through acts of “resistance” or the active “co-construction” and “co-assembly” of the world through presence and vitality as Donna Haraway describes so well in *When Species Meet* [2008]. Sarah McFarland and Ryan Hediger open their book on *Animals and Agency* [2009] with the story of a tiger escaping from San Francisco zoo and killing a spectator. David Lulka, in a fascinating piece of Herzog’s movie *Grizzly Man* in that same book, maintains that:

> Movement, being multidimensional at its core, is perhaps the most illustrative and ubiquitous manifestation of agency [2009: 87].

The challenge for contemporary animal studies, and particularly those that draw in the social sciences, is how to conceptualize and engage with the liveliness of animal movement as a legitimate way of knowing, exchanging and developing “aesthetic” [Johnston 2008] or “positive” [Haraway 2008] knowledge; in Jamie Lorimer’s words:

> [How to] develop modes of affirmative critique for witnessing and evoking lively non-human difference and the forces that pass between human and animal bodies [2010: 238].

Anyone who works with animals, plays with animals, keeps animals knows that it is predominantly through movement and through their embodied actions that animals negotiate with us and with each other. Movement then, becomes more than functionality and physiological causation, more than agency; it becomes communication, interrelation and so on emerging dimensions of this motile ontology. In the growing animal studies literature, particular attention is now being paid to embodied and performative approaches as a means of witnessing and accounting for "the practical, sensual and affective dimensions to human-non-human interactions" [Lorimer 2010: 238].

It is to these approaches I now turn.

Movement as Communication and Understanding

Embodied movement is something we human animals share with our non-human animalian confrères; that ability to be "able" [Nussbaum 2006]. Jakob von Uexküll [2010] recognised body movement, along with form but also independent of it as a critical perception mark for animal subjectivity. The question I want to turn to here is to what extent recognition of a communality in embodied movement allows us to reach across human and non-human subjectivities in the creation of Donna Haraway's elusive "positive knowledge" [2008]. Such communality was hinted at by Darwin:

> The young and the old of widely different races, both with man and animals, express the same state of mind by the same movements [1899: 405].

In her consideration of Lorenz' work with geese and jackdaws, Vinciane Despret makes a valuable connection. "Using his own body as a tool for knowing, as a tool for asking questions, as a means to create a relation that provides new knowledge", Lorenz, she writes, creates a sense of "being with" a young goose that constitutes a mutual co-domestication or "anthropo-zoo-genetic practice" [2004: 130-131]:

> This experience by which Lorenz constructs a "being with" sheds light on one of the ways bodies and worlds articulate each other: it is a particular mode of "disposing" both body and world. Lorenz produces a goose's body to allow a goose's world to affect him (and also to allow a human's world to affect a goose). He learns to be affected [*ibid.:* 131].

This is a different form of language. As Vicky Hearne puts it:

> With horses, as with dogs the handler must learn to believe, to "read" a language s/he hasn't sufficient neurological apparatus to test or judge [1986: 107].

Later, she goes on:

> To be understood is to be open to understanding [*ibid.:* 109].

Of course, this communication between human and non-human can also betray us. Reviewing the famous story of Hans the horse, Vinciane Despret asserts:

> Their bodies were talking and moving against their will, outside the frame of their consciousness [2004: 113].

Deleuze and Guattari write "To become animal is to participate in movement" [1986: 13] as the primatologist Barbara Smuts makes clear through the embodied empathy in her telling of an encounter with baboons in East Africa:

> The process of gaining their trust, changed almost everything about me, including the way I walked and sat, the way I held my body, and the way I used my eyes and voice. I was learning a whole new way of being in the world – the way of the baboon. I was not literally moving like a baboon – my very different morphology prevented that but rather I was responding to the cues that baboons use to indicate their emotions, motivations and intentions to one another, and I was gradually learning to send such signals back to them [2001: 295].

In these encounters, Barbara Smuts has found, what Lori Brown calls "a valid form of communication and a foundation for ethics; and an interpenetration that yields a shared, co-created field of meaning and a concomitant ethical engagement" [2007: 276]. Barbara Smuts herself goes on:

> I had gone from thinking about the world analytically to experiencing the world directly and intuitively. It was then that something long slumbering awoke inside me, a yearning to be in the world as my ancestors had done, as all creatures were designed to do by aeons of evolution. Lucky me. I was surrounded by experts who could show the way. Learning to be more of an animal came easily as I let go of layers of thinking and doing that sometimes served me back home but were only hindrances here [...] With great satisfaction, I relinquished my separate self and slid into the ancient experience of belonging to a mobile community of fellow primates [2001: 299-300].

Movement then is a way of bridging the human/non-human divide, the positive knowledge of sharing movement with animals through encounter, through being together, whether on the farm, at home, in the wild and so on:

> Rhythms create multivariate, possible relations amongst living things expressed within and operating across different milieus [Lorimer 2010: 61].

Bodily movement is a co-alignment that helps us understand each others' needs [Brown 2007]. Through body movement, animals not only express, enact and develop their agency but they communicate that agency to others (to us) just as we do to them, creating new co-assemblages of movement. Movement becomes a mode of existence [Ingold 2011] that is common to human and non-human alike and therefore a basis not only for human/non-human somatic sensibility [Greenhough and Roe 2011] but also ethical engagement:

> I begin to construct an ethics of movement, an ethics in which movement is viewed not only as a means of redefining human/non-human relations, but also as a means of facilitating the agency of non-humans in the construction of their own development [Lulka 2004: 440].

In recent years, a growing number of researchers and scholars have sought to

extend the early interactive and observational approaches pioneered by primatologists like Jane Goodall, Dian Fossey and later Barbara Smuts to explore novel ways of using shared sensory, haptic and motile experiences with animals as a means not only of developing common practical knowledges and understandings but also of moving towards a more-than anthropomorphically representational and more symmetrical sense of a common cultural community where animals actions and animal agency are "no longer downplayed or ignored" [Franklin *et al.* 2007: 45] but are recognised as embodied forms of cross-species understanding and sensibility. New multi-species ethnographies or "zooethnologies" open up to investigation those "contact zones where lines separating nature from culture have broken down, where encounters between Homo sapiens and other beings generate mutual ecologies and co-produced niches" [Kirksey and Helmreich 2010: 546].

Pet and companion animals, particularly through play relationships with humans, have understandably proved more accessible to these new "trans-species methodologies".[1] Donna Haraway, for example, refers to play between human and dog as only occurring among "those willing to risk letting go of the literal" [2008: 240]. She refers to "those wonderful, joy-enticing signals like play bows and feints [that] usher us over the threshold into the world of meanings that do not mean what they seem [...] the world of meanings loosed from their functions is the game of co-presence in the contact zone" [*ibid.:* 240]. Colin Jerolmak observes:

> Humans do not simply teach their dogs how to play; they evolve routines together ones that work for them [2009: 377].

In his account of play with his dog Kate, David Goode [2007] employs a similar ethnomethodological approach to reveal and explore the intersubjectivities that both permit and result from play. Goode describes that play, and the phenomenological layers of his and Kate's mutual engagement, in the following way:

> Matters assumed but not communicated; matters communicated but not spoken; and matters formulated into language. Under such a conception, "what is known or taken for granted in common" is not a reflection of language but of "assumed" intersubjective phenomenon anterior to formulation into language [...] Perception of and action upon naturally given features of the world do reflect the social membership of participants [2007: 89].

The key here is not a belief in mutual and symmetrical intentionality or even, necessarily, a sense of a broader ontological flattening between human and animal. Rather it lies in the emergence of possibly shared set of knowledges, practices and ultimately culture, and "the interconnectedness of the various embodiments of this social form" [Jerolmak 2009: 387]. Jerolmak's analysis of human-animal play reveals non instrumental associations that go beyond the formalities of

1. See J. Bradshaw and H. Nott [1995] ; A. Miklósi *et al.* [2000] ; M. Bekoff [2004] ; R. Fox [2006] ; É. Laurier *et al.* [2006] ; A. Franklin *et al.* [2007] ; D. Goode [2007] and A. Horowitz [2009].

language and categorisation. The actors "loose themselves" [*ibid.:* 386] in what Catherine Johnston calls a process of "becoming liminal through play" [2009: 178].

Such approaches demand new methodological devices in which the movement and corporeality of both observer and observed are intertwined in a process of joint trans-species accounting [Franklin *et al.* 2007]. The difficulty is often to know what to look for/at. Which events, relations, movements are the stuff of such accounting? For Catherine Johnston [2009], citing Marc Higgin [2004] the critical process is that of learning to both perceive and extricate the otherwise unnoticed, unremarked and unrepresented. In a recent chapter that looks through the lenses of ethology and phenomenology to go beyond the seemingly absolute alterity of animals in human-animal associations, Hayden Lorimer explores what he calls "the lore of their likeness and the consequences of inter-species sociality for the figuring of personhood" [2010: 56]. Observing seals over a period of several seasons basking on a river bank and, in his terms "learning-by-witnessing" [*ibid.:* 72], Hayden Lorimer identifies the study of movement and other embodiments as a future research trajectory for the "beyond worlds" of animal life and highlights the methodological importance of "watchfulness": in other words an openness to the nearness (which contains elements of both likeness and otherness) of inter-species relations. Yet there is another dimension at work here too; that of being or becoming interesting. For a more genuine, more generous animal studies needs to respond not only to what human researchers find interesting about non-human animals but also to what non-human animals might find interesting, either about each other or about us. In an intriguing chapter, Vinciane Despret [2005] asks: "Do sheep have opinions?" Drawing on the work of the primatologist Thelma Rowell, she explores an ethology that rather than simply observing behaviour according to our own hypotheses creates the possibility of new voices and new visibilities revealing of other ways of seeing.

Within the field of farm animal welfare, Françoise Wemelsfelder [2007] has pioneered the technique known as "qualitative behaviour assessment" which uses the human observation and "qualitative perception" of farm animal bodies and their movement to discern the latter's subjective experience and emotional state. Avoiding the classic interpretive error of the "grinning chimpanzee", she argues:

> It is not the grin that is the body language; it is how the animal grins, how its whole body moves, that makes the grin an expression of fear, or anger, or something else [2007: 28].

Françoise Wemelsfelder's methodology involves the close observation of animal movement, expressive state and behaviour. Critically, for her, such expressive states are taken not as abstractions but as lived and observed moments in time [Wemelsfelder *et al.* 2001]. The result, she suggests, is a significant shift away from classic approach of animal behavioural studies:

> Thus it is not the "walking", "biting" or "vocalizing", or a combination of these

> behaviours, that express fear or confidence: the animal expresses these qualities through its behaviours. This principle, that animals are expressive "behavers" rather than assembled strings of "behaviour", is known in the wider psychological and philosophical literature as "agency" [*ibid.:* 219].

Reporting, on the one hand, "significant agreement between observers in the interpretation of the animals' behavioural expressions" [Wemelsfelder 2007: 29], and strong correlations between these "subjective" observations and physiological measures such as animal heart rate and heart rate variability, Françoise Wemelsfelder argues:

> When we take the time to closely observe animals and the quality of their expressions, we can develop greater insight into their welfare and quality of life *[id.]*.

Elsewhere, Xavier Boivin and his colleagues [2003], Paul Hemsworth and Grahame Coleman [1998] have demonstrated the importance of positive human contact and physical interaction between stockperson and farm animal in the latter's welfare. They explore the possibility of shared meaning and coordination between farm animal and stockperson as each becomes accustomed, and is reassured by, the others familiar movements [Waiblinger *et al.* 2005].

Moving on

This paper has explored movement as a lexicon of human/non-human relational cognisance, "somatic sensibility" [Greenhough and Roe 2011], and "dwelt understanding" [Johnston 2009]. It has suggested that embodied practices with animals constitute an important means of rendering articulate, opening up and participating in shared endeavour that uses "the space between them to live with, rather than past, each other" [Johnston 2009: 154]. The consequences of this are, as we have seen, both ontological and ethical.

Of course, there are also limitations. In their comparison of scientists' relationships to both human and animal experimental subjects, Beth Greenhough and Emma Roe [2011] identify a number of risks emerging from an ethics based entirely upon "somatic sensibilities". Two of them concern us here.

The first is anthropomorphism, long criticised by the natural science as an unacceptable form of mentalism not amenable to objective study [Wynne 2007]. Recent animal-studies writings however have been swift to turn to the creative, empathetic and intuitive aspects of a more reflexive anthropomorphism, born not from the distance of observation but from the closeness of intertwined lives. They have proposed such variants as "critical anthropomorphism" [Burghart 1991], "reverse anthropomorphism" [Webster 2011] responsible and informed or "aesthetic anthropomorphism" [Johnston 2009]. Such novel approaches espouse the idea that revised forms of anthropomorphism offer, at worst, a partial escape from anthropocentrism and, at best, a recognition of what we share with animals, and can experience with them, rather than simply what makes us different.

The second concern is proximity, both physical proximity (being with) and taxonomic

proximity (being like). Certainly, contemporary accounts of embodied human-animal interaction place special emphasis on the physicality of play, touch, regard and so on within what is often an inter-mammalian "contact zone", favouring such sites as the home [Jeromak 2009], the training ground [Haraway 2008], the garden [Johnston 2009], the laboratory [Greenhough and Roe 2011] and the park [Laurier *et al*. 2006]. Yet more distant animal movements can also be shown to be constitutive of embodied networks of human-animal relations [Whatmore and Thorne 2000] and non-human ontologies [Lulka 2004]. Movement is not simply the physical displacement of self-propelled entities across the surface of the world. Rather, as Tim Ingold points out, it is the very texture of the world [2011]. Of course, in embodied encounters with animals, one can also get too close as many have found out. Suddenly, in Hayden Lorimer's words:

> Disjuncture can occur in all this connectivity [2010: 74].

At the end of the day, there is the time-deepened movement of our very corporeality. Cora Diamond calls for a more somatic understanding of animals when she asks:

> How much of that coming apart of thought and reality belongs to flesh and blood... [2008: 78]

For, if we share movement, and bodies and flesh with non-humans, then we also share vulnerability and finitude [Wolfe 2008], the ability to suffer and, ultimately, the inevitability of death.

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Abstract

Henry Buller, *"One Slash of Light, then Gone": Animals as Movement*

Animals are defined by movement. Animals are movement. As Akira Lippit remarks: "The figure of the animal has always been destined to serve as the symbol of movement itself". Animals never stop moving, never stop moving us, never stop moving across and between the frontiers by which we set them apart. In the invigorated engagement between the social sciences and animal worlds, movement and the sharing of movement offer us the potential for original ways of knowing animals and of understanding our relationship to them. This paper explores that potential and the ontological and ethical consequences it has for living with animals.

Keywords

animals, movement, post-humanism, human-animal relations

Résumé

Henry Buller, *« Un rai de lumière et puis plus rien » : les animaux comme mouvement*

Les animaux sont définis par le mouvement. Comme l'a souligné Akira Lippit : « La figure de l'animal a toujours servi de symbole au mouvement lui-même. » Les animaux ne cessent jamais de se mouvoir, ne cessent jamais de nous faire bouger et ne cessent jamais de franchir les frontières que nous avons établies entre eux et nous. Dans l'intérêt renouvelé que les sciences sociales portent au monde animal, le mouvement et le partage du mouvement offre une voie originale pour appréhender les animaux et comprendre nos relations avec eux. Cet article nous invite à réfléchir aux conséquences ontologiques et éthiques de cette nouvelle approche.

Mots clés

animaux, mouvement, post-humanisme, relations homme-animal