The Other in *A Sand County Almanac*: Aldo Leopold's Animals and His Wild-Animal Ethic

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Much philosophical attention has been devoted to "The Land Ethic," especially by Anglo-American philosophers, but little has been paid to *A Sand County Almanac* as a whole. Read through the lens of continental philosophy, ***A*** *Sand County Almanac* promulgates an evolutionary-ecological world view and effects a personal self- and a species-specific Self-transformation in its audience. It's author, Aldo Leopold, realizes these aims through descriptive reflection that has something in common with phenomenology—although Leopold was by no stretch of the imagination a phenomenologist. Consideration of human-animal intersubjectivity, thematized in *A Sand County Almanac,* brings to light the moral problem of hunting and killing animal subjects. Leopold does not confront that problem, but it is confronted and resolved by Jose Ortega y Gassett, Henry Beston, and Paul Shepard in terms of an appropriate human relationship with wild-animal Others. Comparison with the genuinely Other-based Leopold-Ortega-Beston-Shepard wild-animal ethic shows the purportedly Other-based human and possibly animal ethic of Emmanuel Levinas actually to be Same-based after all.

I. INTRODUCTION

A Sand County Almanac and Sketches Here and There is often called the bible of the contemporary environmental movement and its author, Aldo Leopold (1887–1948), is often called a prophet.[1] Likewise, *A Sand County Almanac's* capstone essay, "The Land Ethic" is the seminal text for contemporary environmental ethics.[2] Leopold's

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[1] See Wallace Stegner, "The Legacy of Aldo Leopold," in J. Baird Callicott, ed., *Companion to A* Sand County Almanac*: Interpretive and Critical Essays* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1987), pp. 233–45, for both the bible and prophet tropes. For an early use of the prophet trope, see Roberts Mann, "Aldo Leopold: Priest and Prophet," *American Forests* 60, no. 8 (August 1954): 23, 42-43; for a continuation of the prophet trope, see Ernest Swift, "Aldo Leopold: Wisconsin's Conservation Prophet," *Wisconsin Tales and Trails* 2, no. 2 (September 1961): 2–5; for a popularizing of the prophet trope, see Roderick Nash, "Aldo Leopold: Prophet," in *Wilderness and the American Mind* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1967), chap. 11, pp. 182–99.

[2] See J. Baird Callicott and Clare Palmer, eds., *Environmental Philosophy: Critical Concepts in the Environment*, vols. 1–5 (London: Routledge, 2005), for the seminal place of "The Land Ethic" in academic environmental philosophy.

"land ethic" is, more generally, the environmental ethic of choice among contemporary environmentalists and conservation biologists.[3] Indeed, according to one leading conservation biology textbook, "Leopold's Evolutionary-Ecological Land Ethic is the best informed and most firmly grounded of any approach to nature and should serve as the philosophical basis of most decisions affecting biodiversity."[4] A great deal of discussion has been devoted to "The Land Ethic" by environmental ethicists, most of whom have a background in Anglo-American philosophy; an article discussing the land ethic appeared in the first issue of *Environmental Ethics* in 1979 and in practically every volume of that journal for the past thirty years.[5] The larger text, *A Sand County Almanac and Sketches Here and There* has received less attention from philosophers than "The Land Ethic," and hardly any at all from the perspective of continental philosophy.

Here we propose to engage the more descriptive essays in *A Sand County Almanac* using the resources of continental philosophy, more than those of Anglo-American, with a focus on animal Others. We suggest that the descriptive encounter with animal Others provided by Leopold in the *Almanac* serves to redefine and transform the self—the self of the book's "implied author" and, through the familiar process of reader identification with the author, this encounter also transforms the self of the reader.[6] Personal transformation, in turn, makes possible Self transformation, a transformation in the metaphysics of the Self in Western philosophy, most fully and recently explored by Jacques Derrida in his posthumously published book, *The Animal that Therefore I Am*.[7] Key to both self and Self transformation is the encounter with animal Others, less as objects than as Other subjects. We go on to consider how the work of ecophilosopher Paul Shepard extends the Self transformation achieved through encounter with the animal Other implicit in *A Sand County Almanac* and how it complements the transformed metaphysics of the Self gained by reflection on the animal Other. Finally, we conclude with a seeming paradox: that both Leopold and Shepard, while expressing a deep admiration and even affection for wild animals, were avid and unapologetic sport hunters, pursuing and

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[3] See Gary K. Meffe and C. Ronald Carrol, "Conservation Values and Ethics," in *Principles of Conservation Biology*, 1st, 2nd, and 3rd eds. (Sunderland, Mass.: Sinauer Associates, 1994, 1997, 2006), chap. 2, a premier textbook, for the prominence of the land ethic in conservation biology.

[4] Meffe and Carroll, *Principles*, 2nd ed., p. 14.

[5] J. Baird Callicott, "Elements of an Environmental Ethic," *Environmental Ethics* 1 (1979): 71–81. We verified the associated claim by examining the annual index of *Environmental Ethics*. Further, examining the footnotes of each issue of *Environmental Ethics* indicates that Leopold is cited in practically every number of this journal.

[6] For the "implied author" of *A Sand County Almanac,* see John Tallmadge, "Anatomy of a Classic," in J. Baird Callicott, ed., *Companion to* A Sand County Almanac*: Interpretive and Critical Essays* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1987), pp. 110–27. See Michel Foucault, "What is an Author?" in Donald F. Bouchard and Sherry Simon, trans., *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977), pp. 124–27.

[7] Jacques Derrida, *The Animal that Therefore I Am*, ed. Marie-Louise Mallet, trans. David Wills (New York: Fordham University Press, 2008).

killing the objects (indeed, subjects) of their admiration and affection. What is it about sport hunting that, for Leopold and Shepard, is among the noblest and highest expressions of the human relationship with some wild animal Others? The Spanish existential philosopher Jose Ortega y Gassett provides the key to dispelling that paradox.

Leopold was trained in the then new applied science of forestry at the Yale Forest School, which was founded in 1900 by Gifford Pinchot.[8] Leopold graduated in 1909 and that same year joined the U.S. Forest Service, which had been created by Congress in 1905.[9] Pinchot was its first chief. Leopold left the forest service in 1924 and pioneered a new applied science, game management, following the model of forestry.[10] He was also an autodidact in ecology, a science that budded off from evolutionary biology and later hybridized with thermodynamics.[11] Anglo-American scholars have made a convincing case that the overarching goal of *A Sand County Almanac and Sketches Here and There* is nothing less than to effect a paradigm shift in Western thought—from a toxic mix of biblical anthropocentrism and materialistic consumerism to a world view grounded in evolutionary biology and ecology.[12]

There exists tension between phenomenology, one prominent type of continental philosophy, and the natural sciences, which some phenomenologists revile as "naturalism." If *A Sand County Almanac* is designed to inculcate a scientific world view—an evolutionary-ecological world view—it may therefore appear to be an unrewarding text to refract with a continental-philosophy lens. The "naturalism" that twentieth-century phenomenology's founder, Edmund Husserl, mostly contested was the reduction of intentional consciousness—the "transcendental" subject, first recognized, as such, by Kant—to an object for scientific description and analysis, as proposed in psychology.[13] Husserl, in short, contrasted a phenomenological engagement of intentional consciousness with psychology's naturalistic observations. Leopold, of course, was not well acquainted with continental philosophy and has little to say about psychology—and nothing at all about "intentionality."

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[8] See Curt Meine, *Aldo Leopold: His Life and Work* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1988), for this and the other biographical details in this paragraph.

[9] Ibid.

[10] Ibid. For the way Leopold conceived game management by analogy with forestry, see Aldo Leopold, "Forestry and Game Conservation," *Journal of Forestry* 16 (1918): 404–11.

[11] See Joel B. Hagen, *An Entangled Bank: The Origins of Ecosystem Ecology* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1992).

[12] See Peter Fritzell, "The Conflicts of Ecological Conscience," in J. Baird Callicott, ed., *Companion to* A Sand County Almanac*: Interpretive and Critical Essays* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1987): 128–53; and J. Baird Callicott, "Turning the Whole Soul: The Educational Dialectic of *A Sand County Almanac*," *Worldviews* 9 (2005): 365–84. Paul Ott, "Value as Practice and the Practice of Value," *Environmental Ethics* 32 (2010): 285–304, would add that Leopold's transformation of value, associated with this transformed world view, was brought about through experience—an addition with which we would not disagree.

[13] See especially, Edmund Husserl, "Philosophy as Rigorous Science," in Quentin Lauer, trans., *Phenomenology and the Crisis of Philosophy* (New York: Harper and Row, 1965): 71–47.

But Leopold does explore the possibility of a trans-scientific, interspecies, intersubjectivity, as we document shortly; nor does he objectify consciousness—neither human nor animal—or attempt to explain it as an object of scientific study. Most importantly and generally, Leopold is adamant that science alone is inadequate for a comprehensive understanding of the world. He himself has a quarrel, if not with "naturalism," then what might be called "scientism"—an uncritical belief that science is definitive, exhaustive, objective, and value-free. Science may inform metaphysics and ethics, but it cannot supercede or eclipse them. "That land is a community is the basic concept of ecology," Leopold wrote in the "Foreword" to *A Sand County Almanac*, "but that land is to be loved and respected is an extension of ethics. That land yields a cultural harvest is a fact long known, but latterly often forgotten. These essays attempt to weld these three concepts."[14]

Further, Leopold developed a descriptive technique that has something in common with phenomenology. Unlike physics and chemistry, which portray the natural world abstractly and mathematically, ecology was characterized by British ecologist Charles Elton as "scientific natural history."[15] Elton was a friend of Leopold's from whom Leopold borrowed the "community concept." The word *history* in the phrase *natural history* comes directly from the Greek ιστορια, meaning not *history* in the contemporary sense—an account of past events—but *inquiry*.[16] As commonly practiced by amateur literati, such as Gilbert White, natural history is an inquiry into nature, more particularly the close observation and description of natural phenomena together with personal observation *and self-reflection*.[17] Charles Darwin's *Voyage of the Beagle* is another excellent example of a work in the genre of natural history.[18] *A Sand County Almanac* fits—albeit somewhat uncomfortably—into that genre as well.

In addition to game management, Leopold pioneered another descriptive science, phenology—observing and recording the seasonal arrival and departure of birds, the leafing of trees, the budding, flowering, and seed-setting of forbs, etc.[19] That is, he observed and recorded the *phenomena* of the changing seasons. Much has

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[14] Aldo Leopold, *A Sand County Almanac and Sketches Here and There* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1949), pp. viii–ix.

[15] Charles Elton, *Animal Ecology* (London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1927), p. 1.

[16] The modern sense of history, as an account of past events, derives from the title of Herodotus's book *Historiai* (Inquiries), which was about many things, but most saliently about the Greek-Persian wars. Because it was mostly a book about history (in the modern sense of the word), the more general Greek meaning of Herodotus's title narrowed, by association with the book's major subject, to the modern meaning—an account of past events.

[17] Gilbert White, *The Natural History and Antiquities of Selbourne in the County of Southampton* (London: Macmillan, 1900) (first published in 1789).

[18] Charles Darwin, *Journal of Researches into the Natural History and Geology of the Countries Visited during the Voyage of H.M.S. Beagle Round the World, Under the Command of Capt. Fitz Roy, R.N.,* 2nd ed. (London: John Murray, 1845).

[19] Nina Leopold Bradley, A. Carl Leopold, John Ross, and Wellington Huffaker, "Phenological Changes Reflect Climate Changes in Wisconsin," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 96 (1999): 9701–04.

been made of the coincidence—or perhaps something more than coincidence—that both *economy* and *ecology* are derived from the Greek οικος (house). After all, ecology has also been characterized as the study of the "economy of nature."[20] We do not wish to read too much into the coincidental derivation of *phenology* and *phenomenology* from the Greek φαινομενον (that which appears or is seen), from φαινεσφαι, passive of φαινειν (to show), but that common derivation too might be more than a coincidence; it may invite speculation that phenomenology and phenology have something more in common than a common etymology.

However that may be, the kind of sciences that Leopold practiced were not the sort that trammel the world with abstract mathematical matrices, nor that posit theoretical entities (such as molecules, atoms, and subatomic particles) as ultimate realities, nor that truck and trade in abstractions and idealizations, such as Newton's laws of motion. Rather ecology (scientific natural history), in part, and certainly phenology, also only in part, are concerned with describing directly observed and experienced phenomena. Much of Leopold's masterpiece is in fact devoted not only to describing the natural phenomena that he himself was perceiving, but also to introspection and self examination. Thus, although Leopold was certainly not a phenomenologist, he was engaged in disciplined observation and description together with introspective self-reflection, not altogether unlike that in which phenomenologists engage. Further, we think that it would not be far-fetched to explore *A Sand County Almanac* as a kind of Heideggerian "clearing"—*Lichtung*, as, for example, explicated by Hubert Dreyfus—in which many usually unnoticed beings come to light.[21]

II. THE ANIMAL OTHER IN "THE SHACK SKETCHES"

"January Thaw" is the first essay in part one, "The Shack Sketches," of *A Sand County Almanac*.[22] It is all about animal Others. The author is awakened by dripping water on an unseasonably warm, mid-winter morning and goes out of his cabin to see what the thaw has aroused. He follows the tracks of a skunk, "curious to deduce his *state of mind*."[23] The trail leads past a meadow mouse (a usually unnoticed being

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[20] See Donald Worster, *Nature's Economy: A History of Ecological Ideas*, 2nd ed. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

[21] Hubert Dreyfus, *Being-in-the-World* (Cambridge: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 1995).

[22] The actual title of part one is "A Sand County Almanac." To unambiguously distinguish part from whole, we refer to part one as "the shack sketches," licensed to do so by the author who writes, in the foreword, that "These shack sketches are arranged seasonally as a 'Sand County Almanac'—or, as the author left his manuscript upon his death in April 1948, 'Sauk County Almanac.'" There is no Sand County, Wisconsin. Leopold's shack is located in Sauk County, Wisconsin. As Dennis Ribbens explains, the county name was changed—by exactly whom is not known—in the process of posthumous editing. See Dennis Ribbens, "The Making of *A Sand County Almanac*," in J. Baird Callicott, ed., *Companion to* A Sand County Almanac*: Interpretive and Critical Essays* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1987): 91–109.

[23] Leopold, *A Sand County Almanac*, p. 3 (emphasis added).

if ever there was one), who probably "*feels grieved* about the thaw."[24] That mice and men, as subjects, are not so different, after all, is cemented by the following characterization: "The mouse is a sober citizen who *knows* that grass grows in order that mice may store it as underground haystacks, and that snow falls in order that mice may build subways from stack to stack: supply, demand, and transport all neatly organized."[25] As men are anthropocentric, mice are microtocentric; and, by implicitly drawing the analogy, anthropocentrism is gently lampooned as no less preposterous than microtocentrism.

"January Thaw" ends where it began with reflection about an Other community member's subjectivity:

> The skunk track leads on, showing no *interest* in possible food, and no *concern* over the rompings and retributions of his *neighbors*. I wonder what he has on his *mind*; what got him out of bed? Can one *impute* romantic motives to this corpulent fellow, dragging his ample beltline through the slush? Finally the track enters a pile of driftwood, and does not emerge. I hear the tinkle of dripping water among the logs, and I *fancy the skunk hears it too*.[26]

Just as Leopold follows the trail of the skunk, we as readers follow the trail of his narrative. Through his narrative style, Leopold basically induces us, as readers, to engage in the same search that he endeavors—namely, to probe the mind of an animal Other. Through the course of his descriptions, the intersubjective world is unfurled. The surroundings along with their inhabitants are experienced by the implied subject—the "I" that the author creates for his readers—from multiple points of view: that of a skunk, a meadow mouse, and a rough-legged hawk. Leopold ends at the pile of driftwood. Tracking the handful of pages of "January Thaw" we readers end up, not with a list of "objective" "scientific" facts, but with a literary reconstruction of a multi-perspectival experience of a common environment narrated by a discursive animal (the author).

Husserl captured in more formal prose the kind of multi-experiential, intersubjective perspective that Leopold captures in narrative prose. As Husserl emphatically declares,

> I am positioned as equal in relation to every other as constituting co-bearer of the world. As I myself, so also is every other necessary for the existence of the world—the very same world that is for me real and objective. I cannot think away any other without giving up this world. No determinate other subject and, by implication, no indeterminate other, anticipated in the open horizon-sense, is to be thought away.[27]

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[24] Ibid., p. 4 (emphasis added).

[25] Ibid. (emphasis added).

[26] Ibid., p. 5 (emphasis added).

[27] Donn Welton, *The Other Husserl: The Horizons of Transcendental Phenomenology* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002), p. 149, quoting *Intersubjektivität III*, p. 46.

Husserl's phenomenological concept of intersubjectivity, according to Christian Lotz, applies to animals—albeit with some reservations—as well as to humans.[28] For Husserl and the phenomenological tradition that he inaugurated, intentionality is the basic structure of experience. While in no sense located in that tradition, Leopold is aligned with it in portraying humans as having no monopoly on intentional consciousness. Many animal Others are intentional subjects as well; they too enjoy intentional consciousness, no less than we. Leopold's writing exhibits another similarity to that of phenomenologists: he does not hide himself in his descriptions. He is very much present as perceiver, experiencing animal Others as objects, yes, but he also acknowledges them as perceiving, experiencing subjects in their own right. Further, through Leopold's construal of himself as a member of a broader intersubjective biotic community, readers are invited imaginatively to similarly reconstrue their own identities as members of a biotic community and to imaginatively experience some of its Other members as fellow subjects. This deceptively simple narrative situates Leopold and us, his readers, as one kind of being among many Others, whose minds may still not be known—indeed, they may not be knowable—but who, nevertheless, co-constitute the world.

As we see, Leopold unapologetically personifies and anthropomorphizes the Other members of his biotic community. Is that consistent with the descriptive evolutionary-ecological world view that, according to Peter Fritzell, he is trying to convey?[29] Note that Leopold does not anthropomorphically portray his animal subjects in the way that Kenneth Grahame does in *The Wind in the Willows*—in which a mole wearing a waistcoat visits a water rat and they drink tea from cups and go boating on a river.[30] Leopold's subjects do only what their species is capable of doing and his careful descriptions of their activities never deviate from meticulous descriptive accuracy. They just don't do what they do as mindless automata, as if by unconscious instinct alone.

Leopold confronts the suspect—from the metaphysical point of view of scientism—legitimacy of personifying and anthropomorphizing animal Others in "The Geese Return." There, he declares, "The geese that proclaim the revolving seasons to our farm are aware of many things, including the Wisconsin statutes."[31] The critical reader is expected to respond with indignant disbelief. How could geese possibly be aware of the Wisconsin statutes?! But, as the reader immediately discovers, if not aware of the Wisconsin statutes, goose behavior indicates that geese are aware of one effect of those statutes—a prohibition on spring waterfowl

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[28] Christian Lotz, "Psyche or Person? Husserl's Phenomenology of Animals," in Dieter Lohmar and Dirk Fonfara, eds., *Interdisziplinäre Perspektiven der Phänomenologie Neue Felder der Kooperation: Cognitive Science, Neurowissenschaften, Psychologie, Soziologie, Politikwissenschaft und Religionswissenschaft* (Dordrecht: Springer, 2006), pp. 190–202.

[29] Fritzell, "Conflicts."

[30] Kenneth Grahame, *The Wind in the Willows* (London, Methuen, 1908).

[31] Leopold, *A Sand County Almanac*, p. 18.

hunting. "November geese are aware that every marsh and pond bristles from dawn till dark with hopeful guns"—and one can certainly believe that!—while "March geese are a different story."[32]

Still, Leopold further presses the issue: "In . . . watching the daily routine of a spring goose convention, one notices the prevalence of singles—lone geese that do much flying about and much talking. One is apt to impute a disconsolate tone to their honkings and to jump to the conclusion that they are broken-hearted widowers, or mothers hunting lost children."[33] Like the "mouse engineer" of "January Thaw," implicit analogies are drawn between humans and beasts in the form of metaphor. Geese gather in "conventions," just like Freemasons; their honkings are a form of "talking"; they are looking for "children," not goslings; and the single geese are "widowers" and "mothers."

Directly, Leopold confronts the question that his rhetoric must have raised in the scientistic reader's critical mind: "The seasoned ornithologist knows," he writes, "that such subjective interpretation of bird behavior is . . . ," he does not say "illegitimate," just "risky."[34] Note that an "ornithologist"—which Leopold here implicitly claims to be—is a kind of descriptive scientist, not just an amateur bird watcher. Then he goes on to argue—now as an ornithologist—that a statistical analysis indicates that flocks of six or multiples of six were more common than "chance alone would dictate"—and that lone geese could thus well be "bereaved survivors of the winter's shooting, searching in vain for their kin."[35]

Leopold's confirmation, in terms of "cold-potato mathematics," of his "fond imaginings" and "sentimental promptings of the bird-lover" is but a tongue-in-cheek surrogate, we suspect, for the actual evolutionary argument that characteristically remains implicit in part one.[36] In both "January Thaw" and "The Geese Return," Leopold uses the word *impute* to characterize his "subjective interpretation" of animal behavior. How can one claim to know what one cannot directly observe—for example, a goose's grief? From the point of view of the prevailing (now as then, we fear) positivistic scientism, one cannot. Leopold, however, does not claim to know, but only to impute, imagine, and fancy. So the pertinent question is, "To what extent is such imputing, imagining, and fancying reasonable and reliable?"

Certainly children—and most adults, for that matter—know intuitively that animal Others, no less than other humans, are conscious, intentional subjects. Phenomenologists concur.[37] The *experience* of intersubjectivity is direct and unmediated. Of course, one cannot, however, directly observe the consciousness of an animal Other. But neither can one directly observe the consciousness of another human

[32] Ibid., p. 19.
[33] Ibid., p. 20.
[34] Ibid.
[35] Ibid., p. 22.
[36] Ibid.
[37] Corrine Painter and Christian Lotz, eds., *Phenomenology and the Non-Human Animal: At the Limits of Experience* (Dordrecht: Springer, 2007).

being. We may say "I feel your pain," but such an expression has the colloquial meaning that it has precisely because one person cannot really feel another's pain or grief or loneliness. Yet we are—ornithologists and laypersons alike—perfectly confident that we correctly impute to other human beings both thoughts and feelings. On what grounds is such confidence based?

Frankly, the spontaneous belief in the *existence* of Other subjects, both human and nonhuman, appears to be as primitive as any ontologically foundational belief, such as that there is a "real" world of independently existing objects, external to one's own consciousness. But a long legacy of Cartesian dualism and an even longer legacy of Judeo-Christian anthropocentrism has led those enthralled by scientism to doubt the subjectivity of animal Others, while uncritically accepting the existence of an "external world," as analytic philosophers call it, and of other *human* subjects. So, how can we convince our positivistic-scientistic selves (the ornithologists that therefore we are), at least of this: that we can be as confident of the existence of other nonhuman animal subjects as we are of the existence of other human subjects?

In short, on the basis of analogy, Other people look, more or less, like we look. Thus, from the artificially skeptical point of view of positivistic scientism ("ornithologism," in this context, to coin a word), we may conclude that they think and feel, more or less, like we think and feel, when they act, more or less, like we act. To the extent that animals look like us (many have four appendages, noses, eyes, ears, mouths) and act like us (many startle, flee, play, stalk, sigh, yawn, whimper, socialize), by way of a similar analogy we may just as legitimately conclude that they think and feel, more or less, like we think and feel. We are, after all, animals ourselves—from an evolutionary point of view—"the animal that therefore we are," as Derrida might put it. So, as it turns out, the determination to believe that animals are unconscious automata is a legacy of pre-Darwinian (as well as pre-phenomenological) metaphysics. Leopold's subjective interpretation of animal behavior is perfectly consistent with—indeed, an implication of—an evolutionary world view.

We carefully say "by way of a *similar* analogy," not "by way of the *same* analogy," to emphasize that Leopold is aware that the intentional consciousnesses of animal Others is different from our own human intentional consciousness. Animals are not only different from humans, they are different from one another, a difference to which philosophers especially have been insensitive. In *The Animal that Therefore I Am*, which was left unfinished at his death and published posthumously, Derrida observes that what all nonhuman animals do have in common—which obscures, especially for philosophers, the myriad differences among them—is that they are Other than human. In his book on the animal Other, Derrida reaches deeply into the roots of the Western world view—both Hebrew and Greek, ancient and modern—for clues to the systematic devaluation and domination of animals in the culture shaped by that world view. Derrida expresses outrage at many things that humans do to animals, from the physical (abattoirs) to the metaphysical (thinking

of them as automata). His title, of course, alludes to Descartes famous dictum, "I think therefore I am." Among the things that Derrida most bitterly protests is the way the word *animal*—which he would replace with the coinage *animot* (from the Latin *anima* and the French *mot*, remembering that the plural of the French word *animal* is *animaux*)—masks the many, indeed the bewildering, differences among animals: from sharks to elephants, lizards to dolphins, parrots to tigers. . . .[38]

Mindful of Derrida's lament, we might add that the reliability of subjective interpretations of animal behavior diminishes as differences in anatomy, physiology, and behavior increase. For us, the states of mind of skunks and mice may be more reliably imagined than the emotions of geese—because mice and skunks are mammals, as are we, while geese are not. Geese are, however, warm-blooded and social animals, while the frogs in the marshes and the fish in the ponds of the geese's habitat are cold-blooded solitaries. What do frogs feel and fish think? Wisely, Leopold doesn't go there.

III. SELF TRANSFORMATION IN "SKETCHES HERE AND THERE"

Leopold is best known for his descriptive and prescriptive focus on the objective *biotic* community. A subtle subtext of part one of *A Sand County Almanac* elides that focus onto a *community of subjects* and thus transforms his readers' understanding of animal Others—rendering a perception of them as conscious, intentional subjects. Leopold thus counters a cultural prejudice regarding animals originating with biblical exclusionism and reinforced by Cartesian-Newtonian scientism. Leopold's oblique description of these Others leads not only to his readers' transformation of their perception of animal Others, but to a transformation of the author's own subjectivity. If not the major theme of part two, "Sketches Here and There," this is certainly one of them.

In an essay titled "Escudilla," in the "Arizona and New Mexico" section of part two, Leopold writes of a mountain by that name, which dominated the landscape on the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest to which Leopold was posted in 1909. "There was, in fact, only one place from which you did not see Escudilla on the skyline: that was on top of the mountain itself. Up there you could not see the mountain, but you could feel it. The reason was the big bear."[39] On the mountain lived the last grizzly in the Southwest. The implicit bear literally animated the mountain. Nor was Leopold alone in sensing the presence of the perceptually absent bear. Even "the most hard-bitten cowboys were aware of bear . . . his personality pervaded country."[40] Because the bear killed a cow every spring after emerging from hibernation, a government hunter was called in to exterminate him. After the bear

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[38] Derrida, *The Animal that Therefore I Am*.
[39] Leopold, *A Sand County Almanac*, p. 134.
[40] Ibid., pp. 134–35.

was killed, Leopold tells us, "Escudilla still hangs on the horizon, but when you see it you no longer think of bear. It's only a mountain now."[41] The bear, Leopold realizes, too late to have prevented its execution, was a subject, a self—with a "personality"—that affected his own self. The bear, moreover, mediated Leopold's relationship with the landscape, giving it a quality of heightened reality.

"Escudilla" is a personal narrative that is only suggestively universalizable. Everyone in that region at that time (even the most hard-bitten cowboys) had the same heightened experience as Leopold, though doubtless few were consciously aware of it or reflected on it. "On a Monument to the Pigeon" in the "Wisconsin" section of part two is not about self-discovery, but Self-discovery, discovery of something fundamental to our species' common humanity. The pigeon of the title is the extinct passenger pigeon, in commemoration of which a monument had been erected in Wyalusing State Park by the Wisconsin Society for Ornithology. In his eulogy to the extinct species, Leopold reflects on who "We" are: "It is a century since Darwin gave *us* the first glimpse of the origin of species. *We* know now what was unknown to the preceding caravan of generations: that men are only fellow-voyagers with other species in the odyssey of evolution."[42] That collective self-realization leads—or it ought to, anyway—to a collective Self-transformation:

> This new knowledge should have given *us*, by this time, a sense of kinship with fellow-creatures; a wish to live and let live; a sense of wonder over the magnitude and duration of the biotic enterprise.
>
> Above all *we* should, in the century since Darwin, have come to know that man, while now captain of the adventuring ship, is hardly the sole object of its quest, and that his prior assumptions to this effect arose from the simple necessity of whistling in the dark.
>
> These things, I say, should have come to *us*. I fear they have not come to many.[43]

In the most poignant and emotionally gripping essay in *A Sand County Almanac*, "Thinking like a Mountain," Leopold relates how these things first came to him. Back when he was assigned to the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest, Leopold would have been the last forest-service officer to try to prevent the killing of Escudilla's big bear, for he himself then, and for many years thereafter, beat the drum of predator eradication—all in the name of game protection.[44] In "Thinking like a Mountain," Leopold recalls a moment of doubt, which, in subsequent years became a contrary conviction. Like the bear on Escudilla, wolves animated the landscape of the Southwest. Indeed, Leopold's description of the way the bear gave life to Escudilla pales in comparison to his description of the way wolves then animated the whole American Southwest:

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[41] Ibid., p. 137.
[42] Ibid., p. 109 (emphasis added).
[43] Ibid., p. 109–110 (emphasis added).
[44] See Meine, *Aldo Leopold*.

> Those unable to decipher the hidden meaning [in a wolf's howl] know nevertheless that it is there, for it is felt in all wolf country, and distinguishes that country from all other land. It tingles the spine of all who hear wolves at night, or scan their tracks by day. Even out of sight or sound of wolf, it is implicit in a hundred small events: the midnight whinny of a pack horse, the rattle of rolling rocks, the bound of a fleeing deer, the way shadows lie under spruces. Only the ineducable tyro can fail to sense the presence or absence of wolves. . . .[45]

Perhaps Irene Klaver alludes to this passage in the *Almanac* with the title of her essay "Silent Wolves: The Howl of the Implicit."[46] In any case, Leopold continues, "My own conviction on this score dates from the day I saw a wolf die." He

> . . . reached the wolf in time to watch a fierce green fire dying in her eyes. I realized then, and have known ever since, that there was something new to me in those eyes—something known only to her and to the mountain. I was young then, and full of trigger itch; I thought that because fewer wolves meant more deer, that no wolves would mean hunters' paradise. But seeing the green fire die, I sensed that neither the wolf nor the mountain would agree with such a view.[47]

"Thinking like a Mountain" is a confessional narrative. After the experience that it describes, there followed a personal transformation, a conversion, as it were, from one state of being to another. Leopold left the church of anthropocentric, utilitarian resource conservation, which he had joined at Yale. He eventually went on to found the new nonanthropocentric, deontological church of evolutionary-ecological ethics. Saul of Tarsus saw a blinding light and heard the voice of Jesus Christ who asked, "Why persecutest thou me?" (Acts 22:7). As his friends then called him, "Leo" of Albuquerque persecuted wolves and the Wolf deva fixed him with her defiant gaze and there too he saw a light, a fierce green fire. Transforming something so constitutive of one's self as one's mature world view is indeed self-transformation or even Self-realization (*sensu* Arne Naess). Saul of Tarsus became Paul the Apostle. Leo of Albuquerque became Aldo Leopold, author of the "bible" of the contemporary environmental movement. Following the killing of the Wolf and seeing the dying flame in her eyes, Leopold was born again, no longer the same person as before. (Or so this narrative is crafted to suggest. Leopold did eventually apostologize on behalf of wolves and other predators, but his conversion was less immediate than Paul's, only fully realized after another quarter century had elapsed.)

"Thinking like a Mountain" is the pivotal essay in *A Sand County Almanac and Sketches Here and There*. From the opening vignette, "January Thaw," the reader has been seductively drawn to the vicarious experience of an intersubjective community of Other subjects. The initial essays of part two, "Marshland Elegy" and

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[45] Leopold, *A Sand County Almanac*, p. 129 (emphasis added).

[46] Irene J. Klaver, "Silent Wolves: The Howl of the Implicit," in David Rothenberg, ed., *Wild Ideas* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995), pp. 117–31.

[47] Leopold, *A Sand County Almanac*, p. 130.

especially "On a Monument to the Pigeon" provide the natural-history context—the evolutionary-ecological world view—which validates and reinforces that experience. They play the role of the new Genesis in this new holy writ. "Thinking like a Mountain" converts the reader into a true believer. It does so in a way that would most deeply penetrate the consciousness of Leopold's target audience: through the passion of blood sacrifice—not by a crucifixion, but by a means no less thoughtlessly brutal and tragically transformative.

IV. THINKING ANIMALS

As Derrida's *The Animal that Therefore I Am* testifies, like Anglo-American philosophers, continental philosophers only slowly and latterly freed themselves from one of the deepest prejudices in Western thought: that there is a metaphysical lacuna separating human beings from all Other beings. Lotz notes, regarding such a lacuna in Husserl, that "although we can find many manuscripts, in which Husserl deals with animals, it will probably not be too successful to push Husserl into current research on animals nor into the ethical debate about them."[48] That lacuna is there certainly in Heidegger, who was born in the same decade as Leopold. It is bridged in Merleau-Ponty's concept of the necessarily embodied subject and critically confronted in Derrida's last work. A cornerstone of Leopold's philosophy is the theory of evolution and its anthropological corollary: that *Homo sapiens* is but one animal species among myriads of others. Yet *Homo sapiens* is spectacularly different from all other animal species in that very capacity which has so fascinated continental philosophers: the quality and power of the human subject, human consciousness, the human mind. We are thinking animals; if not uniquely thinking animals, then certainly, among all animals, we specialize and excel in thinking.

In *The Descent of Man*, Darwin himself speculated on the evolution of human intelligence, among other signal, and closely associated, human capacities—such as language and ethics. In his book, *Thinking Animals: Animals and the Development of Human Intelligence,* published in 1978, Paul Shepard argues that we evolved to become thinking animals by "thinking animals."[49] Our analysis of the animal Other in *A Sand County Almanac* indicates that Leopold is not only revealing the existence of Other animal subjects and the realities that their (often very different) intentional consciousnesses structure, but that recognition of animal Others is both self- and Self-transformative. That is, intersubjective interaction with animal Others transforms a person's personal sense of self—epitomized by Leopold's eye-to-eye encounter with a dying wolf—and the conceptual relocation of *Homo sapiens* in the community of animal Others transforms our Self-understanding, our understanding of what it means to be human. In *Thinking Animals*, Shepard greatly refines and develops

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[48] Lotz, "Psyche or Person?" p. 191.

[49] Paul Shepard, *Thinking Animals: Animals and the Development of Human Intelligence* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1978).

the philosophical exploration of animal consciousness that is only suggestively sketched by Leopold in *A Sand County Almanac*. There, going beyond Leopold, he explores the way intersubjective interaction with animal Others not only changes our understanding of what it means to be human, intersubjective interaction with animal Others is indeed what made *Homo sapiens* human. Ironically, according to Shepard, it was the human relationship to animals that created a metaphysical lacuna between humans and animals—if indeed there is such a lacuna.

While Shepard is certainly working in the tradition pioneered by Darwin in *Descent*, is he also consciously extending the insights of Leopold in *A Sand County Almanac*? In the most expansive sense, the answer must be "of course," because Leopold and Shepard approach the question of human and Other animal consciousness within the general parameters of the theory of evolution. Moreover, Shepard finds in the theory of evolution, the same thing Leopold did—something much more than a "value-free" scientific hypothesis. Rather the theory of evolution, for both Leopold and Shepard, represents a new Genesis, a mythic alternative to the biblical account of creation, with powerful religious overtones. Leopold and Shepard both appreciate what few others have: that the theory of evolution and ecology can touch in us a deep spiritual chord and represents not only a new scientific world view but, potentially, a new religious world view.

In his anecdote-filled swansong, *The Others: How Animals Made Us Human*, published in 1996, the year of his death, Shepard writes,

> In graduate school at Yale I attended a seminar called "Evolution in the Light of Genetics, Biogeography, and Paleontology." It had the effect on me of a religious epiphany. Evolution does not answer the big questions as to where the world is going or why—myths don't have to explain everything. Evolutionary thinking gives me relatedness, continuity with the past, common ground with other life, a kind of celebration of diversity. It is much more humble than the eschatology of "world religions" or the secular progress of literary humanism.[50]

But is there a direct line of intellectual descent, as it were, from Darwin through Leopold to Shepard? Yes, there is. "After World War II, I went to study wildlife conservation with Bennitt," Shepard writes in *The Others*. That would be Rudolph Bennitt, a quail man, who was a family friend of the Shepards; and the place of study would be the University of Missouri. Shepard goes on,

> In his class we used Aldo Leopold's 1935 text on game management. By the time I left Columbia, Missouri, in the summer of 1949, Leopold was dead and we had all seen his new book, *A Sand County Almanac*, published posthumously. Those three years and that book framed the question that has dogged me ever since.[51]

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[50] Paul Shepard, *The Others: How Animals Made Us Human* (Washington: Island Press, 1996), pp. 7–8.

[51] Shepard, *The Others,* p. 5.

In addition to Bennitt, Shepard also studied wildlife conservation with Bill Elder at the University of Missouri. Elder had been a student of Leopold's at the University of Wisconsin and married Leopold's daughter, Nina, in 1941.

Shepard graduated from the University of Missouri in 1949, with a double major in English literature and wildlife conservation. He completed his Ph.D. at Yale, Leopold's alma mater, in 1954, with an interdisciplinary synthesis of conservation, landscape architecture, and art history under the tutelage of Paul Sears and G. Evelyn Hutchinson. (From 1973 to 1994 Shepard was Avery Professor of Natural Philosophy and Human Ecology at Pitzer College and the Claremont Graduate School.)

Just how does Shepard think that animals made us human? Concepts are the currency of human thought. Concepts are mental pigeonholes by means of which we sort, identify, organize, and connect sensorially experienced objects. We now think by means of a congeries of incredibly rich, complex, and multifaceted conceptual schemata, which include such domains as types of popular music (blues, rock, punk, funk, metal, disco, rap, hip-hop, emo), literary genres (novels, novellas, short stories, memoir, biography, autobiography, nature writing, poetry), furniture (tables, chairs, couches, love seats, armoires, chests-of-drawers), elements (hydrogen, helium, nitrogen, oxygen, uranium), and so on and so on. Shepard's most basic claim is that the original template for all such conceptual domains is the way the human mind orders the natural world taxonomically—which, in his realist view, mirrors the actual order of natural taxa. Animals do not come in a continuum—wolf, wolf-wolf-cougar, wolf-cougar, cougar-cougar-wolf, cougar. Any given animal fits neatly and unambiguously into a single mental pigeonhole, a single conceptual category—although, of course, there is the phenomenon of hybridization among different species of the same genus. Except in the case of hybrids, an animal is either a wolf, a cougar, or something else quite definite—a coyote, a bobcat, or whatever. The original pattern for all subsequent human thinking, according to Shepard, is thinking animals.

Why then is *Homo sapiens* the thinking animal *par excellence*? That is, why are we the only hyper-thinking species? A cornerstone evolutionary assumption of *The Descent of Man*, no less than of *The Origin of Species,* is *natura non facit saltus*. Nature does not make jumps; there are no leaps in evolutionary development. Most evolutionary anthropologies, after Darwin, cleave to the same assumptions: for there to have evolved an animal as thoughtful as *Homo sapiens,* there must have first evolved less thoughtful kinds of thinking animals from which *Homo sapiens* evolved, and there must be less thoughtful kinds of animals still around that share in this evolved capacity, but to a lesser degree. The quintessentially thinking animal could have evolved, according to Shepard, only as an omnivorous primate.

Why a primate? For several reasons. Brain size and a high brain-to-body ratio—called the encephalization quotient (EQ)—is one. Primates have a high EQ. You cannot think many big thoughts with a small brain or even a large brain if you have a proportionately larger body—to the management and coordination of which

your large brain is largely devoted. For another, primates are intensely social and sociability implies self-awareness and constant re-assessment of the social status of oneself. High-end thinking involves a rich interiority, an introspective and reflective consciousness. And why an omnivore? Because an omnivore combines the kinds of consciousness typical of both predator and prey. Predators attend to other species, to the point of fixation, but seem not to be self-reflective. Prey are more self-aware and diffusely alert. Human thinking, according to Shepard, evolved in a self-aware social animal that had the brain capacity required for thinking many and big thoughts and an orientation of attention to other species—the taxonomic order of which provided the exemplar for all subsequent conceptual schemata.[52]

Also, intensely social animals, such as primates, are in constant communication with other members of their societies. A necessary condition for the evolution of human thinking is the evolution of language. Or, perhaps more precisely, language is the objective correlative of thought. Words, according to Shepard, call stereotypical images of absent things to mind. Syntax—with its past, present, and future tenses and distinctions between agents and patients, grammatical subjects and objects (both direct and indirect)—is the linguistic device that relates and connects the stereotypical images, become concepts, to form a temporally and spatially integrated whole—a "world." Shepard confirms his thesis that the template for all subsequent human thinking is thinking animals by reminding us of the way animal metaphors animate all the elements of our language. They are transitive verbs (to hound, to badger, to outfox, to bully); intransitive verbs, (to flounder, to rail, to clam up, to pig out, to horse around), nouns (loan shark, lounge lizard, snake in the grass, chicken hawk, catty chick), adjectives (chicken hawk, catty chick, pigeon hole, foxy lady, dog tired, bear hug, pony tail, horse shit), adverbs (doggedly, cockily, sheepishly), gerunds (to take one's bearings).[53]

The Others adds little of substance but much of style to Shepard's evolutionary account of intelligent human consciousness in *Thinking Animals*—the later book being written with more sparkle and clarity than the earlier. In *The Others* as in *Thinking Animals*, Shepard pays homage to the minds of the large animals that shared the ecological theater—the African savannah—on which the drama of human evolution was staged.

> The circumstances in which a series of large carnivores and herbivores became more thoughtful, by watching, pursuing, evading, stalking, hiding, mimicking, and otherwise seeking to comprehend and anticipate each other, set the stage and the terms of our presence, as though we had won a role in a play that had been running for years. . . . The four-legged carnivores and their prey had long since learned that an animal, watched long enough, gradually dissolved into signs. It left the marks that came to represent it: footprints, urine, secretions, feces, molted antlers, scratchings and rubbings, gnawed

[52] Ibid.
[53] Ibid.

stems, bones, feathers, beds, diggings, nests, tracks, and bits of fur as well as an immense range of sounds and smells unavailable to us.[54]

There is nothing in Shepard's background or writings to suggest that he was directly influenced by Heidegger. But he seems to agree with Heidegger on one key point. To be a human being is to be a being-in-the-world and that non-human animals are "world poor." For Heidegger the world is given, but, through language, humans are "world-forming"—and animals are not.[55] Immediately, Shepard goes on to write, "Language and art meant that those signs, as 'objects,' could be transported and therefore shared. . . . Our human specialty was to dislodge those signs from a momentary stuckness in place and time and *build a mental world* of them that could be played over at times of our choosing."[56]

V. KILLING THE ANIMAL OTHER

The question that wormed its way into his mind upon reading Leopold's *A Sand County Almanac* and that harried Shepard throughout his adult life was how "I could resolve this contradiction of both loving and killing animals[?]"[57] Shepard observes that "Leopold wrote about land ethics and in the same book spoke of the joy of seeing the kicking red legs of a shot duck dying in the morning sun."[58]

Shepard here refers to an essay in part two of the *Almanac,* titled "Red Legs Kicking." Two things in Shepard's commentary need corrective attention. First, trivially, in the vignette, the duck didn't die in the morning sun, but rather in the late afternoon shadows of a cold winter's day. Second, more significantly, yes, the red-legs-kicking vignette is found in the pages of the same book which is brought to a climactic close by "The Land Ethic," but Leopold moves straight from killing the duck to a discussion of ethics right there in "Red Legs Kicking." Far from seeing a contradiction in both loving and killing animals, Leopold saw them as perfectly consistent; nay more, as mutually implicated. Loving animals implied killing them; but more to the point, killing them should imply loving them. How is that possible?

It is partly a matter of an accident of American history. Although our current national and global narrative of a downward spiraling environmental decline makes it hard to imagine, at the turn of the twentieth century there were fewer wild animals in the lower forty-eight states than there were at the turn of the twenty-first.[59]

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[54] Shepard, *The Others*, pp. 21, 24.

[55] Martin Heidegger, *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics: World, Finitude, Solitude*, trans. William McNeill and Nicholas Walker (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995); Stuart Elden, "Heidegger's Animals," *Continental Philosophy Review* 39 (2006): 273–91.

[56] Shepard, *The Others*, p. 24 (emphasis added).

[57] Ibid., p. 6.

[58] Ibid., p. 5.

[59] Jenks Cameron, *The Bureau of Biological Survey: Its History, Activities and Organization* (Washington, D.C.: Ayer Publishing, 1974).

Unregulated hunting was the reason that there were fewer wild animals a century ago than there are today in temperate North America. The passenger pigeon had been hunted to outright extinction. The remaining bison numbered only in the hundreds. Seeing a deer in New England was so noteworthy as to be the subject of a newspaper article. It was wealthy, aristocratic, politically well-connected *sport* hunters—the most prominent of which was Theodore Roosevelt, both twenty-sixth President of the United States and a founder of the Boon and Crockett Club—who championed wildlife conservation.[60] They saw their sport threatened by market, "slob," and "pot" hunters and saved "their" game by enacting laws closing seasons, setting bag limits, and, in the case of some species, limiting the kill to adult male specimens. They even negotiated treaties with Mexico and Canada to protect migratory waterfowl from indiscriminate hunting.[61] Leopold was many things: a forester, a wildlife ecologist, a consummate prose stylist, an amateur philosopher. If, however, we were to pick a single thing that was the common denominator of all the other things he was, we would say that, above all (or beneath all), he was a conservationist. For Leopold, whose formative years and first job came during the Theodore Roosevelt administration, to be a conservationist and to be a *sport* hunter were to be practically the same thing.

What differentiates sport hunting from market and subsistence hunting is, in Leopold's view, precisely ethics. In "The Land Ethic," Leopold characterizes ethics as "a limitation on freedom of action."[62] Further, Leopold considered sporting ethics to be a matter of *voluntary* self-restraint. Leopold dedicated his magnum opus, *Game Management*, to his father, "Carl Leopold, pioneer in sportsmanship."[63] According to Leopold's biographer, Curt Meine, before the enactment of hunting regulations, Carl Leopold voluntarily ceased duck hunting in the spring breeding season and limited his take in the fall.[64] The connection between sport hunting and ethics is so settled in Leopold's mind that it is actually the secondary theme of "Red Legs Kicking":

> Like most aspiring hunters, I was given, at an early age, a single-barreled shotgun and permission to hunt rabbits. . . . When my father gave me the shotgun, he said I might hunt partridges with it, but that I might not shoot them from trees. I was old enough, he said, to learn wing shooting.
>
> My dog was good at treeing partridge, and to forego a sure shot in the tree in favor of a hopeless one at the fleeing bird was my first exercise in ethical codes. Compared with a treed partridge, the devil and his seven kingdoms was a mild temptation.[65]

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[60] Thomas R. Wellock, *Preserving the Nation: The Conservation and Environmental Movements 1870–2000* (Washington, D.C.: Harlan Davidson, 2007).

[61] See Dale D. Goble, "Evolution of At-risk Species Protection," in J. Michael Scott, Dale D. Goble, and Frank W. Davis, *The Endangered Species Act at Thirty: Conserving Biodiversity in Human-Dominated Landscapes* (Washington, D.C.: Island Press, 2006), chap. 2, pp. 6–35.

[62] Leopold, *A Sand County Almanac*, p. 202.

[63] Aldo Leopold, *Game Management* (Charles Scribner's Sons, 1933), p. v.

[64] Meine, *Aldo Leopold*.

[65] Leopold, *A Sand County Almanac*, p. 123.

The primary theme of "Red Legs Kicking" is the way hunting heightens sensory experience, a theme that Ortega independently develops, as we shortly explore. In a subsequent essay, "Wildlife in American Culture," in part three of *A Sand County Almanac*, Leopold himself develops, in particularly strong terms, the secondary theme of "Red Legs Kicking," the intimate connection he sees between sport hunting and ethics:

> [T]here is a value in any experience that exercises those ethical restraints collectively called 'sportsmanship'. Our tools for the pursuit of wildlife improve faster than we do, and sportsmanship is a voluntary limitation in the use of these armaments. . . .
>
> A peculiar virtue in wildlife ethics is that the hunter ordinarily has no gallery to applaud or disapprove of his conduct. Whatever his acts, they are dictated by his own conscience, rather than a mob of onlookers. It is difficult to exaggerate the importance of this fact.
>
> Voluntary adherence to an ethical code elevates the self-respect of the sportsman, but it should not be forgotten that voluntary disregard of the code degenerates and depraves him.[66]

Granted, sport hunting is differentiated from market hunting by a code of sporting ethics, but that only serves to obfuscate the more fundamental question, the question that hounded Shepard if not Leopold: how can hunting *per se* be ethical, whether for sport or market, especially for anyone who so readily and poignantly acknowledges the rich consciousnesses of animal Others? In "The Geese Return," during the month of March, Leopold is able "to grieve with and for the lone honkers," but we should not forget that he was among those who sat "from dawn to till dark with hopeful guns" hell-bent on shooting "November geese" flying "high and haughty" past "every marsh and pond" along the Wisconsin River. Indeed, sport hunting is seen by some as even more damnable than market or subsistence hunting, precisely because it is unnecessary.[67] Sport hunters would deprive market hunters of their livelihood and subsistence hunters of their food. Further, it apparently involves taking pleasure in death and often suffering, which is certainly implied by the graphic picture Leopold paints in "Red Legs Kicking": "I cannot remember the shot; I remember only my unspeakable *delight* when my first duck hit the snowy ice with a thud and lay there, belly up, red legs kicking."[68] Some would regard such a pleasure to be indeed *unspeakable*, on a par with that of a sadist, who takes pleasure in torturing others—a most shameful pleasure.[69]

In two of *A Sand County Almanac*'s "Upshot" essays, "Conservation Esthetic"

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[66] Ibid., p. 178.

[67] See Marti Kheel, *Nature Ethics: An Ecofeminist Perspective* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman and Littlefied, 2008).

[68] Leopold, *A Sand County Almanac*, p. 129.

[69] Kheel, *Nature Ethics*.

and "Wildlife in American Culture," Leopold traces the personal evolution of the hunter from youthful trigger itch and blood lust to camera hunting; then on to wildlife ecology, a hunt for knowledge, as it were; and finally to wildlife "husbandry," as Leopold called it in the former essay—that is, wildlife management. "Red Legs Kicking," after all, describes the experience of a boy. But Leopold never expresses regret or remorse for killing that duck or any of the thousands of other animal Others he killed over the course of his venatic career. He has, however, nothing but contempt for the hunter who never matures:

> The disquieting thing in the modern picture is the trophy-hunter who never grows up, in whom the capacity for isolation, perception, and husbandry is undeveloped, or perhaps lost. He is the motorized ant who swarms the continent before learning to see his own back yard, who consumes but never creates outdoor satisfactions.[70]

Reading Leopold ferreted out the question that dogged Shepard all his life—how to reconcile loving animal Others and killing them—but by reading Leopold we seem to get no answer to that question. It was simply not a question that dogged Leopold. Indeed, it seems that such a question never even dawned on Leopold—but not because he was inattentive to ethical quandaries. This, rather, is the question that dogged Leopold's attention all his life: "How shall we conserve wildlife without evicting ourselves?"[71] His answer to it in *Game Management* as in *A Sand County Almananc* was essentially ethical: "The hope for the future lies not in curbing the influence of human occupancy—it is already too late for that—but in creating a better understanding of that influence and a new ethic for its governance."[72] Leopold's environmental ethic was holistic in focus. He was concerned with the preservation of *species* and the integrity, stability, and beauty of *biotic communities*, not, primarily, with the welfare of individual specimens, despite "the sentimental promptings of the bird-lover" throbbing in his own breast. His penchant for casting environmental ethics in strictly holistic terms comes across as clearly in his 1933 (not 1935, *pace* Shepard) textbook as in his philosophical masterpiece from 1949:

> With the Rooseveltian era, however, came the Crusader for conservation, a new kind of naturalist who refused to stomach this anomaly. He insisted that our conquest of nature carried with it a moral responsibility for the perpetuation of the threatened *forms* of wild life. This avowal was a forward step of inestimable importance. In fact, to anyone for whom wild things are something more than a pleasant diversion, it constitutes one of the milestones in moral evolution.[73]

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[70] Leopold, *A Sand County Almanac*, p. 176.
[71] Leopold, *Game Management*, p. 19.
[72] Ibid., p. 21.
[73] Ibid., p. 19.

VI. INTIMATIONS OF ANOTHER KIND OF ANIMAL ETHIC: FROM LEOPOLD TO ORTEGA

Like Heidegger, José Ortega y Gasset was Leopold's contemporary; Ortega was born in 1883, four years before Leopold. Ortega died in 1955, seven years after Leopold. "Prólogo a un Tratado de Montería" ("Prologue to a Treatise on Hunting") was published in 1942 as the introduction to *Veinte Años de Caza Mayor* (*Twenty Years a Big Game Hunter*) by Edward, Conte de Yebes. Ortega's prologue was soon cut away from the forgettable narrative to which it was first attached and published as a free-standing book in three Spanish editions (between 1947 and 1960) and three German editions, plus one Dutch and one Japanese edition (between 1954 and 1966). It was finally translated into English as *Meditations on Hunting* and published by Scribner in 1972—a long thirty years after it was written. It is, therefore, very unlikely that Leopold ever heard of it and less likely still that he ever read it.

Ortega sets an existential tone—indeed a Sartrean existential tone—for his meditation on hunting in the opening paragraph: "When he ['man'] becomes aware of his existence, he finds himself before a terrifying emptiness. . . . But—and this is the problem—life is brief and urgent; . . . and there is nothing for it but to choose one way of life to the exclusion of all others; to give up being one thing in order to be another. . . . Thus the essence of each life lies in its occupations." That is, existence precedes essence; but only for the human animal. "The [nonhuman] animal is given not only life, but also an invariable repertory of conduct."[74]

In the first chapter of *Meditations on Hunting*, Ortega covers the same ground as we see that Leopold covered. He considers sport hunting to be superior to utilitarian hunting—and, at bottom, for the same reason that Leopold did: "It involves a complete code of ethics of the most distinguished design; the hunter who accepts the sporting code of ethics keeps his commandments in the greatest solitude."[75]

Ortega goes well beyond Leopold, however, in confronting not only the intrasporting question—to what ethical restraints should sport hunters conform themselves?—but also the extra-sporting question: how can sport hunting itself possibly be ethical? How can it be morally permissible to kill an Other being not out of necessity—not because otherwise oneself and one's family might starve—but for sport, for pleasure? Ortega is profoundly sensitive to the importance of this question. "Death," he writes, "especially caused death, is or should be a terrifying thing. . . . The hunter is a death dealer."[76] Ortega poses this big, moral question in an especially poignant way: At hunting's climax is "that final scene in which the fine skin of the animal appears stained with blood, and that body, once pure agility, lies transformed into the absolute paralysis of death. Was it all only for this, we ask."[77]

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[74] Jose Ortega y Gasset, *Meditations on Hunting* (New York: Scribner, 1972), p. 35.
[75] Ibid., p. 42.
[76] Ibid., p. 97.
[77] Ibid., p. 98.

Ortega's answer is complex and subtle. It is, in part, (1) anthropocentric and existential; but it is also, in part, (2) nonanthropocentric, both (a) individualistically and (b) holistically. Ortega, indeed, should be counted, along with George Perkins Marsh, Henry David Thoreau, John Muir, and Hans Jonas, as a precursor in the field of environmental ethics. Ortega had a low opinion of the state-of-the-art of ethics in twentieth-century philosophy: "There is greater confusion than ever with regard to the norms which ought to govern the relations between men, *to say nothing of those which could orient and regulate our treatment of the other realities present in our environment: the mineral, the vegetable, and the animal*."[78]

Here, first, is Ortega's (1) anthropocentric, existential answer to the question of hunting and killing the animal Other. As humankind evolves and human technologies proliferate the existential burden of choice grows heavier—because the range of choice of an essence, in the form of an occupation, ever increases. Sport hunting affords one a respite from this existential burden: "For all the grace and delight of hunting are rooted in this fact: that man, projected by his inevitable progress away from ancestral proximity to animals, vegetables, and minerals—in sum, to Nature—takes pleasure in the artificial return to it, the only occupation that permits him something like a vacation from his human condition."[79]

On that vacation, the hunter, according to Ortega, becomes acutely alert and his sensory experience is both organized and heightened. It is organized by its focus on the quarry; and it is organized in two ways. First, the hunter must perceive the surroundings as the game perceives the surroundings: to know what the game is expecting a predator to do and to avoid doing that; and to know where the game might go to avoid detection and to go there. Second, the surroundings become runes to be read by the hunter—a tree freshly scarred by a roebuck rubbing his antlers, scat here, tracks there. Sensory experience is heightened by the need to deploy the senses keenly—to catch a fleeting scent of the game, to hear it rustle the leaf litter in a thicket, to catch a glimpse of it. Indeed, Ortega concludes the *Meditations* with a phenomenological description of the hunter's modality of attention:

> The hunter knows that he does not know what is going to happen, and this is one of the greatest attractions of his occupation. Thus he needs to prepare an attention of a different and superior style—an attention which does not consist in riveting itself on the presumed but consists precisely in not presuming anything and in avoiding inattentiveness. It is a "universal" attention, which does not inscribe itself on any point and tries to be on all points. There is a magnificent term for this, one that still conserves all its zest of vivacity and imminence. The hunter is the alert man.[80]

But here is a subquestion: why is hunting *the only* occupation that provides a vacation from the human condition and a return to nature that requires heightened

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[78] Ibid., p. 99 (emphasis added).
[79] Ibid., p. 121.
[80] Ibid., p. 138.

and organized sensory experience and a universal attention? Wouldn't wilderness backpacking or canoeing confer the same benefits, without sacrificing an animal Other? Ortega thinks not: "Man cannot re-enter Nature except by temporarily rehabilitating that part of himself which is still an animal. And this in turn can be achieved only by placing himself in relation to another animal. But there is no animal, pure animal other than the wild one, and the relationship with him is the hunt."[81] Ortega regards domestic animals as degenerate and as partly humanized. So venturing gunlessly into the wild, even with Lassie or Buck as one's polite and docile companion, is not a return to Nature, as Ortega understands it.

But, a further subquestion: why is the hunt *the only* relationship that a rehabilitated pre-human (that is, pre-existential) animal can have with a wild animal Other? Because, except for the hunt, wild animals have little in the way of relationship with one another in the sense of "relationship" that is Ortega's meaning: an intentional, conscious relationship, as opposed to an unintentional, unconscious ecological relationship—as between, say, woodpeckers who unintentionally provide cavities in trees suitable for warblers in which to make their nests. Except for being on one or the other side of the hunt—predator or prey—wild animals pretty much ignore one another. For the sport hunter, on a vacation from the human condition (that is, for the temporarily rehabilitated pre-human or pre-existential wild primate), "the only adequate response to a being that lives obsessed with avoiding capture is to try to catch it."[82] Ortega elaborates his point: the prey are

> . . . creatures gifted with marvelous powers of evasion, to the point where they are, essentially, "that which escapes," the unsubmissive, the surly, the fugitive, which is generally hidden, absent, unattainable, wrapped in solitude. . . . Before any particular hunter pursues them they feel themselves to be possible prey, and they model their whole existence in terms of this condition. Thus they automatically convert any normal man who comes upon them into a hunter.[83]

We have one final subquestion for Ortega: then why not, as Leopold suggests, take the first step down the path toward becoming a mature hunter and substitute camera for gun? All the instincts and alertness of the authentic, pre-human (that is, pre-existential) animal would seem to be engaged by camera hunting and the prey-essence of the animal Other is apparently greeted with an authentic response—but the life of the animal Other is spared, to say nothing of the suffering it might be caused to endure before it dies. Ortega begs to differ. As noted, only for the human being does existence precede essence; for every Other animal, essence precedes existence. Further, indeed every other thing, even things like iconic activities—the Platonic form, as it were, of those activities—such as hunting, has an essence, in Ortega's philosophy. Thus, contrary to the utilitarian hunter,

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[81] Ibid., p. 130.
[82] Ibid., p. 129.
[83] Ibid., p. 128.

> To the sportsman the death of the game is not what interests him; that is not his purpose. What interests him is everything he had to do to achieve that death—that is, the hunt. Therefore what was before only a means to an end is now an end in itself. Death is *essential* because without it, there is *no authentic hunting*: the killing of the animal is the natural end of the hunt and *that goal of hunting itself*, not of the hunter. The hunter seeks this death because it is no less than the sign of reality for the whole hunting process. To sum up, one does not hunt in order to kill; on the contrary, one kills in order to have hunted.[84]

Ortega is particularly emphatic in regard to "this ridiculousness of photographic hunting."[85] He is as strong in his condemnation of camera hunting as Leopold is of hunters who violate the sporting code—which "degenerates" and "depraves" them, according to Leopold. Ortega characterizes camera hunting as not only ridiculous, but also as a "farce."[86] He concludes, "Therefore it is necessary to oppose photographic hunting, which is not progress but rather a digression, a prudery of hideous moral style."[87]

But what about the poor prey? That is, what about (2a) the individualistic, nonanthropocentric side of the ethical quandary presented by hunting *and killing* the animal Other? Ortega's answer to the big question—how can it be ethical to hunt and kill animal Others—on behalf of the hunted, is less articulate and certainly less elaborate than his answer on behalf of the hunter. What he says is simply this: "the greatest and most moral homage we can pay to certain animals on certain occasions is to kill them with certain means and with certain rituals."[88]

Finally, there remains to consider (2b), Ortega's holistic, nonanthropocentric answer to the hairy question that dogged Shepard ever after reading *A Sand County Almanac*—how can one love animal Others and yet repeatedly pursue and kill them? Rhetorically, it is a continuation of Ortega's brief and undeveloped statement regarding an individualistic nonanthropocentric animal-Others ethic. Echoing Schopenhauer, Ortega writes, "Life is a terrible conflict, a grandiose and atrocious confluence. Hunting submerges man deliberately in that formidable mystery and therefore contains something of religious rite and emotion in which homage is paid to what is divine, transcendent, in the laws of nature."[89] In a footnote Ortega specifies the *ecological* laws of nature, as then understood, that he has in mind:

> The species form groups in which the hunters and the hunted are articulated. They need each other in order to regulate themselves in the whole. There are no solitary species. *More important than the collectivity of individuals is the collectivity of species*. Any

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[84] Ibid., p. 105 (emphasis added).
[85] Ibid., p. 103.
[86] Ibid., p. 104.
[87] Ibid., pp. 105–06.
[88] Ibid., p. 101.
[89] Ibid., p. 106.

> external intervention, if it is not carefully done, disarranges the marvelous clock of their coexistence.[90]

It fell to Shepard in *The Tender Carnivore and the Sacred Game* to fully articulate and elaborate the point Ortega hints at with these tantalizing declarations about "moral homage," "that formidable mystery," "what is divine," "transcendence," "certain rituals," and "religious rite and emotion."[91]

VII. THE *SAME* OR THE *OTHER?* AN AUTHENTICALLY *OTHER* APPROACH TO ANIMAL ETHICS: FROM ORTEGA TO SHEPARD

But such intimations as these are as far as Ortega can take us. Nor does Shepard do more than elaborate and embellish them in the *Tender Carnivore*, which was published only a year after Ortega's *Meditations*. The former fully acknowledges his debt to the latter, and we should also note that Shepard wrote the "Introduction" to the English translation Ortega's "*Prólogo*." Thus, Shepard had steeped himself in Ortega's *Meditations on Hunting* as he was writing his own book on the subject. However, in his last work, *The Others,* Shepard himself provides the complete answer to the question that hounded him ever after reading *A Sand County Almanac*—how can one love animal Others and yet repeatedly pursue and kill them? That was made possible by sharp contrast with the Same (as opposed to the Other) school of animal ethics that emerged in full theoretical flower during the last quarter of the twentieth century. Shepard devotes the penultimate chapter of *The Others* to a stinging critique of animal liberation and animal rights—as found in Anglo-American philosophy and associated popular movements, such as Friends of Animals and People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals.

Shepard first makes it clear that he too renounces the horrors experienced by two classes of animals in the modern (and postmodern) worlds: domestic animals and captive animals (although he often elides the distinction as he warms to his topic). In the former category he laments the suffering that abused and abandoned pets endure, that factory farmed chickens and cows endure, and that animals bred for scientific and medical research endure. With regard to medical experimentation on animals, Shepard writes, "Tom Regan's book, *Animal Sacrifice*, for example, is directed to this issue. With respect to domestic animals, no sane person could quarrel with his concern, and the moral validity of his perspective is obvious."[92] As to captive animals, Shepard laments the loss of freedom and dignity imposed on wild animals held in zoos; worse still, is the suffering of captive animals in the "traditional medicines" and "exotic foods" trades. Shepard runs ambivalently

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[90] Ibid.

[91] Paul Shepard, *The Tender Carnivore and the Sacred Game* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1973).

[92] Shepard, *The Others*, pp. 306–07.

through the moral categories of the animal welfare movement—animal liberation (in the political sense of the term adapted from "women's liberation"), animal rights, kindness toward animals, friendship with animals, bonding with animals—quibbling with all, while agreeing that, however problematic, they are not altogether inappropriate for governing human behavior in regard to domesticated and captive animals.

The problem, for Shepard, comes when such moral categories are supposed to illuminate our relationship and treatment of wild animals and are used to condemn the hunting, killing, and eating of true animal Others in the same breath with, say, vivisection:

> Altruism is undeniably important; cruelty, callous keeping, rationalized butchery, overmechanized husbandry, social and legal disregard, corporate, commercial, and scientific exploitation, and the ordinary street torture of animals are all reprehensible. Given the reality of cruelty and the advance of the modern paradigm of "kindness," why do these expressions of concern and caring make one uneasy? . . . As social phenomena and selfless intentions, such sentiments are clearly an expression of widely shared feelings. But this gentle and generous concern, the extension of civilized regard for a relatively helpless, kept assembly, however appropriate in the ethos of captives, is mostly bad ecology that can drive out the good.[93]

By "bad ecology," Shepard refers to a point to which he returns again and again in *The Others*—that the life of one being depends on the deaths of others—a point made by Ortega only in a passing footnote, but one also uppermost in Leopold's mind. "The only certain truth" of ecology, Leopold observed, "is that . . . creatures must suck hard, live fast, and die often."[94] Extending rights to life into the natural world would wreak ecological havoc: it would mean protecting prey from their predators, artificially feeding overpopulated prey species (relieved of control by their predators), such as deer, treating disease outbreaks among them with medicines, sheltering animals from the vagaries of weather, and so on and so forth. All of erstwhile wild nature would become a zoo. More deeply, to extend rights to wild animals would be just a more subtle and therefore more insidious form of trammeling them, of making captives of them by ensnaring them in the conventions of civilized society. The only suitable wild-animal ethic is an ethic based on their irreducible and implacable Otherness. Wild animal Others are not polite citizens, with us, in civilized societies, enjoying all the rights and privileges pertaining thereto. We must, above all, respect their Otherness and difference and the freedom and independence that that Otherness and difference imply.

But, at the same time, Shepard thinks that, for our own sakes, we cannot betray the animal that therefore we are, and forsake nature for an altogether unnatural existence in a cultural bubble dissociated from nature. We must respect animal

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[93] Ibid., p. 313.

[94] Leopold, *A Sand County Almanac*, p. 107.

Others in all their Otherness, but we must also actively engage them on their own terms. Wild animals are not interested in being our friends. The ancient, original human way of actively engaging them as they are, for what they are, is to hunt, kill, and eat them—"certain animals on certain occasions . . . with certain means and with certain rituals." This human way led Shepard, over the course of many books, beginning with *The Tender Carnivore and the Sacred Game*, to explore not only the ethical, but also the artistic, poetic, spiritual, and religious implications of this primary way of active human engagement with wild animal Others.

But our present point is ethical. In *The Others* we find fully developed and richly textured an Other-based wild-animal ethic. Perhaps better than any condensation of his Other-based wild-animal ethic that Shepard was ever able to achieve is that of Henry Beston (1888–1968):

> And what of Nature itself, you say—that callous and cruel engine, red in tooth and fang? . . . It is true that there are grim arrangements. Beware of judging them by whatever human values are in style. As well expect Nature to answer to your human values as to come into your house and sit in a chair. The economy of Nature, its checks and balances, its measurements of competing life—all this is its great marvel *and has an ethic of its own*.[95]

Shepard's great feat was to recognize and elaborate nature's own ethic, the ethic to which we, as natural beings, are also subject, but only, of course, in our natural interspecies interactions. Our intraspecies interactions should be governed by very different intraspecies ethics. Nor should we confuse the two. To the extent, however, that we have lured or dragged other species into our houses and sat them in chairs, then they should become subject to some variation on our intraspecies ethic, a matter that is complex and fraught with ambiguities.

VIII. COMPARISON OF THE LEOPOLD-ORTEGA-BESTON-SHEPARD OTHER-BASED ETHIC WITH LEVINAS'S OTHER-BASED ETHIC

Emmanuel Levinas (1906–1995) is widely celebrated for providing a continental alternative to the same-based ethics that now dominates moral philosophy in the Anglo-American tradition. In that tradition, in short, a being deserves "moral consideration" if it possesses an entitling property or capacity. Prominent historical examples are the image of God, rationality, autonomy, sentience, and conativity. Much exhortative moral rhetoric—vernacular as well as philosophical—is aimed at persuading moral agents that others are the same as the agents themselves in regard to the ethically entitling property or capacity. Those who, for various reasons—from criminal to geopolitical reasons—want to short-circuit a moral agent's tendency to identify with and sympathize with others employ an anti-moral rhetoric.

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[95] Henry Beston, *The Outermost House: A Year of Life on the Great Beach of Cape Cod* (New York: Rinehart, 1928), p. 221 (emphasis added).

They Otherize others. They play up incidental *differences* of race, language, gender, sexual orientation; they call others derogatory, demeaning, "dehumanizing" names. A truly Other-based ethic—such as that implicit in Leopold, adumbrated by Ortega, encapsulated by Beston, and elaborated by Shepard—is quite anomalous. Thus, a comparison of the Leopold-Ortega-Beston-Shepard Other-based ethic with Levinas's Other-based ethic might illuminate both.

Levinas, a Lithuanian Jew, began his philosophical studies in Strasbourg, but moved to Freiburg, Germany to study with Husserl. There he also came under the influence of another of Husserl's students—Heidegger—which he later regretted because of Heidegger's allegiance to National Socialism. After completing his studies, he returned to France and became a naturalized French citizen in 1939. As such, he served in the French army, which was overrun by the German army in 1940. Levinas spent the rest of World War II interned in a special barracks for Jewish POWs. His wartime experiences doubtless influenced Levinas's notion of Otherness. [96] Through face-to-face encounter, the Other makes implacable moral demands on oneself, including taking responsibility for the crimes against the Other, even those which oneself did not personally commit. Further, the self is defined through this relationship of moral responsibility for the Other, because that responsibility is what makes the self unique. One's reaction to Others, the inability to evade responsibility to Others, is what makes oneself a self, an individual person: "The uniqueness of the self is the very fact of bearing the fault of another." [97]

The importance of the *face* of the Other, in Levinas's ethics, makes its extension to *animal* Others very problematic. Do animals have faces? Levinas replies,

> I cannot say at what moment you have a right to be called "face." The human face is completely different and only afterwards do we discover the face of an animal. I don't know if a snake has a face. . . . I do not know at what moment the human appears, but what I want to emphasize is that the human breaks with pure being, which is always a persistence in being. . . . [W]ith the appearance of the human—and this is my entire philosophy—there is something more important than my life, and that is the life of the other. [98]

The distinction that Levinas draws between humans and animals—"the human breaks with pure being"—may indicate his (regretted?) debt to Heidegger. In any case, recent discussions by Christian Diehm suggest ways in which Levinas's Other ethic may apply to animal Others.[99] Diehm points out two fundamental aspects of

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[96] Howard Caygill, *Levinas and the Political* (London: Routledge, 2002).

[97] Emmanuel Levinas, *Otherwise than Being: Or Beyond Essence*, trans. Alphonso Lingis (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 2008), p. 112.

[98] Emmanuel Levinas, "The Paradox of Morality: An Interview with Emmanuel Levinas," conducted by Tamra Wright, Peter Hughes, and Alison Ainley, in *The Provocation of Levinas: Rethinking the Other*, ed. R. Bernasconi and D. Wood (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1988), pp. 168–80.

[99] Christian Diehm, "Facing Nature: Levinas Beyond the Human," *Philosophy Today* 44 (2000): 51–59; Christian Diehm, "Ethics and Natural History: Levinas and Other-Than-Human Animals," *Environmental Philosophy* 2 (2006): 34–43.

Levinas's ethic that provide an opening for Levinas's Other ethic to be plausibly extended to animal Others. First, Levinas's Other ethic is hypo-linguistic; the initial command from the Other is given in the face-to-face encounter and is nonverbal, indeed pre-verbal; second, the obligations demanded by the face of the Other are not reciprocal.[100] In sharp contrast to social-contract theories of ethics, Levinas develops a non-reciprocal or asymmetrical ethics. Animal Others can neither communicate with us linguistically, nor can they fully reciprocate our ethical treatment of them. But those deficiencies should not disqualify animals from ethical treatment, as Levinas understands the foundations of ethics, according to Diehm.

But, once more, are animals deficient in the most fundamental characteristic of all for Levinas's ethics—having a face? Diehm argues that, in Levinas's ethics, *face* should be replaced by *body*. Encountering a body, like encountering a face, is to encounter the individualized, and thus unique, mortality and vulnerability of the Other.[101] Thus, an encounter with any embodied Other, human or nonhuman, can and should place a command or obligation on the self, according to Diehm.[102]

Diehm's reading of Levinas's ethic may throw new light on the aforementioned "Thinking like a Mountain." A snake—a loaded choice by Levinas to speculate on animals as faces—may not be a "face," but what about a wolf? Leopold looked on the face of a wolf and had a moral epiphany. Further, in Levinasian terms, the face of the wolf disrupted Leopold's world view and shattered his belief that fewer wolves meant more deer and no wolves meant hunter's paradise.

There is a long tradition in environmental philosophy of extending more widely an ethical theory that is, on the face of it (no pun intended), militantly anthropocentric. Despite direct statements to the contrary in *The Ethics* and elsewhere, the late Arne Naess teased a nonanthropocentric environmental ethic out of Spinoza.[103] Despite the multiple functions of reason and rationality in Kant's moral philosophy—as the wellspring of the categorical imperative, as the foundation of autonomy and intrinsic value—Paul Taylor extended Kant's ethics in such a way that all organisms could have intrinsic value and merit respect, essentially by substituting conation and conativity for reason and rationality.[104] Levinas is an even less likely source and inspiration for a nonanthropocentric environmental ethic than Heidegger. At least Heidegger's Nazi leanings made him sympathetic to such National Socialist notions as *blut und boden*,[105] and for precisely that reason—the association of naturism with Nazism—Levinas would (and did) recoil from anything that smacked of identification with Nature. By pursuing such an unlikely project, however, Diehm is in the good company of such giants in the field as Naess and Taylor.

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[100] Diehm, "Facing Nature."

[101] Diehm, "Ethics and Natural History."

[102] Diehm, "Facing Nature."

[103] Arne Naess, "Spinoza and Ecology," *Philosophia* 7 (1977): 45–54.

[104] Paul W. Taylor, *Respect for Nature: A Theory of Environmental Ethics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986).

[105] Michael Zimmerman, *Contesting Earth's Future: Radical Ecology and Postmodernity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994).

Diehm's suggested extension of Levinas's Other ethic to animal Others, however problematic, evidently owes much to the work of Maurice Merleau-Ponty, who delivers the *coup de grace* to any lingering Cartesian dualism in phenomenology by insisting that mind (intentional consciousness/subjectivity) is inseparable, indeed inconceivable apart from body. All subjects are embodied subjects. That intentional consciousness must be embodied follows from the most basic reflection on perception and experience—which is rooted in sensory organs. No body, no organs of sense. No organs of sense, no intentional consciousness. No intentional consciousness, no experience for phenomenological exploration. Merleau-Ponty writes, "When I turn towards perception, and pass from direct perception into thinking about that perception, I reenact it, and find at work in my organs of perception a thinking older than myself of which these organs are merely a trace. In the same way I understand the existence of other people."[106] In the same way we might understand the existence of other animals (as we explained in section two).

Ironically, Levinas's Other-based ethic seems, however, not to be based on genuine Otherness. In comparison with the Leopold-Ortega-Beston-Shepard Other-based animal ethic, it shows itself actually to be Same-based. For Peter Singer, we share the morally relevant capacity for sentience with many other animals. Because we and other animals are the same, in that crucial regard, we must give equal consideration to their equal interests—wild, tame, captive, or feral: one size fits all. For Regan, we and many other animals enjoy a rich subjective life. Having such a life is the foundation of their intrinsic value, which is the same as our human intrinsic value. Thus—wild, tame, captive, or feral—they should have the same rights as we. And what of Levinas's Other, as expanded by Diehm to animal Others? If the animal Other—wild, tame, captive, or feral—is a face (or a uniquely individuated, vulnerable body), the other makes moral claims on oneself, who is also a face.

Being a face, in short, functions in Levinas's ethics in a similar way that being sentient or being the subject-of-a-life functions in the ethics of Singer and Regan, respectively. Having a face may not be a *criterion* of moral considerability, for Levinas, because Levinas's ethics is far more viscerally intersubjective than is the cognitive/rational ethical tradition to which Singer and Regan belong. Nonetheless, like Singer, who wonders if mollusks are sentient, or Regan, who wonders if chickens are subjects-of-a-life, so Levinas is led to wonder if some animals are faces—on which decision turns their desert of moral regard. Diehm thinks that animals do have faces, because they have bodies—and that's really what Levinas, whether he realizes it or not, is talking about. But then, what do we get? A continental variation on a very common theme in Anglo-American moral philosophy.

Diehm, to his credit, is sensitive to a cognate concern: "In positing such continuity between humans and animals, we are not arbitrarily assuming that human others serve as a standard of who is other ethically, and then searching to find ways in

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[106] Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, trans. Colin Smith and revised by Forrest Williams (New York: Humanities Press, 2002), p. 410.

which other-than-human others might conform to that standard."[107] We neither concede nor contest this claim. Rather, our concern is that, while purporting to be an ethic based on Otherness, Levinas's ethics is ultimately founded on sameness. Having a face is necessary to elicit an ethical response, and what that's all about, as Diehm interprets Levinas, is "expressing naked vulnerability" in a uniquely individuated way. That's what elicits moral recognition, what gives a being moral considerability, what makes a being a proper moral patient.[108] All morally recognizable, considerable beings, all proper moral patients have this same characteristic, from the point of view of Levinasian ethics. Indeed, one might say, paradoxically, that what is the same about them is that each is an Other (a unique individual that expresses naked vulnerability).

By contrast, the authentically animal-Other ethic implicit in Leopold, adumbrated by Ortega, captured in a nutshell by Beston, and fully fleshed out by Shepard, would not greet *wild* animal Others with the same or a similar ethic with which we greet other human A Levinasian or Singerian or Reganic animal ethic is fitting for the animals most of us civilized humans frequently come in contact with—domesticated and incarcerated animals—but it is far from fitting for wild animal Others.

Ortega and the Diehmized Levinas share a common philosophical point of departure—existentialism. The difference in their philosophical destinations accounts for the difference in their ethics of the animal Other (if Diehm is right that such an ethic can be teased out of Levinas's philosophy). Like Ortega, Levinas believes that we humans have transcended any biologically determined way of being, which is the lot of all other animals, and we have become unique (nakedly vulnerable) individuals—faces in a word. Ortega longs for a vacation from the human (existential) condition and a return to the being-for-itself of the animal Other that therefore we human beings once were. While in that state, access to which is vouchsafed only by sport hunting, human beings return to the state of being from which they emerged. While in that natural state, the ethic of the state of nature is the authentic ethic of the wild animal Other. Diehm does not seem to share Ortega's atavism and thus seems to want to leverage animal Others, on the fulcrum of Levinas, into, if not existential beings, at least beings that are uniquely individuated and nakedly vulnerable. Thus, because, like us, they have a face, they are entitled to the same ethics, the ethics that all faces demand.

If, as Leopold avers, the very essence of an ethic, any ethic, is "a limitation on freedom of action," then what are the limitations on freedom of action imposed by an animal ethic truly based on Otherness? They are precisely those of the sport hunter's ethic that both Leopold and Ortega variously detail: bag limits, closed seasons, sex and age discrimination, wing shooting, and so forth and so on. At the core, however, of the sport-hunting ethic is a limitation on weaponry. For Ortega, if not for Leopold, this core precept of the sport-hunting ethic is directly tied to

[107] Diehm, "Ethics and Natural History," p. 39.
[108] Ibid.

his existentialism. Human freedom, and with it the burden of choosing what to be, grows exponentially with technological advancement. Ortega and Leopold could choose to be writers, instead of say choosing to be plumbers. But neither could have chosen to be a blogger, which is something now open to us to choose to be. Thus, part and parcel of the venatic vacation from the human condition is a voluntary renunciation of advanced technology, and most especially a voluntary renunciation of advanced weapons technology. So thoroughly did Leopold grasp this core moral maxim of the wild-animal Other ethic and so assiduously did he practice it that he was among the first sport hunters to abandon the use of guns to hunt deer and to take up bow hunting instead.

In conclusion, we discover that there is really only one truly Other-based environmental ethic, the Other-based wild-animal ethic implicit in Leopold, sketched by Ortega, encapsulated by Beston, and fleshed out by Shepard. Levinas's Other-based ethic, at least as extended to animals by Christian Diehm, proves to be same-based in the last analysis, differing from the familiar same-based ethics of animal liberation (Singer) and animal rights (Regan) only in being more visceral and intuitive and less cognitive and rationalistic than its Anglo-American counterparts.

Since the extensive literature on space exploration includes virtually nothing on the environmental ethics associated with it, this collection represents a scholarly landmark. Hargrove is to be commended for launching into this new area of ethical inquiry, just as he did in founding the journal, Environmental Ethics.

—Kristin Shrader-Frechette

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