

It's a (Two-)Culture Thing: The Lateral Shift to Liberation

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From an acute and, some will argue, a harsh, a harsh, fantastic or even tactically naive naive perspective, this article examines examines animal liberation, vegetarianism vegetarianism and veganism in relation to a bloodless culture ideal. It suggests that the movement's repeated anomalies, denial of heritage, privileging of vegetarianism, and other concessions to bloody culture, restrict rather than liberate the full subversionary and revelatory potential of liberationist discourse, and with representation and strategy implications.

'Only the profoundest cultural needs ... initially caused adult man [sic] to continue to drink cow milk through life'.¹

In *The Social Construction of Nature*, Klaus Eder develops a useful concept of *two cultures* - the bloody and the bloodless. He understands the ambivalence of modernity and the relationship to nature as resulting from the perpetuation of a precarious equilibrium between the 'bloodless' tradition from within Judaism and the 'bloody' tradition of ancient Greece.

In Genesis, killing entered the world after the fall from grace and initiated a complex and hierarchically-patterned system of food taboos regulating distance between nature and culture. But, for Eder, it is in Israel that the reverse process also begins, in the taboo on killing. *This* 'civilizing' process replaces the prevalent ancient world practice of

¹ Calvin. W. Schwabe, 'Animals in the Ancient World' in Aubrey Manning and James Serpell, (eds), *Animals and Human Society: Changing Perspectives* (Routledge, London, 1994), p.54.

human sacrifice by animal sacrifice, this by sacrifices of the field, and these by money paid to the sacrificial priests.²

Modern society retains only a very broken connection to the Jewish tradition of the bloodless sacrifice. It continues instead a different traditional evolutionary line which emerges from the Greek polis. This ritual 'civilized' the earlier blood sacrifices in a different way to the Jewish tradition. It did not abolish them but retained them instead as a sacrificial feast in Delphi against the resistance of Pythagorean and other groups who attempted to call this central symbol of the polis into question.³ The dominant modern cultural code continues this older tradition, the bloody culture of Hellenistic antiquity, and symbolizes the fundamental distance from the state of nature.⁴ It is the co-existence of these, developing into *carnivorous* and *vegetarian* cultures, that opens two fundamentally different evolutionary options to modern society.⁵

We shall borrow the two culture concept and use it as a structuring device for our own purposes and, although we shall not be clinging to Eder's thesis, we shall draw upon it.⁶ Here we shall be assuming that animal liberation both constitutes and aims at the transformation of bloody into bloodless culture, at least in the most propitious conditions of the Western world initially. As representative of animal liberation we shall take first the most often quoted works of three of the movement's foremost philosophers - Peter Singer, Stephen Clark and Tom Regan - but we shall not offer critiques of their use of the *philosophical* traditions out of which they come, or indeed of the traditions themselves.⁷ Instead, and in a rather severe textual reading, we shall question animal liberation in relation to the two cultures. To start, we shall measure the canonical works against the slavery analogy, drawn by animal

² Klaus Eder, *The Social Construction of Nature: A Sociology of Ecological Enlightenment* (Sage, London, 1996), p.125.

³ *Ibid.*, p.126.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp.129-130.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p.132.

⁶ Indeed, we cannot continue with Eder's bloody-carnivorous and bloodless-vegetarian cultures throughout, for Eder depicts ecological reason as vegetarian culture when the ecology movement is not necessarily vegetarian at all (in practice) whilst animal liberation has become so (in theory and in practice). Eder also tends to run animals and nature together, and views animal liberation almost wholly in utilitarianist terms. Further, although Eder pictures carnivorous culture as a development of bloody culture, and similarly with vegetarian and bloodless, we shall use carnivorous and bloody interchangeably and similarly with vegetarian and bloodless.

⁷ Peter Singer, *Animal Liberation: A New Ethics for Our Treatment of Animals*, 1975 (Avon, New York, 1977); Stephen R. L. Clark, *The Moral Status of Animals*, 1977 (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1984); Tom Regan, *The Case for Animal Rights*, 1983 (Routledge, London, 1988).

advocates for centuries, which will allow us to explore statements of animal liberation intent and therefore gain clues as to its 'culture' status, which will then be examined against a different model. We shall finally be able to suggest certain implications of the findings.

The Slavery Analogy

In an attempt to make animal liberation more credible and to awaken public consciousness to the scale, nature and values of animal use, the animal liberation movement uses several parallels, and abolitionism seems to be the most pertinent. Black peoples and other Others under slavery, like nonhumans now and in the past, were used as renewable (and expendable rather than exterminable) natural resources in a respectable economic system. The systematic atrocities of human slavery bear striking resemblance to the concept and practices of institutionalized animal use and continuities are identifiable.⁸ Moreover, both animal use and human slavery have been considered at various times synonymous with the process of civilizing and the progress of civilization.

Let us assume the case then, acknowledging that there will always be exceptional, extraordinary and non-representative situations to which no philosophy can hope to extend with consistency (and this is not to assume, as the philosophies themselves do not assume, an absolute inviolability of all animal life). Let us assume that an animal liberation case could be made out, declaring that, *à la* the abolitionist case, humans should not deliberately use nonhumans for any non-symbolic purpose (except perhaps in non-invasive ethological studies in the wild) or in any material way in order to utilize their symbolic power. The aim of the abolitionists was abolition, not kinder treatment, better conditions, longer chains, fewer slaves, gentle usage or a different kind of slavery. Slavery was wrong, according to the campaigners, and the world (or most of it) came to agree or to see the wrong and put an end to it. How do the philosophers' prescriptions stand in relation to this abolitionism? Not full square.

Clark's promotion of anti-vivisection, for instance, is qualified by talk of abolishing 'most' biomedical research on animals,⁹ without saying what

⁸ Richard D. Ryder, *Animal Revolution: Changing Attitudes Towards Speciesism* (Blackwell, Oxford, 1989) pp.1-2; Marjorie Spiegel, *The Dreaded Comparison: Human and Animal Slavery* (Heretic Books, London, 1988).

⁹ Clark, *The Moral Status of Animals*, p.xiii.

should be left to continue and on what basis, and although Regan appears to be quite straightforward in his demands - for vegetarianism, anti-vivisection and an end to hunting and trapping - his idea that it is 'commercial' animal agriculture which should be abolished leaves one considering what 'non-commercial' animal agriculture is envisaged as acceptable within his rights theory.¹⁰ As he implies, no animal-product system is viable in the long term without routine mutilation and slaughter, a similar point made in relation to suffering by Singer who calls for an end to the use of animals in trivial experiments whilst the suffering in non-trivial research can continue until alternative methods are found.¹¹

None of the three cases actually makes out a clear, unambiguous case for an end to all animal-using practices and, of an activity such as horse riding for instance, a classic master/slave relationship, there is no mention. Understandably, Singer, Clark and Regan concentrated on the areas in which vast numbers of animals are used and/or where institutionalized cruelties are more readily detectable, and did not set out to establish in detail the 'proper', or 'better' constructed behaviour in regard to *all* human/nonhuman practices and relations. Instead they establish principles from which we may be able to assume it in most if not all areas. But although we may extrapolate in order to get a grip on how we should look upon, say, animal circuses - obviously unacceptable to Singer, Clark and Regan albeit on different grounds - what guidance is there for something as innocuous to the orthodox as horse riding?¹²

It is in this relationship that we can recognize: a human pastime presented and widely perceived as respectable; the combination of animals and war-victory - the hunting field as a preparation for battle and the use of animals for human warring purposes; animals considered as resources; the exercise of power and the domination of 'nature'; the animal use=civilization equation; and the hidden stories of slavery which in different ways lie behind the use of animals - horses 'broken', family groups separated, animals not up to it or beyond it cast off. Moreover, once broken and separated it is still looked upon as a kindness to find them 'work', to keep them active, a practical example of

¹⁰ Tom Regan, *The Case for Animal Rights*, 1983, (Routledge, London, 1988), pp.349-351.

¹¹ Singer, *Animal Liberation*, p.32.

¹² This is not to enter into the crass area of objection-query - eg what about locusts, mosquitoes and rabid dogs, and should amoebae get the vote? - in which animal liberation is commonly bogged down.

culture passing itself off as benign nature (welfarism notably obscuring their confinement in barren fields deprived of cover and denied shelter).

Now horse riding is possibly too complex for preference utilitarianism to condemn easily and it is not at all clear from Clark's work how it stands in relation to the ancient virtues of his neo-Platonist earth household. From Regan's *Case* we can get the idea that horse riding *may* be anathema to at least rights theory, which can accommodate the objection, although it is only an informed guess: Regan's 'not all harms hurt' and his dissident reality of 'animals are not our resources' are shown to us in the contexts of more obvious harmful or hurtful use.¹³

As we have seen them so far then, these philosophies do not actually spell out what some of them may imply and what they imply could be spelled out, and especially in a case such as horse riding. Indeed, precisely because of its 'innocuity', a condemnation of horse riding - or 'riding' as its practitioners prefer it to be known: again the invisible animal - may be a classic statement of animal liberation from which a position on virtually every topic within the project could be then confidently assumed. Perhaps this could help liberate animal liberation from the confusion or seemingly endless and generally *welfarist*- (and therefore bloody culture-) framed, cruelty-abuse-suffering-grounded debate to which the liberation issue is popularly and politically relocated and by the terms of which even vivisection and factory farming can be and are easily defended.¹⁴

Taking the foremost philosophers' seminal works, we find discrepancies between the human and animal slavery abolitionisms. We have to look elsewhere for the kind of consistency¹⁵ we may require and get closer to a best existing model of and for animal liberation as an abolitionist, bloodless culture.

¹³ Bryant condemns horse riding but from an anti-cruelty perspective, albeit within an animal 'rights' framework. John Bryant, *Fettered Kingdoms: An Examination of a Changing Ethic* (J. M. Bryant, Chard, 1982).

¹⁴ The liberationist fear may be of abolitionism being too easily equated with absolutism, 'fundamentalism' and 'extremism' (as it is by Jasper and Nelkin) or even 'purism', a fate from which other abolitionisms and emancipations are saved by the ability of new rights-holders to negotiate their own 'working' roles in society. On that score, animal liberation is a threat to the work ethic. J. M. Jasper, and D. Nelkin, *The Animal Rights Crusade: The Growth of a Moral Protest* (The Free Press, New York, 1992), p.96, p.178.

¹⁵ This is not to question the internal consistency or coherence of the adopted or adapted philosophies.

Veganism: A Neglected Model

Shortly after the Vegan Society was formed in 1944, and the word 'vegan' coined by co-founder and first Secretary Donald Watson, it issued a Manifesto which included the following aims:

To advocate that man's food should be derived from fruit, nuts, vegetables, grains and other wholesome non-animal products and that it should exclude flesh, fish, fowl, eggs, honey, and animals' milk, butter and cheese.

The Vegan Society is eager that it should be realised how closely the meat and dairy produce industries are related. The atrocities of dairy farming are, in some ways, greater than those of the meat industry but they are more obscured by ignorance.¹⁶

Further, it was proclaimed in 1951, that:

The object of the Vegan Movement ("to end the exploitation of animals by man") is clarified as to the meaning of exploitation by Rule 4(a), which pledges the Society to "seek to end the use of animals by man for food, commodities, work, hunting, vivisection, and by all other uses involving exploitation of animal life by man". By the adoption of this rule, the Society has clearly come out on the side of the liberators; it is not so much welfare that we seek, as freedom. Our aim is not to make the present relationship between man and animal (which if honestly viewed is mostly one of master and slave) more tolerable, but to abolish it and replace it by something more worthy of man's high estate. In short, our aim is to set the creatures free - to return them to the balance and sanity of nature, which is their rightful place, and so end the historic wrong perpetrated when man first decided he had the right to exploit and enslave them.¹⁷

Now this throws up much we could discuss and which many would criticize - the perhaps primary concern about who 'Man' is; the take on a pure 'nature'; the appeal to design; and so on (these being characteristic of the early Vegan Society stance) - but our point is that Leslie Cross

¹⁶ 'The Vegan Society Manifesto', *The Vegan*, (November 1944).

¹⁷ Leslie J. Cross, 'The New Constitution', *The Vegan*, (Spring 1951).

went on to claim that this new constitution marked the 'true birth' of the Vegan Society and, if we are to measure animal liberation against the slavery analogy, this surely is the best available (albeit unparticularized) statement of intent. Can the master/slave relationship of horse riding be accommodated here (even if it was beyond the range of contemporary concern)? Only by preternormal sophistry.

The Society, and vegans in general, had already established and were to consolidate a practical underpinning to animal liberation, living with moral consistency and proving the ethic's firm grounding. So, to what extent do Singer, Clark and Regan build on such codification? The great anomaly is, as we know, that Singer's *Animal Liberation* actually promotes the use of animals. That Singer should, some thirty years after the Society's founding, approach the subject of animal liberation in the following way, is perhaps rather curious, notwithstanding the reasonable pragmatics - a chapter entitled 'Becoming a Vegetarian'¹⁸ rather than 'Becoming a Vegan'; a toleration of mollusc-eating;¹⁹ promotion of egg-eating, where a welfarist-bloody culture stance is openly adopted;²⁰ the use of inverted commas for vegan; the phrase '... some have *begun* to call themselves vegans';²¹ the adoption, like Salt, of a 'worst abuses first' stance;²² the deliberation over where to draw the line between *killing* shrimps and oysters whilst considering the *sufferings* (and suffering is Singer's main concern) of the dairy cow and calf as a lesser issue;²³ and, in a concession to popular rhetoric, the general depiction of veganism as 'strict' and somewhat esoteric. Do Clark and Regan also keep veganism at arm's length? Clark makes this claim:

What follows for our obligations? Simply, that if we are to mean what we say in outlawing the unnecessary suffering of animals, we must become, at the least, vegetarians.²⁴

With veganism well established - and with the routine chickicide of day-old males, the suffering of the dairy cow and the immediate or delayed slaughter or crated future of her calf exposed (again) by the Vegan Society - Clark did not feel the need to write instead, 'we must become,

¹⁸ Singer, *Animal Liberation*, p.163.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p.179.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p.181; Peter Singer, *Animal Liberation*, 1990, Second edition (Pimlico, London, 1995), pp.175-176.

²¹ Singer, *Animal Liberation*, p.179.

²² *Ibid.*, pp.181-182.

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ Clark, *The Moral Status of Animals*, p.45.

at the least, vegans'. Although he refers to veganism several times, as a stage of progression, thus implying as is usual, that veganism is a material development rather than a cognitive transformation ('... those vegetarians who have not (yet) progressed to veganism' he says, for instance, in his 'Notes for Proselytes' *after* the main body of the work),²⁵ it is *vegetarianism* for which he makes the case. However, he does grant veganism greater credibility and probability: 'There will be less suffering in a vegan world, even in a near-vegan world'.²⁶ But, although declaring in a footnote that 'veganism is a better project than lacto-vegetarianism', he goes on to say: 'we may in the end be able to take *some* milk from our kin without injustice'.²⁷ But why *this* concession to the purely cultural (whilst the essentialism of 'meat'-eating is outlawed)? And is this, along with other backyard images, what Regan had in mind when he condemned only 'commercial' animal agriculture?

There is also Regan's preference for the word 'vegetarian' which is used throughout *The Case for Animal Rights*. Now it had for long been the American practice, somewhat in contrast to English usage since the 1940s-50s, to use the word 'vegetarian' as all-embracing (and technically correct it is or, more accurately, was), despite the existence of an American Vegan Society since 1960. So it is reasonable to assume that Regan, in talking of the total dissolution of commercial animal farming, was perhaps *thinking* veganically, reservations about 'commercial' notwithstanding. This is supported, for instance, by Regan's later article with Gary Francione which claims that rights (now seen in *vegan* terms) and welfare ideologies are morally incompatible, a tacit understanding of bloody and bloodless cultures.²⁸ Nevertheless, 'vegan' was not used ten years earlier in the major work which came partly as a response to Singer, who *differentiated* between vegetarians and vegans.

Is Regan's whole effect warped by not using the word 'vegan'? Not using it can lead not least to problems of both spatial and intellectual comprehension as any vegan, considered to be 'a vegetarian', has found in hotels, restaurants, on airlines or even as a guest in a private home. The implications are far-reaching, for by it, both here and in Singer and Clark, *vegetarianism* is typically equated with rights theory and indeed with animal rights and animal liberation. When we can regularly read about celebrities and others being described as 'vegetarians' only to find

²⁵ Ibid., p.213.

²⁶ Ibid., p.80.

²⁷ Ibid., p.185.

²⁸ Tom Regan and Gary Francione, 'A Movement's Means Create its Ends', *The Vegan*, (Winter, 1993). First published in *The Animals' Agenda*, (January-February, 1992).

that they eat fish, the word and concept of veganism, by contrast, constitute a clear and unequivocal statement (or do so when not clouded by vegetarianism).

Vegetarianism's milky dilutions would appear not only to weaken the vegan, animal-free, comprehensive principle but also fail to loosen sufficiently orthodoxy's long established meanings of human/nonhuman relations and definitions of animal liberation. There can still be detected an accommodating vagueness (and tactical tortuousness) which only disappears with veganism's clearing away of shams, fictions and concealments, its lack of concession to orthodox ontology and, see Adams 1994, its determining epistemology.²⁹ There is a world (or world-view) of difference between vegetarianism and veganism. It's a culture thing, as we shall see.

A Repeated Anomaly

The chronology is awry then; momentum appears to have been lost. For whatever reasons or motives (and there is an obvious tension between ethics and tactics), veganism was not or appeared not to be the philosophers' alpha (leaving aside pre-verbal mappings) and omega in the 1970s and '80s. This had happened before: it is a repeated anomaly. In 1892, Henry Salt had claimed in *Animals' Rights* that assertions of one form of animal exploitation being more or less cruel than any other, were 'irrelevant'³⁰ whilst at the same time advocating egg-eating, milk-drinking and wool-wearing.³¹ What places Salt, like Singer, Clark and Regan it would seem, within the increasingly identifiable area of bloody and bloodless culture tension are comments which can be juxtaposed thus:

It is little use to claim 'rights' for animals in a vague general way, if with the same breath we explicitly show our determination to subordinate those rights to anything and everything that can be construed into a human 'want'.³²

²⁹ Carol J. Adams, 'Beastly Theology: When Epistemology Creates Ontology' in her *Neither Man nor Beast: Feminism and the Defense of Animals* (Continuum, New York, 1994).

³⁰ Henry S. Salt, *Animals' Rights Considered in Relation to Social Progress*, 1892 (Centaur Press, Fontwell, 1980), p.106.

³¹ e.g. *Ibid.*, p.43; Henry S. Salt, *The Logic of Vegetarianism: Essays and Dialogues* (London Vegetarian Society, London, nd (1899)), pp.35-38.

³² Salt, *Animal Rights Considered*, p.9.

And, perhaps out of a narrow focus on normative *cruelty*:

What I say will of course have no reference to wool, or any other substance which is obtainable without injury to the animal from which it is taken.³³

For Salt, who considered the question of whether man is morally justified in utilizing animal labour at all as 'abstruse',³⁴ animals were still resources. Further:

I desire to keep clear also of the extreme contrary contention that man is not morally justified in imposing any sort of subjection on the lower animals.³⁵

He was referring to the contention of Lewis Gompertz who, some seventy years earlier, had written:

at least in the present state of society it is unjust, and considering the unnecessary abuse they suffer from being in the power of man, it is wrong to use them, and to encourage their being placed in his power.³⁶

Lewis Gompertz, second Secretary of the SPCA, champion of the 'rights' of women, blacks, the poor and nonhumans, published his *Moral Inquiries on the Situation of Man and of Brutes* in 1824, a work whose strategic and tactical approaches are reversed by Singer:

in our present speciesist world, it is not easy to keep so strictly to what is morally right [i.e. not using dairy products].³⁷

We see from Gompertz that it was not the case, as some have claimed, that Salt left little for his heirs to add, but that he and they left out a lot of Gompertz who, although his work is not fully formulated, being more of an uncertain inclination, outlined most of what was to follow, and more. Recognizing human-nonhuman similitude, animals' personal identity, and promoting equal pleasure and happiness in the cause of

³³ Ibid., p.79

³⁴ Ibid., p.43.

³⁵ Ibid., p.33.

³⁶ Cited in Ibid.

³⁷ Singer, *Animal Liberation*, p.181.

what was moral and just, Gompertz was, like some others^{6,38} a vegan long before the word was coined, dispensing with wool, leather, silk and eggs and refusing to ride in a horse-drawn carriage. Much of *Moral Inquiries* is taken up in the form of subversionary 'arguments' (with Gompertz as Z):

Y: I understand that you object to the use of milk; what harm can there be in that?

Z: It was evidently provided for the calf, and not for man.

Y: When the calf is taken away from its mother, it is then a kindness to relieve her of her milk.

Z: But the calf should not be taken away.³⁹

For both Salt and the philosophers to fall short of overt endorsement of Gompertz and veganism also means not capitalizing on the substantive shift of his revelatory light which, aptly, he shines on horses. His concern with the way they were treated appears foremost in his work but extends beyond questions of cruelty. Asked, 'How can man do without the aid of horses?', Gompertz's reply is, 'That is his business to find out',⁴⁰ perhaps a typical response from one famed also for a catalogue of technological inventions. He goes on:

It is true that we have adopted the method of employing horses to perform our labour, by which we have most probably only chosen one method out of a great many, and we have remained contented with it ... What causes you to think the services of horses so important to man is, that you take things as they are; *horses being used*....⁴¹

What is important here is that very ability to *see*, not only the suffering of horses when most others could not see it (which was Salt's concern), but that animals, horses, were being used in the first place (which wasn't Salt's concern, until later).⁴² Gompertz exposes the mythology of animal

³⁸ One of the earliest recorded vegans in Britain was Roger Crab who died at Bethnal Green in 1680 (see *The Vegan*, Summer, 1997, p.25) but, as early as 3BC, Porphyry and Claudius Neapolitan wrangled over dispensing with all animal products.

³⁹ Lewis Gompertz, *Moral Inquiries on the Situation of Man and Brutes*, 1824 (Centaur Press, Fontwell, 1992), p.97.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p.122.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, pp.123-125.

⁴² Salt came to see it more from Gompertz's angle: 'a civilized posterity will shudder at the sight of what we still regard as a legitimate agent of locomotion'. Henry S. Salt, *Seventy Years Among Savages* (George Allen and Unwin, London, 1921), p.217.

use naturalism and inevitability and, in the milk argument above, of bloody culture's tender mercies.

Regardless of the philosophical position or other grounding, and of interim tactical considerations, espousing animal liberation without affirming and valorizing veganism - as both theoretical starting point and practical aim - when the model(s) already exist, takes animal liberation's eyes off the prize. Whether Regan and Clark are promoting veganism or not, it is lacto-ovo-vegetarianism which, one hundred and seventy years after Gompertz, is popularly taken as the obligatory stance of animal liberationists. Indeed, the recoil, if that's what it is, seems endemic. As Leah Leneman has shown us, the vigorous correspondence during 1909-1912 in the Vegetarian Society's journal *The Vegetarian Messenger and Health Review* had led to the conclusion that the defence of the use of eggs and milk by vegetarians was unsatisfactory and that the only 'true way' was to 'live on cereals, pulse, fruit, nuts and vegetables'.⁴³ Nevertheless, in what was becoming a familiar pattern, this was reversed in the decades that followed.

The immediate or ultimate disdain, marginalization or even total exclusion have also been contagious, and across the spectrum. Robert Garner's strategy-minded work, for instance, talks of the vegetarian and vegan societies in Britain and elsewhere all campaigning to end animal cruelty 'which for them involves the end of the meat industry' (no mention of dairy or eggs) and even manages to omit the Vegan Society from its listing of the other three organizations which formed the Great British MeatOut coalition in the late 1980s.⁴⁴ The 'manifesto' edited by Godlovitch, Godlovitch & Harris had few references to veganism⁴⁵ which is at best a subtext in the review-and-recommend essays of the Garner-edited *Animal Rights: The Changing Debate*.⁴⁶ Richard D Ryder's chronicle⁴⁷ and (notably from 'outside' of animal liberation) Keith Tester's new historicist exaggerations⁴⁸ merely acknowledge veganism,

⁴³ Leah Leneman, 'Britain's First Vegans?', *The Vegan*, (Winter, 1997); Leah Leneman, 'No Animal Food: The Road to Veganism in Britain, 1909-1944', *Society and Animals*, 7/3, (1999), pp.219-228.

⁴⁴ Robert Garner, *Animals, Politics and Morality* (Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1993), p.39, p.186.

⁴⁵ Ruth Harrison, 'On Factory Farming' in R. Godlovitch, S. Godlovitch, and J. Harris (eds), *Animals, Men and Morals: An Enquiry into the Maltreatment of Non-humans* (Gollancz, London, 1971), p.23.

⁴⁶ Robert Garner (ed), *Animal Rights: The Changing Debate* (Routledge, London, 1996).

⁴⁷ Richard D. Ryder, *Animal Revolution: Changing Attitudes Towards Speciesism* (Blackwell, Oxford, 1989).

⁴⁸ Keith Tester, *Animals and Society: The Humanity of Animal Rights* (Routledge, London, 1991).

give the briefest of descriptions and fail to record the foundation or existence of a Vegan Society, despite the latter offering a critique of Bryant for whom, almost uniquely, veganism is *de rigueur* within 'animal rights'.⁴⁹ Ted Benton's eco-socialism, which identifies rights theory with an opposition to 'animal agriculture', nevertheless equates it with vegetarianism (thus following the Regan confusion) and not veganism which, again, is Cinderella'd in favour of a 'high welfare' model.⁵⁰ And philosopher-activists Finsen & Finsen⁵¹ still refer to Gompertz as a vegetarian (Singer refers to him as a 'strict' vegetarian⁵²) and, like Singer, use inverted commas for their reference to vegans. Eder too, in referring to animal liberation never mentions veganism and, although his 'vegetarian culture' is seen in terms of negating social order, lacto-ovo-vegetarianism maintains hierarchies in terms of the primacy of animal protein and sustains the negative magic of complex food taboos which normalize animal-dependent diets.⁵³ Indeed, for virtually all the popular and academic literature on or referring to animal liberation, vegetarianism rather than veganism is the common coin.

Moreover, that Donald Watson and Leslie Cross are ignored by Magel⁵⁴ and Wynne-Tyson,⁵⁵ the two works which represent the movement's most comprehensive and specific archaeologies of pro-animal thought, would seem to weaken these attempts to help legitimate the tradition and authority of animal liberation heritage through its hallowed value-leaders.⁵⁶

⁴⁹ Bryant, *Fettered Kingdoms*

⁵⁰ Ted Benton, *Natural Relations: Ecology, Animal Rights and Social Justice* (Verso, London, 1993).

⁵¹ L. Finsen and S. Finsen, *The Animal Rights Movement in America: From Compassion to Respect* (Twayne, New York, 1994), p.284, p.155.

⁵² Singer, *Animal Liberation*, p.244; Singer, *Animal Liberation* 2nd ed., p.11.

⁵³ Eder, *The Social Construction of Nature*.

⁵⁴ Charles R. Magel, *Keyguide to Information Sources in Animal Rights* (Mansell, London, 1989).

⁵⁵ Jon Wynne-Tyson (ed), *The Extended Circle: An Anthology of Humane Thought*, 1985 (Cardinal, London, 1990).

⁵⁶ Nonetheless, the value of Wynne-Tyson's work here resides not least in illustrating how animal concern has been edited out by mainstream collections, eg the *Oxford Dictionary of Quotations*. In further defence of Wynne-Tyson we should acknowledge his largely overlooked comment on veganism in *Food for a Future*: 'The logic of the vegan case is absolute. No one - whether nutritionist, physician, sociologist or layman - can rebut the veganic argument in any important respect. Veganism is part of the most truly civilised concept of life of which the human mind has been capable'. Jon Wynne-Tyson, *Food for a Future: The Complete Case for Vegetarianism*, 1975 (Centaur Press, Fontwell, 1979), p.107

However, there appears to have been a latterday shift towards the vegan nexus by some. In several of the campaigning magazines one notices at the turn of the millennium - as with Regan and Francione - a growing emphasis on veganism in, for instance, the promotion of vegan food items and the publication of vegan rather than vegetarian recipes. And some hitherto hidden agendas have now been willingly revealed. Yet it has all taken a very long time to catch the shirt tails of Watson and Cross, indeed with those of Gompertz.

The delay has served to render animal liberation somewhat confusing and confused as to its aims (important for those outside the movement) and therefore its means (important to the *cognoscente*). Even now, the Vegetarian Society actively promotes animal products. And, possibly for tactical reasons, many of the (now mainly vegan-staffed) organizations do still tend to promote by name the more 'user-friendly' option of vegetarianism, and anti-vivisection organizations have promoted 'cruelty-free' products containing animal ingredients (thus failing to redefine cruelty). Moreover, throughout the 1990s, there seems to have been an increasing association of vegetarianism with 'animal rights' through female vegetarian-welfarist celebrities, which may sustain the old derogatory representation of sentimental animal concern.

Although there are other factors involved, such as which foods are 'male' and which 'female' and which are essentialisms and which culturalisms, and all the tactical decisions which will flow from such considerations, this has much to do with the 'worst abuses first' stance.⁵⁷ What is 'worst' is not only arbitrarily decided but appears to depend on the extent of one's empirical knowledge of animal use (witness Singer's laudable *volte-face* on wool after reading Townend).⁵⁸ The movement seems to have set in stone the construction that 'meat'-eating is worse than other forms of animal consumption, establishing a hierarchical scale to be negotiated *as one finds out more*, even though knowledge of the stories behind all animal products is more readily available now than it was in 1892, or even in 1975 (despite the Vegan Society making available such information for years prior to then and Singer, like Salt, had read Gompertz before laying out his ethics).⁵⁹ Indeed, submitting to

⁵⁷ Salt's own 'worst abuses first' approach to 'extreme vegetarianism' displays a greater anticipation of veganism in his later *The Logic of Vegetarianism*. See George Hendrick and Willene Hendrick, *The Savour of Salt: A Henry Salt Anthology* (Centaur Press, Fontwell, 1989), p.27. The particular passage was omitted from the London Vegetarian Society's revised and abridged edition (Salt, *The Logic of Vegetarianism*)

⁵⁸ Singer, *Animal Liberation* cf Singer, *Animal Liberation* 2nd ed.; Christine Townsend, *Pulling the Wool* (Hale and Iremonger, Sydney, 1985).

⁵⁹ Singer, *Animal Liberation* 2nd ed., p.11.

this, the Vegan Society is today reduced to specifically targeting vegetarians rather than the general public(s), and the UK has still not seen concerted anti-animal milk, anti-egg or anti-wool campaigns. (Perhaps there is a linguistic problem: does the inability to name the non-milk-egg-wool-using meat-eater preclude the stance and therefore bar *that* road? But, conversely, if to be named is to be controlled, maybe here is a seditious advantage to be seized).

Rebuking Vegetarianism

Crucially perhaps, the abiding common association of *vegetarianism* with 'animal rights' associates animal liberation with animal use, and animal use is welfarist, bloody culture, territory. We can pursue this. Carol J Adams offers us the notion of 'the vegetarian quest', the first step of which is

experiencing *the revelation of the nothingness of meat* as an item of food...which arises because one sees that it comes from ... someone, and it has been made into ... no-body. The revelation involves recognizing the structure of the absent referent.⁶⁰

The second step is *naming the relationships*, eg the connection between meat on the table and a living animal; between a sense that animals have rights and that killing them for meat violates those rights; the recognition of the violence of meat eating; and possibly of the continuity between meat eating and war. This stage also enables the reclaiming of appropriate words for meat, from euphemisms, distortions and misnaming. The third step is *rebuking the meat-eating world* by proving that an alternative to meat-eating exists and that it works; 'vegetarians... seek to change the meat eating world'.⁶¹

It is the second and third steps in which we are interested here. Regarding the possibility of the second - remembering why the Society had been formed in 1944 while war was still raging, Donald Watson wrote the following (as Leneman⁶² 1999 has reminded us):

Why did we do it *then* of all times? Perhaps it seemed to us a fitting antidote to the sickening

⁶⁰ Carol J. Adams, *The Sexual Politics of Meat: A Feminist-Vegetarian Critical Theory* (Polity Press, London, 1990), pp.175-179.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² Leneman, 'No Animal Food'.

experience of the War, and a reminder that we should be doing more about the other holocaust that goes on all the time.⁶³

But Watson took further Adams' third step, *of rebuking the meat-eating world*. Although appreciating the efforts of vegetarians, he also rebuked the non-vegan *vegetarian* world: it was to be demonstrated that *veganism* works. If the Great War gave rise to a revelation of continuities between warring and animal-eating (as it had for Salt,⁶⁴), it was the effect of the second war which, for some, took the process across to re-connect with Gompertz's vision.

Watson's own connection of animals, veganism and peace not only identifies bloody culture rationalism's nadir but also expands the war 'front' (another of Adams' notions⁶⁵) to recognize not just all animals but all animal products and, for Leslie Cross and the Society as we saw earlier, all animal use. But Watson goes on, and in the process both disrupts the foster mother symbolism of old world creation myth - the Egyptian Pyramid Texts' cultural-need depiction of the pharaoh suckling from the cow mother of humankind - and reverses the values of sacred and profane:

though nature provides us with lots of examples of carnivores and vegetarians it provides us with no examples of lacto-carnivores or lacto-vegetarians. Such groups are freaks and only made possible by man's capacity to exploit the reproductive functions of other species. This, we thought, could not be right either dietetically or ethically. It was certainly wrong aesthetically, and we could conceive of no

⁶³ Donald Watson, 'Out of the Past', *The Vegan*, (Summer, 1988). Watson had also grasped what Salt seems to have suspected already at the turn of the century: that the virtually automatic progress inherent in nineteenth century evolutionary concepts shifted into an unspecific 'social change' in the twentieth; that the idea of united, comprehensive progress was replaced by an understanding of uneven and partial change, different aspects of society falling out of step with each other (notably the animals issue being left aside); and that change then had to be forced - one couldn't wait for inevitability or for the ripe time. See Norbert Elias, *The Civilising Process* (Blackwell, Oxford, 1994), p.184. In the light of this - and Watson had dealt with the 'delaying tactic': 'There is an obvious danger in leaving the fulfilment of our ideals to posterity, for posterity may not have our ideals' - we could ask what 'the plan' is. To wait until an as yet unspecified percentage of the population is vegetarian before veganism dare become the name of the game? Donald Watson *The Vegan News*, 1, (November, 1994).

⁶⁴ Salt, *Seventy Years Among Savages*, pp.219-230.

⁶⁵ Adams, *The Sexual Politics of Meat*, pp.120-141.

spectacle more bizarre than that of a grown man attached at his meal-time to the udder of a cow.⁶⁶

Now, if humans have gone from being pre-hunt, pre-ethical vegan to being animal eaters and then, only with the neolithic revolution, to full-blown lacto-ovo-carnivorism then, in this sense, lacto-ovo-vegetarianism is firmly rooted in animal-based *agriculture*: it is animal-*using* culture's freakish form of veganism just as the animals used have been turned into freakish Forms.

We need to re-assess the two culture concept, as it appears that we now have two different versions. One, extending Eder's thesis, would perhaps place veganism as the fuller development of bloodless culture. However, if we take our lead from the vegan exemplars, we can suggest that veganism is no such thing but, rather, that it is veganism which is bloodless culture,⁶⁷ wherever it originates: most plausibly perhaps in an innate alternative potential of both individual and society. We cannot suggest that Watson and Cross are claiming any of this, but we can suggest that they are, in their turn, discovering and connecting with bloodless culture as that very option, one which has been consistently rejected and obscured since the time of cultivation and domestication, efforts being made ever since to reconnect with the primal sympathy. Eder's bloodless culture starting point in Judaism can be seen as just one effort, and the vegan Eden of the troubled writers of Genesis, torn again between two cultures, may have been another.

Our entire history can be seen in this light.⁶⁸ Most of history's 'bloodless culture' representatives - including the famous anti-cruelty foxhunters and animal-eating anti-vivisectionists - have been in some half-way house, trying to reach out to a bloodless culture ideal but pulled back by the internalized values of bloody culture, the numbing and blinding

⁶⁶ Watson, 'Out of the Past'.

⁶⁷ Of course, for humans at least, there is probably no such thing as truly bloodless culture: it remains an ideal, probably an unattainable one. But, rather than using unavoidable bloodletting - eg in the tilling of soil or in defence - as the premiss from which to exploit, veganism is surely bloodless culture in its original and continuing intent, in its deliberate non-use. It is the bloodless culture of which we know humans to be capable. (Gompertz's own suggestion that we might eat animals which died of natural causes seems to have been inspired by the belief he was encouraged to hold: that his health would suffer without animal products, a familiar story in 1944 and even at the turn of the millennium: bloodless culture spells anaemia for the orthodox).

⁶⁸ And no less than in the equally valid light of 'The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of the struggle between humans and non-humans'. John Simons, 'The Longest Revolution: Cultural Studies after Speciesism', *Environmental Values*, 6, (1997), p.484.

comforts of its cosmology(ies), and the entirely practical impossibilities which no longer obtain in the Western world.

Vegetarianism itself, seemingly a product of bloody culture, is a cultural ersatz, and appropriation. It may be a 'further step' from today's vegetarianism to veganism but on a lateral, cross-culture (cognitive) route, not on a vertical, intra-culture (material) one. Not so much a development or Ederian evolution as an abandonment of one culture for another.⁶⁹ In a remarkable testimony proving that conscience is an indispensable factor in the best scientific equation Watson and Cross, like Gompertz and others, in much doubt due to orthodoxy's command of nutritional knowledge, put bloodless culture in sharper perspective, liberated from the eternalization of animal use, from the mythology of the animal-product dietary and from the power-based ambivalence of human/nonhuman relations, all of which are retained by vegetarianism.

And this has many implications, not least of which are for the effectiveness of the movement's oppositional discourse and its strategic/tactical dilemmas - which ends are dictating which means, or vice versa, as the movement shifts, in part, from protest to public policy activity⁷⁰ - *and* for normative perceptions and ideological representations of animal liberation, many of which picture it as an extreme of orthodoxy, eg an *overidentification* with animals, thus of course validating the *centre* of animal-use, using the ALF as a political synecdoche (strategy and representation having influenced the philosophies in the first place). The equating of animal liberation with *vegetarianism* affords the extreme label a certain legitimacy, for vegetarianism seems to reside at bloody culture's refined periphery, at its opposite pole to the *raw* bloody culture of, for example, hunting, Roman and Renaissance periods. (Thus circumscribed it remains, albeit idiosyncratically, within the realm of private lifestyle-menu options. And this relates too to Tester's ability to entrap 'animal rights' within the realm of bloody culture's anthropocentric 'entrapment' of animals). But it would be illegitimate to view and represent *veganism*-animal

⁶⁹ If there is a sense of development or evolution of bloodless culture it would be, perhaps, to fruitarianism but how practicable that would be for whole societies has yet to be shown, as have hitherto vague notions of non-exploitative symbiotic human-nonhuman relations.

⁷⁰ The outcome of an animal liberation which does not emulate and unequivocally advocate non-use and uphold veganism as its base line is, ironically, illustrated in a 'state of the cause' comment by Singer himself: 'What disturbs me is the fact that the thrust for a really radical change in our attitude to animals - in other words, for equal consideration of the interests of animals - keeps getting sidetracked into small increments of progress in animal welfare'. Peter Singer, Interview in *Outrage*, (June/July, 1993).

liberation as an extreme rather than as, together, a genuine alternative culture, civilization and civilizing process, one which is not defined and shaped by invisible and 'lesser' slaveries.⁷¹

Biography

Barry Kew founded/organized South Lincolnshire Animal Protection group (1978-1984). He graduated with a BA from the Open University in 1979 and was employed as the General Secretary of the Vegan Society from 1984 to 1989 and editor of The Vegan from 1987 to 1989. Barry's publications include: The Pocketbook of Animal Facts & Figures (Green Print, London, 1991), and The Animal Welfare Handbook (with Caroline Clough) (Fourth Estate, London, 1993) and 50 town, city and county guides. Barry completed a Ph.D. in Sociology at the University of Durham in 1999 with a thesis entitled 'Fearsome Truths: The Challenge of Animal Liberation'.

⁷¹ None of the foregoing has meant to suggest of course that veganism is itself a strategy.

