REVIEWS

Sorabji, Richard, *Animal Minds and Human Morals. The Origins of the Western Debate*, Cornell Studies in Classical Philology 54, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993, 267 pp.

Sorabji investigates the philosophical theories about animals in ancient Greece in order to place the debate over the moral status of animals in its proper historical context. He advances three main theses. First, he contends that "the Stoic view of animals, with its stress on their irrationality, became embedded in Western, Latin-speaking Christianity above all through Augustine" (2). Second, Sorabji argues that Western Christianity concentrated on the anti-animal half of a much more evenly balanced ancient debate. He presents evidence that the ancient philosophers were less complacent about the killing of animals than has been the norm in our Western Christian tradition. Sorabji believes that in the eighteenth century the tide began to turn away from this complacency, and that in the last fifteen years concern about animals has accelerated. Third, Sorabji identifies as the turning point of the ancient debate the crisis that was provoked when Aristotle denied reason to animals. "It was a crisis both for the philosophy of mind and for theories of morality, and the issues raised then are still being debated today" (7). As his title suggests, the first half of the book examines the philosophies of human and animal minds, while the second half is devoted to the theories of morality regarding the treatment of animals.

Sorabji argues that when Aristotle and the Stoics denied that animals have reason (*logos*) and belief (*doxa*), they compensated them by expanding the content of their perception in order to account for how they deal with the world. The Stoics other than Posidonius argued that animals are incapable of judgment, and so cannot have genuine emotion (58–59). Sorabji judges the Stoic downgrading of psychological capacities in animals to be "entirely implausible" (61).

The Epicureans in contrast focused less on the need to expand the perceptual content, because they had such varying views about the cognitive resources available to animals. Lucretius, Sorabji explains, ascribed a mind (*mens, animus*) to the horse, lion, and deer, and insisted that animals can dream; another Epicurean denied that animals have minds, but allowed them analogues of belief; and still others denied animals reasoning and thinking (8–9).

Sorabji reports that the second head of the Peripatetic school, Theophrastus, held that animals *do* engage in reasonings (*logismoi*) (45). Theophrastus's successor, Strato, adopted the view, subsequently endorsed by Platonists, that perception involves thinking (*noein, dianoia*), which therefore belongs to all animals (46). Sorabji cites another of Aristotle's pupils, Eudemus of Rhodes, as a collector of many examples of animals' cleverness, emotion, ability to count, and even sense of injustice (46).

Sorabji makes a compelling case that one of the most important insights for understanding the ancient debate over the mentality and moral status of animals is that the concept of reason itself and other psychological concepts (including perception, belief, memory, and emotion) were widely disputed and, as a result, underwent change during the ancient period. He traces the shifting of the concept of reason in Plato,

Aristotle, the Stoics, the Middle Platonists, the Neoplatonists, and the "memorists." Sorabji argues that the basic Neoplatonist distinction between reason (*logos*), which makes transitions, progresses, and unfolds, and is thought of as a function of the soul (*psukhê,*), and intellect (*nous*), whose gaze is unchanging and simple, was passed on to the Latin Middle Ages by Boethius and was still being discussed in the thirteenth century by Thomas Aquinas (74–75). The "memorists" were the group of empiricist physicians who held that both animals *and* humans lack reason, since the concept of reason is unnecessary for explaining cognitive abilities. Instead, these memorists argued that memory was what enabled us to think, infer, reflect, believe, assume, examine, generalize, and know (76). Sorabji rejects Michael Frede's suggestion that the Epicureans took a similar line, instead comparing the memorists to David Hume in the eighteenth century, whose position was that all that animals need, and all that humans need most of the time, is an association of ideas based on custom (76).

Sorabji makes the revealing observation that while Aristotle and the Stoics denied that animals have reason, Aristotle's own successors, Theophrastus and Strato, and the Pythagoreans and Platonists up to Iamblichus, disagreed with them. Sorabji details the many capacities that formed the basis of the case for animal reason: perception, memory, preparation, and emotion, but also animal speech, skills, virtues, vices, and even the liability to madness (78–79). Sorabji cites Philo of Alexandria, Plutarch, Sextus Empiricus, and Plotinus's pupil Porphyry as the most important sources for the arguments for animal reason.

In the second part of the book, the author identifies what he takes to be the two main questions for the ancients (107). If animals lack reason, are they responsible for what they do? Do we owe them justice, or are they not the sort of beings who can suffer injustice? Thus not only did the concept of reason shift throughout the ancient period, but competing theories of justice, as well as theories of morality, were also debated. Sorabji observes that Democritus held that animals *are* responsible for their actions, and this makes them subject to just punishment. Aristotle too, Sorabji maintains, thought that animal action can be classed as voluntary and therefore morally praised or blamed *despite* lacking reason, but that the merely voluntary acts of animals must be carefully distinguished from the deliberate choice of humans, which is a prerequisite for full-scale action (*praxis*) and genuine virtue (109–110). Sorabji argues that the Stoics diverge greatly from Aristotle on this point by robbing animals of anything like human action (113). The Stoics do this by denying that animals can have desire (*orexis*), since on their account desire is a *rational* impulse directed to the good or the apparent good (114).

The Stoics and Epicureans, Sorabji explains, both had theories of justice that disqualified irrational animals from consideration. For the Stoics, since the "process of extending fellow feeling" (*oikeiôsis*) can include only those beings who are rational like ourselves, and justice is based on *oikeiôsis*, justice does not apply to animals (7–8). In his discussion of *oikeiôsis*, which is one of the most sophisticated concepts in Stoicism, Sorabji describes how Plato, Aristotle, and Theophrastus paved the way for the theory of *oikeiôsis*. Plato did so, Sorabji suggests, by making the point that we may treasure others because they belong with us or are akin (*oikeioi*) and that this is different from treasuring them because they are *like* us. Aristotle's contribution was the idea that friendship towards others is modelled on one's relation to oneself. However, Sorabji emphasizes, the most important antecedents of *oikeiôsis* are in Theophrastus, because he contradicted his predecessor Aristotle's claim that there can be no friendship, and

so no relation of justice, towards a horse or ox because there is nothing in common (*koinon*) with them. "On the contrary, a relation of belonging (*oikeiotês*) unites us with animals, because they have emotions and even (*pace* Aristotle) reasoning (*logismos*), and are closest of all to us in their sense perception. Moreover, they are (as Pythagoras and Empedocles said) made of the same elements" (132).

Sorabji claims that the Epicureans, and Thomas Hobbes following them, held that justice extends only to those capable of making contracts, and thus only to rational animals. Those wishing to reject the Stoic and Epicurean conclusion that we owe no justice to irrational animals, Sorabji reasons, could either deny that animals were irrational or appeal to alternative theories of justice. He observes that Porphyry takes the second route by invoking Plato's account of justice (165–166). In his chapter on religious sacrifice and meat-eating Sorabji makes the case that animal sacrifice was an even more important feature of Greek life than animal experimentation is for us today (170). Sorabji notes that Pythagoras is credited with the argument that cruelty to animals leads to cruelty to fellow human beings (173) and that Empedocles and Theophrastus held that we wrong animals by killing them. He concludes this chapter observing that "Iamblichus defeated Porphyry's attempt to steer Neoplatonism away from animal sacrifice" (194).

In examining the influences on the Christian tradition, Sorabji claims that Aquinas followed Augustine, who followed the Stoics in holding that animals cannot be brought within the community of just dealings because they lack reason. In fact, Augustine's view that animals exist for humans was, Sorabji claims, in line with a long earlier tradition from both pagan sources (as early as Xenophon's ascription of this view to Socrates and Aristotle) and Christian sources (198–199). Sorabji states that Aquinas, citing Aristotle as his authority, held that since intellectual understanding (*intelligere = nous*) is the only operation of the soul performed without a physical organ, the souls of brute animals are not immortal like ours (201). However, Sorabji offers the illuminating historical observation that the ancient Greek "pro-animal" arguments re-emerged in the tenth-century Islamic Ikhwān al-Safā, or Brethren of Purity, as well as in Montaigne and Leibniz. Sorabji says that the *superiority* of animals was promulgated to a wide literary public in the sixteenth century by Montaigne, who often followed Plutarch's views on animals (205). Descartes' position that animals have no feeling at all and no souls was, Sorabji speculates, perhaps due to the need to counteract Montaigne. Sorabji notes that Leibniz, *contra* Descartes, thought that animals do have sense perception, and hence that their souls are immaterial and indestructible (206).

In his final chapter, Sorabji criticizes the works of contemporary philosophers Peter Singer and Tom Regan as examples of one-dimensional ethical theories regarding animals. While Singer and Regan each appeal to an overly simplistic, monolithic ethical scheme, Sorabji argues that multiple considerations of morally relevant similarities and differences between animals and humans, as well as the various kinds of relationships we can have with animals, ought to be incorporated into our moral theorizing.

The depth and range of scholarship that Sorabji presents in this meticulously researched work is admirable. His references range from Olympiodorus and Priscian to Donald Davidson and John Rawls. But it is surprising that Sorabji seems unaware of the earlier work by Daniel A. Dombrowski, *The Philosophy of Vegetarianism* (Univ. of Massachusetts Press, 1984) which covers so much of the same ground and anticipates many of Sorabji's central theses. For example, Dombrowski explains how philosophical vegetarianism had a history of nearly 1,000 years in ancient Greece and that Pythagoras,

Empedocles, Theophrastus, Plutarch, Plotinus, Porphyry, and perhaps even Plato all believed that eating animals is wrong (Dombrowski, 2). "Following Aristotle, the Stoics (including Cicero) defined animals in terms of an extrinsic teleology, where plants existed for animals and animals existed for men. Animals cannot be members of our community of concern primarily because they lack reason—i.e., human beings could not possibly be just to animals because justice is possible only between those who *share* values" (Dombrowski, 75–76). Thus while many of Sorabji's main conclusions lack originality, he does cover new ground, particularly in furthering our understanding of the ancient philosophies of mind. Sorabji's work is more concerned with describing the sources of the Western debate over animals than with critically evaluating the philosophical positions staked out in that debate. But *Animal Minds and Human Morals* certainly extends the philosophical study of the history of animal ethology and ethical theory in an informative way. It represents a valuable new addition to the group of earlier works in this area: Johannes Haussleiter, *Der Vegetarianismus in der Antike* (Berlin, 1935), Urs Dierauer, *Tier und Mensch im Denken der Antike* (Amsterdam, 1977), and Daniel A. Dombrowski, *The Philosophy of Vegetarianism* (Amherst, 1984).

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Relihan, Joel C., *Ancient Menippean Satire,* Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993, 306 pp.

Despite many attempts to define Menippean satire, and a host of helpful theories advanced in the cause, the genre has remained the misunderstood stepchild of classical literature. In *Ancient Menippean Satire,* Joel C. Relihan offers a detailed analysis of the history, purposes and salient features of the type. Of course, he goes far beyond the conventional definition of "prose mingled with verse," which has served readers whose interests in Menippean satire are incidental, but he also complements (and in many ways, supplants) the work of scholars who have studied the genre in depth. His conclusions are provocative and forcefully argued.

The book is divided into five parts: Theory and Practice; Fragments; Diverging Greek Traditions; The Late Latin Revival; Boethius and Beyond. The scope includes the practice and development of Menippean satire from its origins into the Middle Ages. In addition, there are three appendices (Greek Prosimetric Romances; The Prologue of Fulgentius' *Mythologies;* Ennodius' *Paraenesis Didascalica*), as well as notes and extensive bibliography.

The first part of Ancient Menippean Satire comprises two chapters in which the author reviews and summarizes modern theories, notably those of Northrop Frye and Mikhail Bakhtin, with considerable deference to the former, as on pages 4 and 5: "Frye, with his accustomed brilliance . . . Frye is quite right . . . Frye rightly notes . . . Frye is right." After acknowledging these theoretical debts and pointing out their limitations, the author goes on to offer his own definition (pp. 10–11), which states in part that "the genre is primarily a parody of philosophical thought and forms of writing, a parody of the habits of civilized discourse in general . . . it ultimately turns into the parody of the author who dared to write in such an unorthodox way." Relihan discusses such essential features of this "antigenre" as its burlesque of language and literature,

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