

## Book Review

# Maria do Céu Patrão Neves. Fernando Araújo (Coord.) Ética Aplicada

Animais Edições 70. Almedina (Lisboa 2018) 340 p.

ISBN: 9789724419565

Helena Correia Mendonça

Practicing Lawyer

Master Degree in Animal Law and Society

Faculty of Law, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

Received: September 2018

Accepted: September 2018



**Recommended citation.** PATRÃO NEVES M.C., ARAÚJO F. (Coord.), *Ética Aplicada: Animais* (Lisboa 2018), rev. CORREIA MENDONÇA H., dA. Derecho Animal (Forum of Animal Law Studies) 9/4 (2018) – <https://doi.org/10.5565/rev/da.367>

## Abstract

---

The increasing awareness of animal sentience is bringing relevant changes to society and a growing commitment to guaranteeing their wellbeing. Portugal has been making its way in a solid, even if slow, manner, including through the approval of legal changes that put animals at the centre stage. Academic work remains essential for strengthening the theoretical approaches that are the basis of such societal and political changes. It is in this context that the Portuguese book “Applied Ethics – Animals” (author’s translation) represents an important source for learning and reflecting on the main topics dealing with animals. The book covers a wide array of subjects from the ethical status of animals to domestication, companion animals, animal testing, farming, vegetarianism, endangered species and activism. This review undertakes a short description and analysis of the essays contained in the book.

Keywords: Portugal, animals’ moral status, domestication, companion animals, animal testing, farming, vegetarianism, endangered species, activism.

## Resumen

---

La creciente concienciación respecto a la sensibilidad de los animales está derivando en cambios relevantes en la sociedad y un compromiso en auge para garantizar su bienestar. Portugal ha estado avanzando de forma sólida, aunque lenta, incluso a través de la aprobación de cambios legales que sitúan a los animales en el centro del escenario. El trabajo académico sigue siendo esencial para fortalecer los enfoques teóricos que son la base de estos cambios sociales y políticos. En este contexto, el libro portugués “Ética

Aplicada – Animales” (traducción del autor) constituye una fuente importante para aprender y reflejar los principales temas relacionados con los animales. El libro abarca una amplia gama de temas desde el estatuto ético de los animales hasta la domesticación, los animales de compañía, la experimentación animal, la ganadería, el vegetarianismo, las especies amenazadas y el activismo. Esta reseña describe y analiza brevemente el contenido del libro.

Palabras clave: Portugal, estatuto moral de los animales, domesticación, animales de compañía, experimentación animal, ganadería, vegetarianismo, especies amenazadas, activismo.

---

The growing worldwide recognition of animal sentience is bringing massive changes in several areas of society, ranging from technology, nutrition and health, to entertainment, sports and even the very concept of family. The recent origins of the animal movement are traced back to the seminal work of Peter Singer<sup>1</sup>, and the philosophical approaches to animals were soon accompanied by law itself, which began to reflect the new visions of “what” animals are and “how” they should be treated. Though slow, conservative and with some limited practical enforcement, changes in law have also been responding to the increasing yearning from growing sectors of society to treat animals in accordance with their sentient nature. Science has played a major role in this scope, from disproving the old Cartesian theories of “animals as machines”<sup>2</sup> to devising new approaches to animal care (“animal welfare science”) to even developing replacement products and technologies (such as in animal testing and animal derived products, from meat, eggs, milk and leather).

Portugal has not been oblivious to these changes. Indeed, from the pivotal work of law professor Fernando Araújo (“A Hora dos Direitos dos Animais” – which can be loosely translated as “The Time of Animal Rights”<sup>3</sup>), Portugal has been showing a growing interest in animals. Two major breakthroughs have been made in recent times: the recognition of animal sentience in the Portuguese Civil Code<sup>4</sup>, and the criminalisation of animal abuse in the Criminal Code<sup>5</sup>. Alongside these, other relevant steps were taken, such as the prohibition of killing companion animals as a means of population control especially in city/public kennels<sup>6</sup>, the admittance of companion animals into public spaces such as shops and restaurants<sup>7</sup> and the new provisions for the commercialisation of companion animals<sup>8</sup>.

It is in this context that one cannot help but welcome with open arms the book “Applied Ethics – Animals” (translated from Portuguese “Ética Aplicada – Animais”). The

---

<sup>1</sup> Peter Singer, *Animal Liberation*, Harper Collins Publishers (1975).

<sup>2</sup> René Descartes, *A Discourse on the Method*, trans. Ian Maclean, Oxford University Press, Oxford, UK (2006).

<sup>3</sup> Fernando Araújo, *A Hora dos Direitos dos Animais*, Almedina, Coimbra (2003).

<sup>4</sup> Portuguese Civil Code, approved by Decree-Law n. 47344/66, of 25 November 1966, as amended by Law n. 8/2017, of 3<sup>rd</sup> March, which recognised animals as sentient beings.

<sup>5</sup> Portuguese Criminal Code, approved by Decree-Law n. 400/82, of 23 September, as amended by Law n. 69/2014, of 29 August, which criminalised cruelty against companion animals, and further amended Law n. 92/95, of 12 September, on the protection of animals, broadening the rights of animal protection associations.

<sup>6</sup> Law n. 27/2016, of 23 August, which approves measures for the creation of a network of official collection points for animals and forbids slaughter of stray animals as a form of population control.

<sup>7</sup> Law n. 15/2018, of 27 March, which allows companion animals to stay in commercial premises, under specific conditions, and amending the legal framework on access and exercise of commercial, services and catering activities, approved by Decree-Law n. 10/2015, of 16 January.

<sup>8</sup> Law n. 95/2017, of 23 August, which regulates the sale of companion animals in commercial establishments and through the Internet, and amends Decree-Law n. 276/2001, of 17 October.

book is part of a collection of books on Ethics that have covered issues such as mass media, economics, environment, scientific research and new technologies. That animals have been the subject of a volume does show that animal related issues remain a topical matter and that continuous academic work is essential for strengthening the theoretical approaches that are the basis of societal and political change.

The volume is coordinated by law professor Fernando Araújo and ethics professor Maria do Céu Patrão Neves. Araújo is the leading authority on animal issues in Portuguese law and has spearheaded the most recent efforts to increase awareness of animal law at the academic level. Patrão Neves is a specialist on bioethics with long experience in this field of study. Both scholars sign the introductory chapter of the book, under the title “Biodiversity and Coexistence”<sup>9</sup>. By briefly describing the evolution of philosophical thinking when it comes to animals, the chapter has the merit of explaining, in clear and accessible terms, the main theoretical thoughts that underpin the current animal movement(s). The authors then highlight the importance of academic reflection in opposition to what they describe as radical militancy, which, in their opinion, is an obstacle to the objective presentation of facts and rational consideration of arguments. I note, in any case, that both theoretical approaches and on-the-ground work are central to promote change that benefits animals. And, in addition, the way we perceive and treat animals is not only about objective facts and rational thought: it is a moral concern where common-sense<sup>10</sup>, intuition and arguments by analogy<sup>11</sup>, as well as the usually infamous anthropomorphism<sup>12</sup>, play a relevant role.

The book is then split into two sections.

The first section deals with fundamental themes and contains four articles, which examine the relationship between humans and other animals and the question of whether the arguments for “human exceptionalism” withstand the test of objective analysis.

Both Daniel Braga Lourenço<sup>13</sup> and Fernando Araújo<sup>14</sup> argue that animals have moral status. Lourenço notes that animals can have different interests from humans but is clear in indicating that such differences cannot mean difference in importance and meaning. Lourenço makes a very clear and systematic examination of this issue, by methodically deconstructing the arguments usually brought forward to support speciesism. According to this author, sentience is the criterion that makes it possible to enter the moral community.

Araújo brings into attention that animal behaviour shows some sort of “moral

---

<sup>9</sup> Maria do Céu Patrão Neves and Fernando Araújo, *Bio-diversidade e co-Existência*, (*Biodiversity and Coexistence*, author’s translation), pp. 9-29.

<sup>10</sup> As it has been correctly said: “It’s important to blend ‘science sense’ with common sense. I maintain that we know that some non-human animals feel something some of the time, just as do human animals”. Marc Bekoff, *Animal Emotions and Animal Sentience and Why They Matter: Blending ‘Science Sense’ with Common Sense, Compassion and Heart*, Jacky Turner, Joyce D’Silva (ed.), *Animals, Ethics and Trade. The Challenge of Animal Sentience*, Earthcan (2006), at 28-29, 32.

<sup>11</sup> Nevertheless, it is an analogy that makes (also) use of the biological knowledge of the animals. Marian S. Dawkins, *The Scientific Basis for Assessing Suffering in Animals*, Peter Singer (ed.), *In Defense of Animals. The Second Wave*, Backwell Publishing (2013), at 38.

<sup>12</sup> “Anthropomorphism allows other animals’ behaviour and emotions to be accessible to us. Thus, I maintain that we can be biocentrally anthropomorphic and do rigorous science; in fact, our anthropomorphism can be a tool rather than an obstacle to such rigor”, Marc Bekoff, *Wild Justice, Social Cognition, Fairness, and Morality. A Deep Appreciation for the Subjective Lives of Animals*, Paul Waldau, Kimberley Patton (ed.), *A Communion of Subjects: Animals in Religion, Science, and Ethics*, Columbia University Press (2006), at 463.

<sup>13</sup> Daniel Braga Lourenço, Law professor at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, *Fronteiras da inclusão: implicações éticas do contínuo das espécies* (*Frontiers of inclusion: ethical implications of species’ continuity*, author’s translation), pp. 33-51.

<sup>14</sup> Fernando Araújo, *O estatuto animal dos humanos e o estatuto moral dos não-humanos* (*The animal status of humans and the moral status of animals*, author’s translation), pp. 53-70.

intelligence”. He further highlights that neurology and evolution also point to this conclusion: indeed, animal brains and their fundamental characteristics of neurons and synapses are roughly the same as that of humans. If this is so, then there are no arguments to defend that only humans have moral status. The author goes even further by stating that it is from the “animality” in all of us that moral qualities emerge.

Tagore Trajano de Almeida Silva<sup>15</sup> argues for the similarities between humans and non-humans and as a result proposes extending the concept of dignity to animals, which would work as the connecting link between humans and non-humans and would be the basis for granting rights.

No express conclusions as to whether animal use and exploitation should be abolished as a result of animal moral status or animal dignity are however taken. And indeed, even in current societies where the Cartesian paradigm is slowly eroding, animal instrumentalisation remains alive and strong. Even in countries where animal dignity has been acknowledged, such dignity is a step below that of human dignity<sup>16</sup>. And even in countries where animals have been recognised as sentient beings, no rights have been expressly allocated to them<sup>17</sup>.

Raul Farias<sup>18</sup>, in his analysis of the current changes in Portuguese civil and criminal law, argues that animals should at least hold rights connected with their bodily integrity and promotion of their welfare and criticises the amendments to the Portuguese Civil Code for having fallen short of what would be desirable in light of animal nature. Indeed, the Portuguese Civil Code, though it states that animals are living beings endowed with sensibility, does not assign them rights and, among other provisions, simply imposes an obligation to owners to attend to their animals’ well-being<sup>19</sup>. It has been argued that having obligations towards animals does not lead to animals being granted rights<sup>20</sup>. However, it can also be argued that rights should be considered as given as a reflection of the duties owed by humans<sup>21</sup>.

Regardless of the above, I argue, in addition, that if animals are sentient and conscious and if our morality is no more valuable than theirs<sup>22</sup>, then we should be consequent and take the road where it clearly leads us to: animal rights associated with integrity (or, in other words, the right not to suffer, not to be tortured, in a biocentric approach to the rights of each individual, regardless of his species) and even to life (see

---

<sup>15</sup> Tagore Trajano de Almeida Silva, Law Professor at the Federal University of Bahia, *A política das espécies (The policy of species, author’s translation)*, pp. 93-112.

<sup>16</sup> In Switzerland, the topic of animal dignity has been addressed in law, with both the Federal Constitution of the Swiss Confederation, 18 April 1999 (article 120.2) and the 455 Federal Swiss Animal Welfare Act, of 16 December 2005 (article 3a) recognising animal dignity. Animal dignity is however different from human dignity: though dignity is the inherent value of the animal, it is not an absolute value.

<sup>17</sup> This is the case, for instance, of France (French Civil Code, 1804, as amended, in article 515-14), as well as the case of Portugal.

<sup>18</sup> Raul Farias, Public Prosecutor in Portugal specialised in the field of animal criminal law, *Animais: objetos de deveres ou sujeitos de direitos (Animals: object of rights or subject of rights, author’s translation)*, pp. 71-92.

<sup>19</sup> Portuguese Civil Code, *supra* note 4, article 1305-A.

<sup>20</sup> Menezes Cordeiro, *Tratado de Direito Civil Português, Vol. III – Coisas*, Almedina, Coimbra (2013), at 279, 287-288. Luís Carvalho Fernandes, *Teoria Geral do Direito Civil – Vol. I, Introdução, Pressupostos da relação jurídica*, Universidade Católica (2012), at 696-697. António Pereira da Costa, *Dos Animais – O direito e os direitos*, Coimbra Editora (1998), at 10.

<sup>21</sup> This is the benefit or interest theory, under which an individual can be said to have a right when she is the beneficiary of another’s duty that is imposed for her benefit (the benefit theory) or when the legal system recognises that she has interests that are worth protecting and that serve as a reason for imposing a duty on others (interest theory). Gary L. Francione, *Animals, Property and the Law*, Temple University Press, Philadelphia (1995), at 99-100. Also, Fernando Araújo, *supra* note 3, at 285.

<sup>22</sup> Fernando Araújo, *supra* note 14, at 57.

below on this issue).

Why, we may ask, is society still largely embroiled in Cartesian views when they have been long discredited?

Araújo goes to the heart of the problem: cultural inertia in the formation and preservation of stereotypes, and fear that acknowledgment of the moral status of animals would dictate an end to old traditions of abuse and indifference<sup>23</sup>.

Almeida Silva talks about the “discourse of denial” and the creation of a “moral shield”<sup>24</sup> that takes away the responsibility for actions that are detrimental to fellow beings.

Farias makes reference to the argument that claims that recognising rights to animals would lead to a civilizational revolution for which we are not prepared, and would further lead to veganism<sup>25</sup>.

But, if indeed, speciesism does not resist scientific analysis, then its end can only mean an end to animal instrumentalisation.

The second section of the book is titled “problems of animal ethics” and analyses more concrete topics in this field. It contains ten articles<sup>26</sup>, covering such diverse subjects such as companion animals, animal testing, animal farming and nutrition, biodiversity and activism. The diversity of topics, together with the diversity of the authors’ background, is proof of the multidisciplinary features brought about by our relationship with other animals. It further enriches the book, giving the reader a broad view of some of the problems and reflections in different fields of expertise. In this way, the book contributes to giving a holistic view of the “animals” subject, thus avoiding fragmented approaches that impoverish the discussion and are of little help to animals.

Despite the diversity of topics, the second part tends to focus on domestication, with some emphasis on companion animals. This is an interesting approach, given that it is usually argued that, of all animals, companion animals are the ones best protected. Alexandra Reis Moreira<sup>27</sup> does make this point in her article, noting the positive discrimination of companion animals who are increasingly seen as family members in a new vision of family that is “multispecies”. The Portuguese legal evolution also seems to confirm this, as indicated above. But this seemingly better protection hides the fact that domestication itself, and the manner under which many companion animals are now treated, denatures them and is in itself abusive. This point, already made by Araújo and Neves in their introductory remarks, is developed in the second section of the book.

Jorge Marques da Silva<sup>28</sup> and Inês de Sousa Real<sup>29</sup> address the broad issue of domestication, both speaking about the origins of domestication. Marques da Silva presents a concise list of reasons for why some mammals have not been domesticated (and, conversely, why some species have) and further describes the various uses of animals by humans in three categories: as raw materials, as service providers and in techno scientific societies. Sousa Real addresses in detail the ethical issues brought about by domestication,

---

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, at 64.

<sup>24</sup> Tagore Trajano de Almeida Silva, *supra* note 15, at 93 and 97.

<sup>25</sup> Raul Farias, *supra* note 18, at 80.

<sup>26</sup> I refer to the articles not in the order as they are in the book but with reference to their subject matter.

<sup>27</sup> Alexandra Reis Moreira, lawyer, from Empty Cages – Portuguese and Spanish Association of Animal Law, and Jus Animalium – Animal Law Association, *O caso particular dos animais de companhia (The particular case of companion animals)*, author’s translation), pp. 183-203.

<sup>28</sup> Jorge Marques da Silva, professor of Vegetal Biology at the Faculty of Sciences of the University of Lisbon, *Do cativo à exploração dos animais (From captivity to animal exploitation)*, author’s translation), pp. 115-132.

<sup>29</sup> Inês de Sousa Real, specialist in animal law with a Master Degree in Animal Law and Society by the Autonomous University of Barcelona, former Ombudsman for animals in the city of Lisbon, *Domesticação, desnaturação e renaturação (Domestication, denaturation and renaturation)*, author’s translation), pp. 155-182.

with a special focus on companion animals – from their denaturation, health problems, cruelty associated with their breeding and commercialization, and even the moral concerns brought by their sterilization, which curtails the animals’ reproductive natural behaviour. Even if animals and humans have converged in a mutual domestication, to which Sousa Real refers, or even if some animals have domesticated themselves, domestication has led to the subordination of animals to human interests, in an instrumental relationship that values the emotional bond with (companion) animals but seems to forgo their interests as individuals.

But, if animals do indeed have moral value, a view seemingly shared by all authors, then, I argue, a reformulation of our relation with domestic animals is urgent. Marques da Silva argues that, because humanity is inserted in a global ecological network, a relationship with animals is inevitable and stopping any type of instrumentalisation of animals is not feasible. The author makes an interesting analysis of the use of animals in such areas as biological control and adaptive management of habitat, where both animals and humans benefit from each other’s intervention and interaction. That being said, I share the views that instrumentalisation refers to types of use that are abusive, unbalanced, where humans hold all the power and the animals hold none.

This same subject is developed by Alexandra Reis Moreira<sup>30</sup>, with a focus on companion animals. Reis Moreira highlights that even the expression “companion animals” hides the exploitation and subjugation of these animals: they are companions to humans, but have not chosen this condition or destiny. In an enlightening sentence, Reis Moreira says that “Being an object of affection is different from being a subject in an affectionate relationship”<sup>31</sup>.

Would renaturation be then the answer? Sousa Real addresses this very interesting issue in her article<sup>32</sup> but correctly makes the point that many animals have lost their ability to survive alone. We are left, therefore, with no other option than to treat current domestic animals in accordance with their interests, bringing them into the midst of moral consideration, and to halt the process of denaturation where we still can.

If we are to treat companion animals in accordance with their interests, the first step is avoiding their continuous denaturation by humanizing them or treating them as “replacement humans”. Ricardo R. Santos<sup>33</sup> and Lisa Mestrinho<sup>34</sup> make an analysis<sup>35</sup> of the evolution of the role of the dog, who transitioned from a “dog as a dog” – the one that provides work/services – to a “familiar dog”, to the “human” dog, who is a member of the family. In accordance with these authors, the dog would be, in this last case, a “para-human”, a “quasi-person” in a position similar to those of children. But in both cases the dog is deprived of liberty and of making his own choices.

This change in the role of the dog has had relevant impacts beyond that of “family”. In the second article written by these authors<sup>36</sup>, it is highlighted how the veterinarians’ role has evolved from “sanitary police”, concerned especially with issues of public health, to a “medic”, effectively concerned with the wellbeing of the animal, their patient. Because the reflection is focused on companion animals, it can be legitimately questioned whether other animals (especially largely abused animals in animal testing and farming) benefit from the

---

<sup>30</sup> Alexandra Reis Moreira, *supra* note 27.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, at 200.

<sup>32</sup> Inês Sousa Real, *supra* note 29.

<sup>33</sup> Ricardo R. Santos, researcher of the Centre of Bioethics, Faculty of Medicine of the University of Lisbon.

<sup>34</sup> Lisa Mestrinho, veterinary doctor, from the Department of Clinic of the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine of the University of Lisbon.

<sup>35</sup> Ricardo R. Santos and Lisa Mestrinho, *Um cão é um cão, um cão, um cão (A dog is a dog, a dog, a dog, author’s translation)*, pp. 205-226.

<sup>36</sup> Lisa Mestrinho and Ricardo R. Santos, *Uma ética clínica centrada na veterinária (An ethical practice in veterinary, author’s translation)*, pp. 297-321.

same approach of this new “patient centred medicine”. I strongly suspect that is not the case. Hence, the capacity-building and training the authors call for in order to avoid bias in accordance with the species of companion animal<sup>37</sup> should be extended to all veterinaries, even those not dealing with companion animals.

Animal testing and farming are two of the articles in the second part of the book not dealing specifically with the broad issue of domestication or companion animals.

The article on animal testing, by Ana Elisabete Ferreira<sup>38</sup>, makes an analysis of the EU and Portuguese legal frameworks in the implementation of the 3Rs approach. It is a very relevant introductory article on this subject matter worth reading by anyone interested in this topic. But it is important to note that, given its mostly descriptive nature, it may leave the reader with the impression that animals are thoroughly protected in animal testing. In my opinion, that is not the case. For instance, experiments that can cause pain to animals are nevertheless permitted, not to mention that animals would, in any case, still be deprived of their freedom for purposes unrelated to their wellbeing – this clearly contends with the sentience and conscious nature<sup>39</sup> of most animals used in testing. In addition, the number of animals used in scientific experiments is in the millions per year in the EU, which contends with the reduction and replacement purposes of the 3Rs<sup>40</sup>.

Specifically in the case of Portugal, the lack of political drive to address the difficult issues brought by animal testing is even more evident. Indeed, in 2017, several proposals were made in Portugal to better control animal testing and reduce its use<sup>41</sup>. However, practically all proposals were rejected, including in such relevant areas as with relation to the allocation of specific funds to projects that implement alternative testing methods, the carrying out of a viability study on the creation of 3Rs investigation centres and even the guarantee that updated reports and information relating to animal testing were published in due time. The refusal to integrate representatives of animal protection associations in the National Commission for the Protection of Animals used for Scientific Purposes (CPAFC) and in the bodies responsible for the animals’ well-being (ORBEA) is especially problematic as they would give a very important view with relation to the use of animals in testing. Arguments defending that the scientists themselves are interested in animal replacement and that the presence of such representatives is unscientific or leads to the belief that scientists cannot be trusted with taking good care of animals are extremely misguided. Quite differently, the presence of such representatives would play a very important role in promoting new venues of communication and articulation, thus guaranteeing a better dialogue and common efforts to the goal of phasing out animal testing.

Nuno Vieira e Brito<sup>42</sup> addresses animal farming and ethics and provides a very useful summary of the current legal framework at the international level, EU level and in Portugal. The author then reflects about the ethical consideration that should be granted to farming animals for their production, transport and slaughter, with separate analysis for cattle, small ruminants, pigs, birds and in aquaculture, as well as in transport and slaughter.

---

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, at 314.

<sup>38</sup> Ana Elisabete Ferreira, Lawyer, Biomedical Law Centre of the Faculty of Law of the University of Coimbra, *Experimentação animal e Comissões de Ética (Animal testing and Ethics Commissions*, author’s translation), pp. 133-154.

<sup>39</sup> See the Cambridge Declaration on Consciousness (2012).

<sup>40</sup> See EU statistics on animal experiments for 2014, ALTEX 33(4) (2016). See also [http://ec.europa.eu/environment/chemicals/lab\\_animals/reports\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/chemicals/lab_animals/reports_en.htm).

<sup>41</sup> Projects for Resolution from The Greens, PCP – Communist Party, BE – Left Bloc and PAN – People-Animals-Nature; and Draft Bill that introduces more rigorous provisions with relation to the use of animals for scientific purposes.

<sup>42</sup> Nuno Vieira de Brito, professor at the Agricultural Higher School of the Polytechnic Institute of Viana do Castelo, *Ética em animais de produção e no agroalimentar (Ethics in livestock animals and in agribusiness*, author’s translation), pp. 225-252.

This analysis is very useful, not in the least because it covers animals not specifically addressed by EU laws. Indeed, even the EU welfarist approach (the most advanced in the world) has massive limitations: for instance, most kinds of animals kept in the EU are not covered by specific legislation. Even with relation to animals that are covered, the greatest animal welfare problems remain<sup>43</sup>.

Vieira e Brito does not examine whether animal production is needed for nutrition and hence whether the EU welfarist approach is the correct one in light of the sentient nature of animals. But this issue is addressed, in an indirect manner, by Marisa Quaresma dos Reis<sup>44</sup>, who tackles the topic of vegetarianism. I applaud the book for having a reflection on this subject, as a diet without animal products is, in my opinion, one of the logical conclusions of all theoretical approaches arguing for the moral status of animals, their dignity, sentience and consciousness. The article goes through an interesting description of how humans came to eat animals and how, from a struggle to survive, animal consumption results now from other concerns and desires: the pleasure of eating, culture, consumerist society and the enrichment of the agribusiness. Quaresma dos Reis correctly points out that this is “the last frontier of slavery”<sup>45</sup> and argues for a vegetarian diet (excluding however peoples such as Inuit). She underlines, however, that it is the manner under which animals are produced that is of major concern. I note, in any case, that the issue should not be only that animals are abused in the production chain: even if well taken care of, an ethical approach requires not using them for food.

This point is very well summarized by Pedro Galvão<sup>46</sup>, whose article addresses some of the most pressing points such as that of killing an animal. Galvão goes through the arguments to the effect that killing is not an ethical problem and deconstructs them. Nevertheless, the author notes that even if human life were considered more valuable than animals’ lives, it would not justify superseding their interest in living for trivial human interests, such as tasting meat. And, as Quaresma dos Reis points out, “if we are honest with ourselves, we know that animals do not want to die”<sup>47</sup>. Once again, our common-sense and arguments by analogy would lead to no other conclusion.

I note that there does seem to be some evolution in our views of animals as sources of food, with growing innovation in the area of alternatives to meat, eggs and dairy. And yet, it is possible that the future of an animal-free diet is escaping through our fingers and before the stunned eyes of animal advocates (at least of mine) due to the recent trends of insect-eating. Insects are, after all, also animals...

Rute Saraiva<sup>48</sup> addresses the environmental side of the animal condition, and makes a very interesting reflection of whether species (in addition to the individuals) are part of the moral community and whether the use of biotechnology to avoid species’ extinction is acceptable. Saraiva notes that the legal commercialization of endangered species such as for zoos, though it seems to make the moral status of the species prevalent in comparison to that of the individual, also harms the species: indeed, in such a case, the species was uprooted from its natural habitat and had to abdicate from its interests and intrinsic

---

<sup>43</sup> European Parliament, Directorate General for Internal Policies, Policy Department C: Citizens’ Rights and Constitutional Affairs, Donald. M. Broom, *Animal Welfare in the European Union*, Study for the PETI Committee (January 2017).

<sup>44</sup> Marisa Quaresma dos Reis, current Ombudsman for the city of Lisbon, *A cadeia alimentar e a causa vegetariana (The food chain and the vegetarian cause*, author’s translation), pp. 253-274.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, at 263.

<sup>46</sup> Pedro Galvão, professor of philosophy at the Faculty of Arts of the University of Lisbon, *O activismo animalista: fundamentos éticos (Animalist activism: ethical grounds*, author’s translation), pp. 323-339.

<sup>47</sup> Marisa Quaresma dos Reis, *supra* note 44, at 266.

<sup>48</sup> Rute Saraiva, law professor at the Faculty of Law of the University of Lisbon, *O equilíbrio ecológico e as espécies ameaçadas (Ecological balance and endangered species*, author’s translation), pp. 275-296.

purposes. She legitimately asks whether there can be justice for species at the expense of the individual.

This issue is also analysed by Pedro Galvão, who goes through the philosophical currents that are unfavourable to animal activism: radical anthropocentrism and radical environmentalism. Galvão presents compelling arguments against the above theories and correctly points out that if we were to take environmentalism to its ultimate consequences (as we aim to do with non-native species), then we should also exterminate humans as we are the gravest threat to the planet. The author then concludes by explaining the different views of the animal welfare and animal rights movements. He argues that abolitionism is extremely difficult to achieve and therefore a reformist strategy that gradually improve animals' lives, would be more feasible. I agree with this view, but make the note that a reformist strategy cannot legitimize animal abuse and should always be framed in terms of prohibitions to acts impacting animals' lives (such as prohibition of castration) instead of regulating those acts (and thus allowing them) in a vain attempt to mislead society that animals are well taken care of.

“Applied Ethics – Animals” is a thought-provoking reflection on some of the most pressing issues of today's debate on animal issues. It covers a large array of topics, giving the reader a basic knowledge on this subject matter whilst also containing more detailed ethical analysis on the topic, making it a go-to book for both beginners and experts alike. Each chapter also contains a final list of additional sources of information. This allows the reader to further investigate and deepen his knowledge in this area - an essential step to increasing awareness and in continuing to promote the discussion and exchange of ideas.