



ANIMALS THIRSTING FOR

FREEDOM



15th September 2018

How many pacific marches before “closing down all slaughterhouses”?

How many petition to put an end to massacres?

How many reforms before all animals to be free?

How many laws to cease animal experimentation?

How many decrees to destroy anthropocentrism?

How many SPAs before stopping “comfort euthanasia” and imprisonment?

How many animalist parties to destroy “egalitarian state”?

How many “ethical sterilizations” to eliminate our desire for control?

How many adoptions before refusing any desire for possession?

A few months from the “March to close down all slaughterhouses”¹, it seems that it’s time to provide a critical look upon what seem to become today (at least media-wise) antispeciesist struggles. This march has been exiting for 6 years, what has it bring? Nothing. One could retort to us that arrangements have been done in the Law but that has changed nothing in what seems to be the goal of these marches: slaughterhouses still exist and still kill at least as much as before. How can one seriously think that marching in the streets with signs and over-use slogans could enable to put an end to, at least, this part of animal exploitation?

What is the purpose of these marches, what do one aspires to when one takes part of them? Are the means of struggles effective, and do they enable to liberate anybody? Do people behind these

1 <https://stopabattoirs.org>

marches really want to achieve this goal? Since reformist and abolitionist struggles exist, non-human animals are still killed, imprisoned, exploited, identified, etc. Whatever the strategy used, from the moment when they make demands to government, they can only lead to authoritarian measures (law, decrees, norms) that will be bellow expectations of those who desire to destroy speciesist authority. How unbearable is this massacre for us to content ourselves to accept the time lost in begging laws? Furthermore, would the authority be intolerable only when it's speciesist? What does one mean by "animal liberation"? That one have to be revolted because non-human animals, them, "did not ask for anything"? Or because exploitation, slaughtering, imprisonment, etc, are themselves unacceptable?

It seems that the beginnings of animal liberation movements have more been marked by clear and radical positions rather than media-friendly self-promotion and servility in front of state which we witness today. Shortly before 80's, a series of sabotages has indeed begun, in the name of Animal Liberation Front. Till today, ALF's position has always been clear: fight till every cage is empty, not bigger. In the beginning of the year 1980, a nonetheless reformist organization regarding the animal liberation emerged in United States : PETA. However, this one has also always taken a clear stand regarding direct action and more precisely ALF: refusing to condemn means of action that are not the same as those that they used.²

A leap forward to today and the bitter reality smashes us in the face. In the course of the last months (at the time of the writing on

2 <https://www.peta.org/about-peta/faq/whats-petas-position-on-the-animal-liberation-front-alf/>

this text) diverse actions of sabotage have been carried out against shops that live on animal exploitation. It didn't take long to another reformist organization (L214) for hastening to crawl before the journalists' microphones dissociating and condemning these means of action³. One can see that in more than twenty years things have well changed, and not in a good way.

3 <https://sansattendre.noblogs.org/post/2018/06/27/lille-france-l214-vole-au-secours-des-bouchers/>

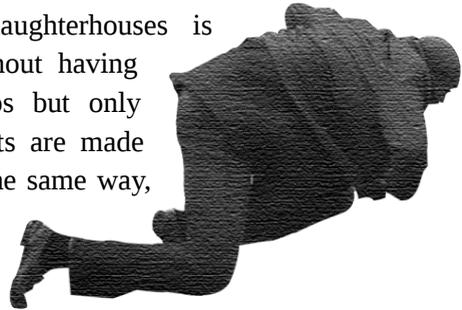
ANIMAL LIBERATION WITH CAMERA BLOWS

Truly, cameras are items which are really present in L214's life. This organization introduces them into slaughterhouses (it be by activism for filming "abuses" or via public force in order to supposedly guarantee "animal welfare") or, each time that they have the opportunity, they swagger before journalist cameras. After several infiltration and the disclosure of videos taken into slaughterhouses, a socialist deputy proposed a law aiming to force the use of CCTVs. Eventually, the 28th of May 2018 they decided that this system would be tried out (which is to say not obligatory) during two years, present with the agreement of slaughterhouses managers. It has also been decided that the recorded images could be



viewed internally by control services, and by veterinary services. What is the purpose of these CCTVs? To claim that only methodical slaughter behind closed doors is unbearable? That these cameras will enable to dissociate the acceptable killing from

the one which is not? With which criteria? Aren't we able to tell that the very existence of slaughterhouses is inevitably nonsensical, without having to see these bloody videos but only because these establishments are made for killing individuals? In the same way, it's absurd to think that these cameras could be an efficient tool to lead to anything but bigger cages. Didn't public agents see in that law proposal, an opportunity to coat themselves with ethic and for the



slaughterhouses bosses the possibility to police employees? Because the risk is here: don't be dupe, the slaughterhouses which will be "voluntary" will be those which are obviously irreproachable in terms of "mistreatment" (in the eyes of the law!). Thus, cameras will aim workstations where the only thing to monitor could be production rates. If things evolve that way, how does state could justify this exception made for slaughterhouse? This would constitute a breach in which the other business sectors could rush into without any difficulty. Then, this situation could, in the long term, lead the state to officially allow the use of CCTV in the purpose of police employees.⁴

If antispeciesism is not defined by everyone the same, one can nonetheless agree on the fact that it includes an opposition to animal exploitation. Now, given that human beings are also animals, if the struggle for antispeciesism is done at the expense of their living conditions, then it's not really antispeciesist. Animal liberation is thus consistent only if it concerns the liberation of every animal, without any distinction. Yet, a good number of individuals welcome these leftover-reforms, which in no way constitute a step, considering that the exploitation of animals and their domestication, if not only reduced to non-human animals, could even less be reduced to slaughter.

4 Without wishing to get into legalism, in France the use of CCTV is currently subject to the condition that workstations are not recorded. (<https://www.cnil.fr/fr/la-videosurveillance-videoprotection-autravail>)

NO TO CORPSES, YES TO CUDDLY TOYS!

An aspect of animal exploitation taboo even within antispeciesism is about relations maintained (and imposed) with domesticated animals. Slaughterhouses aren't the only places where animals are killed, imprisoned and exploited. That's also what happens towards Sociétés Protectrices des Animaux⁵ (!) on the pretext of "it's for their own good" or "we can't do otherwise". It's astonishing that the only "solution" for fighting against abandons consists in sterilizing "pets"⁶. This topic is not much broached within antispeciesist movements, and when it is the case, the consensus seems to be that sterilization is a good thing. Unfortunately, animals considered as "pets" have not requested to be born, and if they exist, it's in the purpose of satisfying a demand, and thus a whim. The cuddly-toy-animal seems to find less favour with animal protection/liberation organizations than the corpse-animal. This is most likely easily explained: the "pet" have an enjoyable life. They indeed enjoy a home where they are fed, loved, pampered. This idealistic vision masks the fact that non-human animals use to live independently of us, and that once again, we use them, no more, no less. The cuddly-toy-animal doesn't suffer less from exploitation than the corpse-animal. Thus, the origin of the problem is not to find in the fact of preventing already present "pets" to breed in order to ensure our emotional comfort, but in this very search of emotional comfort near individuals whom we pretty often impose this affection to⁷.

5 The SPA is a French institutional union of refuges where the majority of abandoned animals are taken.

6 Why should we name these animals differently from other animals?

7 This affection may lead to favor non-consensual relationships – going so far as to, in extreme cases, zoophilia (a topic which is not much,

Therefore, “awareness campaigns” and articles about sterilization claim many arguments for it. According to us, it is only the expression of a benevolent speciesism, that is to say that hiding oneself behind good intentions, it actually enables to ensure more control on their bodies. In order to this, its tenants use disgusting tactics like using blackmail, for example when they make us believe that we just would have to sterilize non-human animals to avoid abandonment. Now, not only animals are still abandoned, but it’s logical that when you generate less births, there will not be more abandonment cases than where they are sterilized. With a similar foolish reasoning, these “animal protectors” achieve to praise the benefits of sterilization from a health viewpoint, telling us that the removal of testicles and ovaries will avoid... testicles and ovaries cancers!

Sterilization has to be a personal choice (which would even be desirable concerning the 7,6 billion human individuals), otherwise it’s an authoritarian act practiced on others. In addition, it’s supposed to allow for struggling against ecological disasters. Now, it is absurd to reject responsibility on “pets” by sterilizing them, while continuing farming. Would we sterilize for the same reason, and by force, human animals? Sterilization mostly enables servility and docility of non-human individuals – no more urine spraying, runaways, fights, inopportune meowing, etc., who can however do well with more freedom without being sterilized. In these conditions, one can realize that sterilization is just another control among a myriad of other ones that are imposed to them: where to live, what and when to eat, when to do their business, etc.

even not at all, mentioned by antispeciesists) – thus preventing any critic words on that required attachment.

When the latter, for whatever reason, are not anymore able to satisfy the whims of those who consider themselves as their owners, they pretty often end up crammed into “refuges” (mainly those of SPA). Thus, the latter have triggered several scandals having recourse to euthanasia as a (false) solution to overcrowding.⁸ In 2013, 1007 animals have been euthanized at the SPA of Indre⁹. The same year, 529 animals have been killed in a pound/kennel in Lot-et-Garonne¹⁰ 1700 animals, again, have been killed by the SPA of Pau between 2010 and 2013¹¹. Euthanasia is also practiced on animals



that are considered as dangerous. It should be asked “By whom?”, “For whom?”, and “Why?”. When cuddly-toy-animal bites, one gets definitively rid of them. One grants oneself the power of life and death on individuals, even to the heavenly field of “pets”. Once again, at the risk of push that logic all the way, the human being should be the main target of its lethal injections, because in terms of dangerous animal, few non-human individuals can compete¹².

8 And by the way, “overcrowding” for whom, in a world where the human being reaches 7,6 billion of individuals?

9 <https://www.lanouvellerepublique.fr/actu/euthanasies-a-la-spa-comment-faire-autrement>

10 <https://www.refugeanimalierdebrax47.com/2014/03/12/chenil-fourri%C3%A8re-de-caubeyre-529-euthanasies/>

11 https://www.lemonde.fr/biodiversite/article/2017/05/10/la-spa-de-pau-suspectee-d-euthanasies-massives-danimaux_5125588_1652692.html

12 That is an *reductio ad absurdum*. We are obviously not for the death penalty.

These attempts to fight against this overcrowding that we are ourselves responsible for (it's about individuals that we generate by forced reproduction, if it should be recalled) are totally pointless. This is obvious, "pets" population is increasing, so much as the population of those ending up into refuges.

The problem is once again to find the very fact of needing to own a "pet". There is certainly some psychology that steps in: cuteness, the fur that you can "pet", the way of seeing the pet as a kind of eternal child, the social validation, here may be a part of what explains the extent of the disaster. The harshness of the world we live in, emotional deprivation, frustration, etc, happen to be less painful to bear when we have the calming, when we are back at home on the evening, to meet this eternal child, this cuddly-toy-animal, again. But like the cuddly toy, the cuddly-toy-animal is a ploy. Unlike the cuddly toy however, it is a devastating ploy in both field of speciesism and field of ecological disasters. And yet, there's still regularly these disgusting campaigns of the SPA aiming to encourage adoption, without ever challenging domestication. It's not obviously not about saying that you shouldn't adopt at all. It's about becoming aware of the problem of domestication, even when it adorns itself with the best intentions. Because these intentions can only be, in the final analysis, bad. No non-human animal should be dependent of human, and concerning these measures (sterilization and euthanasia) aiming to regularize a population that is also encouraged¹³, they are anyway authoritarian, applied to beings that we have decided they were our property. And eventually, when animal liberation teams up with adoption, shouldn't we see that as an

13 If the idea was to take on the origins of the issues, it would be more relevant to directly take on farmings.

issue? To leave a rusty cage for a golden one, is it there the dignity that we want to give them back?

A NON-PROGRAM

We do not want the state to “veganize” itself, we wish for its destruction. No legislative text will be able to put an end to speciesism and anthropocentrism, in the same way as no legislative text have never led to put an end to sexual violence. Furthermore, how could a power organization (state) destroy power and domination? Lobbyists and politicians who directly live from the exploitation of animals will never accept to put an end to their livelihood. As we’ve seen above, when the state legislates for “animal welfare”, it creates in the end more control, more repression.

We do not want the commodity world to “veganize” itself, we wish for its destruction. For alter-capitalist vegans and antispeciesists, it’s necessary to tend toward economics that respect non-human animals. Vegan meals in restaurants, vegan hotels, “cruelty-free” cosmetic products at exorbitant prices, etc.: capitalists have many opportunities to ensure the durability of economics “veganizing” it. Certain antispeciesist organizations go as far as to sell sweatshirts and cookbooks in the name of “animal cause”. Others wish for the professional conversion of farmers to sectors that don’t need the exploitation of non-human animals, but they don’t challenge their mercantile and state founding principles.

We do not want the “wilderness” to “veganize” itself, we want to get closer to it. Under the guise of “consequentialism”, “anti-predation” militants take the position of the “predators murder thinker”. Indeed, one of the co-founders of “Cahiers antisépécistes” wrote :

“Refraining ourselves killing a lion, we kill a lot of gazelles. From a consequentialist viewpoint, it would seem preferable to kill a lion rather than killing (indirectly) all these animals ; and preferable to do it immediately, rather than rely on solutions that imply a long time.”¹⁴

According to that “ethics” it would be preferable to kill non-human animals hunting for feeding. Against Nature, that Homo Antispeciesist sets himself up as nearly divinity in order to appropriate the power of death, which is not dissimilar to humanist positions. If they don’t wish for the death of predators, other “anti-predation” militants come down for disgusting “alternatives”, such as genetic modifications making predators herbivorous, or forced sterilization. But would they accept to apply on themselves or their near relations what they advise? Isn’t it speciesist to treat differently animals depending to their “belonging to a species”?

Those managers of wilderness apply their conception of the world on the whole of the living things, conception which beyond environmental consequences, is not more than the demonstration of their anthropocentrism. According to us people who base their antispeciesism exclusively on the notion of sentience go the wrong way. Indeed, such a position leads ineluctably to see the suffering which is present in wild animals and thus to try to reduce it. Now, human being is not responsible for the most part of this suffering, which makes the idea of “anti-predation” both absurd and dangerous. From our point of view, the base of an antispeciesist position is the

14 <https://www.cahiers-antispecistes.org/sur-le-droit-a-la-vie-des-predateurs/>

exploitation which results from domestication and deprivation of freedom of individuals.





It's not something new: antispeciesism, like many other areas of struggle, is not free from reflections, individuals, and acts that are fundamentally reformist and aiming for an authoritarian reinforcement (demands for more justice, demands for laws in order to “limit abuses”, etc.). However, antispeciesism, probably more than a lot of areas of struggle, is an open door to reactionary individuals and ideas. And it is probably within organizations that these ideas can easily infiltrate. Because we “have to” be consensual, and because an organization is usually not going to take care of anything else than antispeciesism. It may be argued that the antispeciesist movement has to be united, “for the animals”, that division leads to failure, and so on. We don't need to be led to failure, because we are already there. Therefore, the question is, supposing that is within the realm of the possible, how do we want to get out of this situation of failure? By accepting world views that don't suit us, just for staying

united? Anarchists, and more generally individuals who refuse authority, have always suffered from this kind of strategies. In the same vein, we refuse that the perspectives of struggle against non-human animals exploitation quash those against the exploitation of human animals. That's why we don't want the legalistic trajectory taken by the majority of antispeciesist organizations; to want new laws, is to wish for more control, it is, in the final analysis, to wish for reinforce the dominance of the state on our lives. That's why we don't want either a vegan alternative commodity world that still exploits human animals, and that once again ends up reinforcing the commodity world in its entirety making it more legitimate, making it more ethical.

To conclude, it would also be good to ask the question of antispeciesism in the other direction. Because if antispeciesism can't do without a consistent criticism of authority in every shape and form, should the anarchist reflections and practices avoid to integrate antispeciesism? Human being is also an animal, so what would justify that we wanted to destroy authority for us while accepting to use it on other individuals? When we accept to be on the side of the "free" while having human individuals under our control, we are *de facto* tyrants. How would it be different when the individuals under our control are not human?

Obviously the antispeciesist criticism is widespread in the anti-authoritarian circles, and that's a good thing. But it still has to extend, and it shouldn't be considered normal, for example, that food coming from animal exploitation is served during events centered around anti-authoritarianism, in the same way as while these events are suffused with others kinds of oppression, we must react.

When the world in which we live disgusts us, and that we aspire to its destruction, the separation and the compartmentalization of areas of struggle are a plague.



