



MULTISPECIES FUTURES

New Approaches to Teaching
Human-Animal Studies

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Andreas Hübner

“Preventing Malicious and Wanton Cruelty to Animals”

Historical Animal Welfare and Animal Rights Education

1. The rise of animal welfare and animal rights movements

Animal welfare and animal rights movements can look back on a long history.¹ As early as in 1809, the English Lord Chancellor Thomas Erskine was calling for animal welfare to be written into the British body of law as part of a legislative initiative to prevent “malicious and wanton cruelty to animals.”² Although his plan failed, the foundations for an organized animal welfare and animal rights movement had been laid. Shortly afterwards, in 1824, the British Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals was founded and, in 1840, thanks to its patroness Queen Victoria, was elevated to the rank of Royal Society.³

The founding of the society fueled the animal welfare and animal rights movements in many other countries, both on the continent and outside Europe. The institutional birth of the animal welfare and animal rights movement in German-speaking countries was marked by the founding of the Fatherland

1 In a recent overview, Kenneth Shapiro, cofounder of the Animals and Society Institute, emphasized the interrelation between animal welfare and animal rights movements and the emergence of human-animal studies. See Kenneth Shapiro: Human-Animal Studies: Remembering the Past, Celebrating the Present, Troubling the Future. In: *Society & Animals* 28:7 (2020), pp. 797–833. <https://doi.org/10.1163/15685306-BJA10029> (accessed: January 20, 2022).

2 Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ed.): *Cruelty to Animals: The Speech of Lord Erskine in the House of Peers on 15th May 1809, on the Second Reading of the Bill for Preventing Malicious and Wanton Cruelty to Animals*. London: Rivington 1824.

3 A concise history of the animal welfare movement in England has been offered by Hilda Kean: *Animal Rights: Political and Social Change in Britain since 1800*. London: Reaktion 1998.

Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Vaterländischer Verein zur Verhütung von Tierquälerei) by the Protestant pastor Albert Knapp in 1837. Many countries in Europe had followed suit by the end of the nineteenth century by founding their own national animal welfare organizations. In the United States, it was the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals that launched the animal welfare movement in 1866.⁴ Animal welfare initiatives in North America can be traced back to colonial times, when the first laws against animal cruelty were enacted in the Massachusetts Bay Colony in the mid-sixteenth century.⁵

Similar to this development, modern animal welfare and animal rights education dates back to the nineteenth century. In German-language textbooks and readers for agricultural schools, traces can still be found today that testify to the importance of caring for domestic animals. Clear warnings were issued, for example, “Never mishandle or abuse an animal!”⁶ in a textbook published by Hugo Weber in 1885, which at the same time reveals the norms and values of early animal welfare and animal rights education:

Domestic animals are of extraordinary use to humankind and make an essential contribution to the preservation and comfort of his [*sic*] life by providing him with the best and most nutritious food, material for clothing and for hundreds of useful objects. For this reason alone, humans have a great moral duty towards animals, the duty to treat and care for them well – apart from the fact that his religion and his own human dignity also impose this duty on him in the most definite way.⁷

4 Mieke Roscher: Geschichte des Tierschutzes. In: Roland Borgards (ed.): *Tiere: Kulturwissenschaftliches Handbuch*. Stuttgart: Metzler 2016, pp. 173–182, here pp. 176–177. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-476-05372-5_4 (accessed: January 20, 2022); Gieri Bollinger / Michelle Richner: Tiere schützen – Rechtliche Entwicklungen. In: Meret Fehlmann / Margot Michel / Rebecca Niederhauser (eds): *Tierisch! Das Tier und die Wissenschaft: Ein Streifzug durch die Disziplinen*. Zurich: vdf Hochschulverlag 2016, pp. 83–96, here pp. 85–86. <https://doi.org/10.3218/3597-1> (accessed: January 20, 2022); Frank Uekötter / Amir Zelininger: Die feinen Unterschiede: Die Tierschutzbewegung und die Gegenwart der Geschichte. In: Herwig Grimm / Carola Otterstedt (eds): *Das Tier an sich: Disziplinenübergreifende Perspektiven für neue Wege im wissenschaftsbasierten Tierschutz*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 2012, pp. 119–134.

5 Andreas Hübner: American Studies. In: André Krebber / Brett Mizelle / Mieke Roscher (eds): *Handbook of Historical Animal Studies*. Berlin / Boston: de Gruyter 2021, pp. 69–83, here pp. 74–75. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110536553-008> (accessed: January 20, 2022).

6 Hugo Weber (ed.): *Lehr- und Lesebuch für ländliche Fortbildungsschulen*. Berlin / Leipzig: Klinkhardt 1885, p. 84. All translations from the German, unless otherwise noted, Paul Lauer.

7 Weber (ed.): *Lehr- und Lesebuch*, p. 82.

The focus of early animal welfare and animal rights education, as a glance at this textbook clearly shows, was treating and caring for so-called domestic and farm animals. The human-animal relations involved were often defined in terms of the humans' moral and religious duties. The duty toward animals served the education and development of human dignity and secured the extraordinary benefit for humankind that derived from animals. Early animal welfare and animal rights education thus amounted to an anthropocentric enterprise that placed "man's interest in the animal above the animal's interest in a life fit for the animal."⁸ The focus was not on the welfare and protection of domestic and farm animals but on educating the modern human being, who was supposed to act with moral and religious dignity. Animals provided humans with moral improvement and education, while humankind's dominion over and paternalistic attitude toward animals went unquestioned.⁹ However, current educational and learning processes that take into account the goals of animal welfare and animal rights education require completely new goals and guidelines. To date, few scholars have embarked upon this journey.¹⁰ Still, the textbooks and readers of the nineteenth century offer an excellent starting point for reflecting on current approaches to animal welfare and animal rights education. This article begins with the basic themes and concepts of a history of animal welfare and animal rights education, then critically contextualizes and historicizes their anthropocentric orientation, before discussing educational and learning processes that might help to overcome conventional human-animal dichotomies. The aim of this article is to present subject-specific recommendations for critically integrating topics and content relevant to animal welfare and animal rights into future curricula, and to make recommendations that recognize the importance of nonhuman actors in history and question conventional human-centered narratives of historical learning.

8 Mieke Roscher: Tierschutzbewegung. In: Arianna Ferrari / Klaus Petrus (eds): *Lexikon der Mensch-Tier-Beziehungen*. Bielefeld: Transcript 2015, pp. 371–376, here p. 372. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783839422328-118> (accessed: January 20, 2022).

9 Mieke Roscher: *Ein Königreich für Tiere: Die Geschichte der britischen Tierrechtsbewegung*. Marburg: Tectum 2009, p. 77.

10 Among this small number of researchers, mention should be made of Edward Eadie, whose studies aim above all to make a contribution to "enhancing the welfare of individual animals, which is important, as well as result in better animal welfare generally" (Edward N. Eadie: *Education for Animal Welfare*. Berlin / Heidelberg: Springer 2011, p. 2).

2. Exploring historicity and animal agency

In recent years, historical animal studies have repeatedly referred to the historicity of human-animal relations and, in exploring these relations, have chosen primarily interdisciplinary, cultural studies approaches that have placed the practices, materiality, and spatiality of human-animal relations at the center of investigation.¹¹ Similarly, the basic themes of historical animal welfare and animal rights education should be formulated along these premises, not least because this allows past forms of speciesism to be analyzed and the ongoing discrimination as well as unequal treatment of animals to be openly discussed in class.

It is one of the legacies of Western philosophical and historical traditions that educational and learning processes have often been shaped, and are *still* being shaped, in such a way that the historicity of the animal has taken a back seat to notions of the historicity of the human being; that animals, unlike humans, have rarely been accorded the status of actors; and that historical change has been attributed solely to humans. Recently, the cultural studies scholar Dominik Ohrem stated that the animal, in opposition to humans, has continuously embodied the ahistorical “other,” and that the historiography of the earth and humanity have largely been based on the ahistoricity of the animal.¹² Such traditions of thought can already be found in the textbooks of the nineteenth century, for instance (in relation to cows) in the *World History Guide for Secondary and Elementary Schools (Weltkunde: Leitfaden der Geographie, Geschichte, Naturgeschichte, Physik und Chemie für Mittelschulen und mehrklassige Volksschulen)* from 1896: “It is probably the oldest and in any case the most important domestic animal of man; for it benefits him not only by its labor, but also by its milk, its meat, its skin and its horns.”¹³ The textbook suggests that cattle *have* no history, that they have always been limited to their role as domestic animals, and that they have been included in the understanding of human societies solely due to their usefulness to humans.

11 Andreas Hübner / Mieke Roscher: Pandadiplomatie im Klassenraum: Mensch-Tier-Beziehungen als geschichtsdidaktische Aufgabe. In: *Zeitschrift für Geschichtsdidaktik* 18 (2019), pp. 112–128, here p. 116. <https://doi.org/10.13109/zfgd.2019.18.1.112> (accessed: January 20, 2022).

12 Dominik Ohrem: A Declaration of Interdependence: American History and the Challenges of Postanthropocentric Historiography. In: Idem (ed.): *American Beasts: Perspectives on Animals and Animality in U. S. Culture, 1776–1920*. Berlin: Neofelis 2017, pp. 9–48, here pp. 23–24.

13 August Renner / Gustav Feddeler / J. F. Hüttmann / Heinrich Jastram et al. (eds): *Weltkunde: Leitfaden der Geographie, Geschichte, Naturgeschichte, Physik und Chemie für Mittelschulen und mehrklassige Volksschulen*. Hanover: Helwing 1896, p. 312.

The historicity of the animal must be considered at the beginning of every concept of historical animal welfare and animal rights education. The assumption that animals also *have* history must be taken into account in didactics and teaching; biological reductionism and the cultural uniqueness of humans must be critically questioned.¹⁴ This is the only way forward to forcing an animal history as “co-history,” which, as Donna Haraway states, is characterized by the transgressions of human and nonhuman animals and their bodies.¹⁵ The smallest possible particles for analyzing this co-history are not human-animal subjects or objects, but human-animal *relationships*, or, as Haraway defines them, *co-constitutive relationships*.¹⁶ In this sense, the ahistorical, unprotected, and unlegislated body will become a thing of the past. In the future, both animals and humans should, in the sense of the Anthropocene, be understood as geological factors in a network of protectable and legally relevant actors that also includes plants, substances, and objects.¹⁷

Animals will thus become *animal agents* in historical animal welfare and animal rights education as they are conceived of as agents in many other sub-disciplines of human-animal studies today – more than a decade after Sarah McFarland and Ryan Hediger’s seminal claim: “We think it is time to focus on animal agency.”¹⁸ Such inclusion of animal agents in animal welfare and animal rights education, of course, may be regarded as a political act; or, to draw on Mieke Roscher, André Krebber, and Brett Mizelle, it may be regarded as a “necessary and important intervention in discourses on animals’ societal standing and recognition.”¹⁹ In this sense, animals are actors in history, even if they “mostly unfold their life story outside of human perception.”²⁰

14 Hübner / Roscher: Pandadiplomatie, p. 116.

15 Donna Haraway: *The Companion Species Manifesto: Dogs, People, and Significant Otherness*. Chicago: Prickly Paradigm 2003, pp. 12, 31.

16 Pascal Eitler / Maren Möhring: Eine Tiergeschichte der Moderne: Theoretische Perspektiven. In: *Transverse* 15 (2008), pp. 91–105, here p. 92. <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-99718> (accessed: January 20, 2022).

17 Hübner / Roscher: Pandadiplomatie, p. 117.

18 Sarah E. McFarland / Ryan Hediger: Approaching the Agency of Other Animals: An Introduction. In: Idem (eds): *Animals and Agency: An Interdisciplinary Exploration*. Leiden / Boston: Brill 2009, pp. 1–20, here p. 16.

19 André Krebber / Brett Mizelle / Mieke Roscher: Writing History after the Animal Turn: An Introduction to Historical Animal Studies. In: Idem (eds): *Historical Animal Studies*, pp. 1–18, here p. 7. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110536553-002> (accessed: January 20, 2022).

20 Gabriela Kompatscher / Reingard Spannring / Karin Schachinger: *Human-Animal Studies: Eine Einführung für Studierende und Lehrende*. Münster: Waxmann 2017, p. 187. <https://elibrary.urb.de/doi/book/10.36198/9783838547596> (accessed: January 20, 2022).

In educational and learning processes, it is advisable to include the diverse research findings on *animal agency* in didactic concepts, to operationalize the various concepts of agency in the classroom, and thus – in spite of existing power relations between humans and animals – to reflect on animal subjectivities.²¹ Taking into account the heterogeneity of various groups of animals, I would like to suggest three agency concepts: (1) *relational agency*, which foregrounds interactions and their effects in human-animal relations; (2) *entangled agency*, which manifests itself in the interconnectedness of the actors in networks; and (3) *embodied agency*, which accentuates the corporeality of human-animal relations and seems particularly promising as a praxeological approach toward animal welfare and animal rights education.²²

3. Tracing the practices of human-animal relations

Recently, historical animal studies have increasingly turned to praxeological and sociological approaches to avoid the dilemma of having to provide evidence of the actions and intentions of animals. A variety of studies emphasize that it is above all the practices employed in human-animal interactions that leave behind legible signs revealing the concrete doings of animals, that make animal actors an “other” that can be studied, and that thus map the social practices performed in human-animal interactions as processes that shape society and everyday life. This kind of praxeological approach also enables historical animal studies to break through dichotomous notions of human-animal power relations: just as the polarities of familiarity and strangeness between humans and animals are permanently negotiated in practices of interaction, the tensions between dominance and subjugation as well as the nature of structures of domination, power, and exploitation should be understood as part of the constant process of negotiation between humans and animals.²³

21 Markus Kurth / Katharina Dornenzweig / Sven Wirth: Handeln nichtmenschliche Tiere? Eine Einführung in die Forschung zu tierlichen Agency. In: Sven Wirth / Anett Laue / Markus Kurth / Katharina Dornenzweig et al. (eds): *Das Handeln der Tiere. Tierliche Agency im Fokus der Human-Animal Studies*. Bielefeld: Transcript 2016, pp. 7–42, here p. 35. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783839432266-001> (accessed: January 20, 2022).

22 Kompatscher / Spannring / Schachinger: *Human-Animal Studies*, p. 188.

23 Aline Steinbrecher: Tiere und Geschichte. In: Borgards (ed.): *Tiere*, pp. 7–16, here p. 12; idem: “They do something”: Ein praxeologischer Blick auf Hunde in der Vormoderne. In: Frederike Elias / Albrecht Franz / Henning Murmann / Ulrich Wilhelm Weiser (eds): *Praxeologie: Beiträge zur interdisziplinären Reichweite praxistheoretischer Ansätze in den Geistes- und Sozialwissenschaften*. Berlin: de Gruyter 2014, pp. 29–52. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110370188.29> (accessed: January 20, 2022).

Practices of human-animal interaction are never static; rather, they are subject to constant historical change. They change with time, just as the political meanings generated by these practices change. Animals have always been interwoven with this historical and political change, which directly affects them. On the one hand, they feel the change of normative measures that are part of political decision-making processes, as in the case of animal welfare laws; on the other, the roles of animals in the overall social framework are continuously being reshaped as a result of changing philosophical and ethical ideas.²⁴

Practices of human-animal interaction have also determined the social construction and classification of animals, which are usually made according to their relationships with and usefulness for humans (and not according to biological systematizations). Social constructs and animal classifications are highly anthropocentric. From a human perspective, the routines of making meaning that arise from practices of interaction lead to divisions and classifications into categories such as domestic animals, farm animals, feedlot animals, animals for slaughter, and wild animals, but also into predators, pests, and plagues.²⁵ Such categorizations are mostly the result of emotional relationships and intersubjectively shared images of animals that express assumptions about the nature of certain animals and ascribe legitimacy to certain actions toward animals. The basis for these attributions is cultural practices and ideas that have been historically and spatially reinforced time and again. In other words, in their historical and spatial specificity, the social practices of interaction – and not biological determinants – condition whether an animal, for example a rabbit, can be legitimately seen as a domestic, experimental, or wild animal – or as food or a pest.²⁶

Historical animal welfare and animal rights education must take into account seemingly arbitrary categorizations of this kind when designing future educational and learning processes. After all, these categorizations and

24 Mieke Roscher: New Political History and the Writing of Animal Lives. In: Hilda Kean / Philip Howell (eds): *The Routledge Companion to Animal-Human History*. London / New York: Routledge 2019, pp. 53–75, here p. 54. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429468933> (accessed: January 20, 2022).

25 Kompatscher / Spannring / Schachinger: *Human-Animal Studies*, pp. 56–57.

26 Marcel Sebastian: Subjekt oder Objekt? Ambivalente gesellschaftliche Mensch-Tier-Beziehungen als Resultat kultureller Aushandlungs- und Wandlungsprozesse. In: Elke Diehl / Jens Tuider (eds): *Haben Tiere Rechte? Aspekte und Dimensionen der Mensch-Tier-Beziehung*. Bonn: Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung 2019, pp. 70–81, here pp. 71–72.

classifications do not take place in a norm- and value-free vacuum; rather, they often have legal consequences for animals, which go hand in hand with the legal privileging or the legal excluding and limiting of individual animal species. “The decisive dividing line” of animal categorizations, as legal scholars Margot Michel and Saskia Stucki recently noted, runs “between legally and factually privileged pets, which are kept out of interest in the animal or as companions in the household, and deindividualized farm animals, which are used for economic or scientific interests.”²⁷ From a historical perspective, the boundaries between privileged pets and deindividualized farm animals have always been fluid. As late as in the nineteenth century, for example, dogs were harnessed to carts by rag merchants in urban centers like New York as horses for the common man and used in so-called dog treadmills and wheels to drive various mechanisms, while the pet and lap dog was reinvented as a *companion animal* for the emerging middle class, and dog breeding became discursively intertwined with the humane treatment of animals.²⁸ In New York, dogs being kept as both pets and farm animals simultaneously was instrumental in the rise of the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. Under its founder Henry Bergh, the society prosecuted hundreds of animal abuse cases annually after 1866 and helped to limit human-dog practices to the roles of owner and pet, adapting pet and lap dogs to a humanistic ideal of pet ownership.²⁹

27 Margot Michel / Saskia Stucki: Rechtswissenschaft: Vom Recht über Tiere zu den Legal Animal Studies. In: Alejandro Boucabeille / Gabriela Kompatscher / Karin Schachinger / Reingard Spannring (eds): *Disziplinierte Tiere: Perspektiven der Human-Animal Studies für die wissenschaftlichen Disziplinen*. Bielefeld: Transcript 2015, pp. 229–255, here p. 236. <https://doi.org/10.1515/transcript.9783839425183.229> (accessed: January 20, 2022).

28 John Homans: *Warum Hunde? Die erstaunliche Geschichte des besten Freundes des Menschen – ein historischer, wissenschaftlicher, philosophischer und politischer Streifzug*. Berlin / Heidelberg: Springer 2014, p. 304. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-662-43388-1> (accessed: January 20, 2022).

29 Andrew A. Robichaud: *Animal City: The Domestication of America*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP 2019, pp. 174–175, 195–196. <https://doi.org/10.4159/9780674243187> (accessed: January 20, 2022).

4. Experiencing the materiality and physicality of human-animal relationships

“It is the vulnerability of animals’ bodies and feelings that makes them so worthy of protection in our eyes,”³⁰ writes animal philosopher and ethicist Arianna Ferrari in her reflections on the treatment of animals. Ferrari accentuates the material component of human-animal relationships, which was already a theme in the textbooks and readers of the nineteenth century. It was not uncommon for textbooks at the time to disapprove of physical contacts between humans and animals and to warn against violence toward animals, with the usual reference to its coarsening and brutalizing effects on humans:

Whoever mistreats his working animals without giving them proper food and the necessary rest, whoever subjects them to excessive burdens and forces them to exert their last strength by rough blows and maltreatment, sinks down to the level of the animal himself, and such a person who beats his animals is despised by every decent human being.³¹

In historical animal studies, the corporeality of animals has always received special attention, and animal historians have repeatedly pointed out that the bodily contact between humans and animals allows significant conclusions to be drawn about past and present societies. In addition to human-animal contacts, historians, especially those with a preference for medical history, have in recent years explored the bodily imperfection of humans and animals. In particular, the historical dimensions of the practices of healing as well as the production of knowledge through medical testing laboratories and animal experiments have been increasingly discussed with reference to post-humanist approaches. Donna Haraway’s ideas about the “co-constitutive” nature of human and animal bodies has found productive application in animal and historical pandemic research.³² In a joint contribution, the medical

30 Arianna Ferrari: Anthropozentrismus: Zur Problematisierung des Mensch-Tier-Dualismus. In: Diehl / Tuider (eds): *Haben Tiere Rechte?*, pp. 353–365, here p. 362.

31 Weber (ed.): *Lehr- und Lesebuch*, p. 84

32 See, among others, Dominik Merdes: Co-Constitutive Relationships in Modern Medicine: Körper-Werden um die Geburtsstunde der modernen Chemotherapie. In: *Zeitschrift für Körpergeschichte* 2:4 (2016), pp. 329–364, here pp. 262–263. The basis for the reflections here is provided by: Donna Haraway: Manifesto for Cyborgs: Science, Technology, and Socialist Feminism in the 1980s. In *Socialist Review* 80 (1985), pp. 65–108; idem: *Simians, Cyborgs and Women: The Reinvention of Nature*. New York: Routledge 1991.

historian Daniela Haarmann and the animal ethicist Kerstin Weich note that animal epidemics in the nineteenth century were interpreted less as a disturbance in an organism than as a disturbance of the national order. In their words, animal epidemics were considered “an attack on the health of the national body.”³³

The display of animal bodies in the context of educational and learning processes must also be critically viewed from the perspective of historical animal welfare and animal rights education since the material remains of animal bodies still lie buried not only in curiosity cabinets, evidence rooms, and museum collections, or in animal cemeteries and monuments in public spaces, but are also preserved in taxidermied form in the biology cabinets of schools and universities.³⁴ The display of animal bodies is reflected in the reified mode of everyday language: “their dead bodies are not ‘corpses’ but ‘carcasses.’”³⁵ Time and again, students in history lessons encounter forms of dehumanization and objectification in their investigations of hunting and hunting culture in prehistory and early history, in lessons on colonialism and imperialism, and in France under the *Ancien Régime*. Animals are not killed but “bagged” or “culled”; they are not frightened into fleeing from the hounds but “put up.” The rights and protection of animal bodies are undermined by this use of language, a language which makes it easier to speak about killing and forgives the act of killing itself.³⁶

5. Exploring spatial human-animal relationships

In 1980, the British art historian John Peter Berger published an essay entitled “Why Look at Animals?” Referring to animals locked up in zoos, he criticized the marginalization and imprisonment of nonhuman bodies as a symbol of Western capitalism. While animals, according to Berger, disappeared elsewhere, in zoos they were stylized as monuments to their own disappearance.³⁷ Berger linked the material display of animal bodies to a critique of

33 Daniela Haarmann / Kerstin Weich: Geschichte der Tiermedizin. In: Borgards (ed.): *Tiere*, pp. 149–159, here p. 154.

34 Hübner / Roscher: Pandadiplomatie, p. 122.

35 Reinhard Heuberger: Tiermetaphern und andere anthropozentrische Sprachphänomene: Was sie über das Mensch-Tier-Verhältnis aussagen. In: Diehl / Tuider (eds): *Haben Tiere Rechte?*, pp. 366–378, here p. 369.

36 *Ibid.*, p. 370.

37 John Peter Berger: *Why Look at Animals?* [1980]. London: Penguin 2009, p. 36.

their spatial confinement and disenfranchisement, and unmasked the liminal spaces and places that were thought to belong to animals. Berger's reflections spread widely in the years that followed and were taken up in the writings of cultural geographers such as Chris Philo and Chris Wilbert. Their fundamental differentiation between "animal spaces," that is, spaces assigned to animals by humans, and "beastly places," that is, places that animals appropriate for themselves, is now widely accepted in historical animal studies.³⁸

Such distinctions are not unfamiliar in the history of animal rights and animal welfare education and can be found in nineteenth-century textbooks. In these works, readers could always rely on the authors providing them with information about the spatial orders of animal husbandry. In the *World History Guide for Secondary and Elementary Schools* mentioned above, the authors distinguished between domestic dogs and cats, animals that lived in the home, and animals in the poultry yard and barn, and made precise spatial allocations. While a parlor companion like the goldfish was to be placed in a larger water vessel, cattle, sheep, and goats, according to the guide, belonged in the barn.³⁹ However, the authors of the *World History Guide* could not deny that some animals – against the will of humans – took possession of the parlor room and the bedroom. Houseflies, fleas, and bedbugs, as well as cockroaches and moths, were therefore all declared uninvited guests in the house; kitchens, pantries, cupboards, and furniture crevices were proclaimed places of animal disorder.⁴⁰

In addition to a basic understanding of past spatial human-animal relations, historical animal welfare and animal rights education must create an understanding of the historicity of spatiality. After all – to stay with the example of the farm – the parlors, bedrooms, and farms were not static products of social spatial practices but were in a constant state of flux. The dog, to take just one animal as an example, migrated from the rural farmyards to the streets of the metropolises in the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, sneaking from there into the parlor rooms of the bourgeoisie and, at the end of the twentieth century, not infrequently finding a place at the foot of their owner's bed. With this spatial reconfiguration of human-dog relationships,

38 Chris Philo / Chris Wilbert (eds): *Animal Spaces, Beastly Places: New Geographies of Human Animal Relations*. London: Taylor & Francis 2005, especially pp. 1–35.

39 Renner / Feddeler / Hüttmann / Jastram et al. (eds): *Weltkunde-Leitfaden*, pp. 306–314.

40 Ibid., pp. 309–310.

not only did the social practices of human and animal actors change, but the protective and legal relationships between humans and dogs also changed dramatically.⁴¹

Generally speaking, industrialization, mechanization, and urbanization in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries led to a radical transformation of spatial human-animal relations. Animals were now fixed within a certain space, hierarchized, and sometimes legally excluded. Whether animals were desired or allowed in certain places depended not least on spatial discourses. Thus, with the beginning of the twentieth century, the rat was domesticated and, in some respects, relocated: the Norway rat was still considered a pest in public spaces, but the laboratory rat rose to become indispensable in animal testing laboratories. The fancy rat found its way into the rooms of urban teenagers.⁴² Meanwhile, urban decision-makers declared more and more places to be prohibited areas for animals or created spaces that were defined by the absence of animals. In a countryside supposedly free from human influence, humans slowly but steadily invaded the last refuges of wild animals.⁴³ While horses and cows not only disappeared from the newly created parks and gardens of metropolises such as New York and San Francisco,⁴⁴ humans also restricted any remaining free spaces for animals by establishing large-scale wildlife reserves and national parks, “which, as state-decreed and scientifically sanctioned spaces of the wild animal, became a constant field of conflict between animal and human rights.”⁴⁵

For historical animal welfare and animal rights education, these considerations result in a particular challenge: these fields must initiate reflections on the spatial allocations and orders of human-animal relations, make the hierarchical structures of the spatial transparent, and then discuss the consequences of spatial configurations for animal welfare and animal rights. This can only succeed, of course, if the relationships between the spatial, the material, and the corporeal are considered together within the framework of a cultural studies reorientation of history didactics and the insights of human-animal histories enter school classrooms.

41 Robichaud: *Animal City*, p. 195.

42 See, among others, Pascal Eitler: In tierischer Gesellschaft: Ein Literaturbericht zum Mensch-Tier-Verhältnis im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert. In: *Neue Politische Literatur* 54:2 (2009), pp. 207–224, here p. 207.

43 Jessica Ullrich: Editorial. In: *Tierstudien* 6 (2014), pp. 7–14, here p. 7.

44 Robichaud: *Animal City*, pp. 13–46. Significantly, the chapter is entitled “Cow Town.”

45 Bernhard Gissibl: Das kolonisierte Tier. Zur Ökologie der Kontaktzonen des deutschen Kolonialismus. In: *Werkstatt Geschichte* 56 (2011), pp. 7–28, here p. 10.

6. Historical animal welfare and animal rights education

So, how can educators initiate learning processes that sustainably anchor the ideas of animal welfare and animal rights in history didactics and history teaching? What recommendations for reflection and action can be derived from the basic themes of historical animal welfare and animal rights education? Even in the age of the Anthropocene, history didactics and history teaching are still characterized by their pronounced anthropocentrism. The animal, as we have already seen, continues to represent the nonhuman “other” in classrooms and study rooms and “is consistently demarcated from the human.”⁴⁶ Such anthropocentrism, of course, is no stranger to other subjects and classrooms in primary, secondary, and higher education. Speaking on behalf of educational philosophers and scholars of moral education, animal rights philosopher Kai Horsthemke recently remarked that “[l]eading journals of philosophy of education and moral education, too, have tended to contain comparatively little about the treatment, status and rights of other-than-human animals, and about the relevance of such philosophical thought within education and pedagogy.”⁴⁷ Introducing the term “institutional anxiety,” Helena Pedersen, a leading scholar in the fields of critical animal pedagogy and human-animal education, even detects a sort of infrastructural anthropocentrism of educational institutions, built on “unspoken assumptions about human exceptionalism.”⁴⁸ Educators and scholars must counter this infrastructural anthropocentrism. In its place, they should introduce post-humanist approaches and objectives to didactics and teaching – that is, humans should not be the end or key point of historical animal rights and animal welfare education anymore. Instead, it is time to conceive a *humanimal* history of animal rights and animal welfare.⁴⁹ According to the animal historian Amir Zelinger, this would lead to minor stories of partnerships between humans and animals and the exploration of minor anecdotes, in which “the emergence of such relationships is described.”⁵⁰

46 Hübner / Roscher: *Pandadiplomatie*, p. 126.

47 Kai Horsthemke: *Animal Rights Education*. Cham: Springer 2018, p. xiv. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-98593-0> (accessed: January 20, 2022).

48 Helena Pedersen: Education, Anthropocentrism, and Interspecies Sustainability: Confronting Institutional Anxieties in Omnicidal Times. In: *Ethics and Education* 16:2 (2021), pp. 164–177, here p. 165. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17449642.2021.1896639> (accessed: January 20, 2022).

49 Amir Zelinger: *Menschen und Haustiere im Deutschen Kaiserreich: Eine Beziehungsgeschichte*. Bielefeld: Transcript 2018, p. 20. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783839439357> (accessed: January 20, 2022).

50 *Ibid.*, p. 24–25.

At the same time, educators and scholars should initiate reflections on the historical varieties of animal welfare and animal rights and their changes. With regard to the origins of the animal welfare and animal rights movement in the nineteenth century, Mieke Roscher has shown how animal welfare discourse was gradually emotionalized during the transition from anthropocentric to pathocentric animal welfare. Building on the ideas of utilitarianism and legal developments in England, an animal welfare movement took shape in the German-speaking world that, according to historical animal studies consensus, no longer focused on the morality of humans but on the capacity of animals to suffer. In the twentieth century, an economization and politicization of the discourse on animal welfare took place, bringing about a multitude of new terms in debates on animal welfare and animal rights. In addition to the concept of “animal rights” per se, these included the concept of “animal liberation” and that of “speciesism” as an institutionalized form of “animal oppression.”⁵¹

The historicization and contextualization of concepts related to animal welfare and animal rights can be taken as starting points for educational and learning processes that offer many opportunities to further reflect on history didactics and teaching: concepts often gain strength in the context of social conflicts, which also involve processes of social transformation and change. Within such conflicts, animal welfare and animal rights issues are often used for political positioning and contribute to the implementation or realization of interests. For example, conflicts about gender relations in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were repeatedly negotiated through debates on animal welfare and animal rights. Especially in Great Britain, where the proportion of women in almost all animal welfare organizations was high, activists were able to closely link their commitments to animal welfare and animal rights with questions about their own emancipation. Similar tendencies manifested themselves in the German-speaking countries. However, women’s rights activists acted more cautiously there as they did not want to expose their goals to the accusations of hysteria to which their English comrades-in-arms had been subject.⁵²

Accordingly, future (historical) animal welfare and animal rights education will require critical reflection on the interconnections of central processes of transformation and the developments of human-animal relations. Scholars

51 Roscher: *Geschichte des Tierschutzes*, p. 180.

52 Mieke Roscher: *Geschichte des Tierschutzes: Von der Aufklärung bis zur veganen Revolution*. In: Diehl / Tuider (eds): *Haben Tiere Rechte?*, pp. 39–52, here pp. 43–44.

need to rethink gender conflicts, industrialization, urbanization, colonialism, and many other topics through the lens of animal welfare and animal rights history and make them productive for educational and learning processes. If further recommendations for action are to be derived from these reflections, then these recommendations must also take into account the current discussions taking place in history didactics and the curricular guidelines for history teaching. However, the aim is not for these insights – as is often the case – to indirectly lead to the relegitimation or reinstallation of anthropocentric convictions, to the ahistorical application of concepts, or to the supposedly unavoidable separation between historical subject areas in history didactics and history teaching. Instead, historical animal welfare and animal rights education provide opportunities to challenge established settings and approaches and should encourage teachers and students to create lessons that go “against the grain.” In doing so, historical animal welfare and animal rights education would be responding to current calls for an “orientation toward competencies,” supporting task-oriented approaches, and could easily be implemented in history didactics and teaching by employing case-analytical, biographical, and longitudinal as well as cross-sectional concepts.⁵³ The curricular prerequisites for this educational turn are in place in many countries; the only thing left is to arouse the willingness of teachers and learners to use interdisciplinary methods in order to rediscover and teach familiar topics from the perspective of animal welfare law.

From a thematic perspective, the transformations that took place in human-animal welfare and animal rights during the National Socialist era require special attention in history didactics and teaching. As early as on November 24, 1933, the Nazi regime passed the Reich Animal Protection Act (Reichstierschutzgesetz), which in its novelty went far beyond the animal welfare and animal rights measures of the time, specifically making animal cruelty and vivisection punishable, but nevertheless taking up previous ideas and policies from the days of the Weimar Republic.⁵⁴ From the beginning, the law also formed an integral “component of the reorganization of society

53 Andreas Körber / Niko Gärtner / Annika Stork / Hanna Hartmann: Task-Based History Learning (TBHL): Ein Konzept für reflexive Lernaufgaben im Geschichtsunterricht? In: *Zeitschrift für Geschichtsdidaktik* 20 (2021), pp. 197–212. <https://doi.org/10.13109/zfgd.2021.20.1.197> (accessed: February 4, 2022).

54 Maren Möhring: „Herrentiere“ und „Untermenschen“. Zu den Transformationen des Mensch-Tier-Verhältnisses im nationalsozialistischen Deutschland. In: *Historische Anthropologie* 19:2 (2011), pp. 229–244, here p. 230. <https://doi.org/10.7788/ha.2011.19.2.229> (accessed: January 21, 2022).

on a racist national basis.”⁵⁵ The National Socialist regime brought, organized and institutionalized animal welfare under its control, ousted radical progressive animal welfare activists, and designed almost all animal welfare law measures in such a way that racist and biologicistic concepts, instead of animal welfare, provided the guiding principles for future Nazi policies.⁵⁶ Furthermore, they regularly disregarded essential elements – for example, concerning animal experiments – because they were able to suspend them on the grounds of war-relevant research, among other things. The historian Maren Möhring has impressively demonstrated that “the inclusion of animals in a cross-species National Socialist *Lebensgemeinschaft* [...] was constitutively linked to the exclusion (and extermination) of certain groups of people.”⁵⁷ The Reich Animal Protection Act further excluded, restricted, and defamed Jewish life in particular. Henceforth, it was punishable to slaughter animals according to Jewish rites, and Jews were denounced in public as callous vivisectionists or cattle traders for whom, according to Nazi propaganda, the animal was merely a thing with monetary value.⁵⁸

Furthermore, the Reich Animal Protection Act was unmistakably intertwined with the National Socialist programs of the *Volksgemeinschaft* (people’s community) and *Lebensgemeinschaft* (biocoenosis, a community based on biocoenotic principles, at times also described as ecological community). This also affected the biopolitical consequences of the law, as again Maren Möhring has demonstrated: animals were classified into “lower” and “higher” species, healthy and useful animals were included in the *Lebensgemeinschaft*, and measures were initiated against so-called “vermin” that threatened collective entities such as the “German forest” and the “German people.”⁵⁹ This process was accompanied by the “racial improvement” of certain people and animals, while others were degraded to “vermin” and “parasites.” Animal welfare and animal rights were now discursively intertwined with the National Socialist exclusion and persecution of people as “vermin” and “subhumans.”⁶⁰

For historical animal welfare and animal rights education, a critical discussion of the Nazi regime is unavoidable. Scholars must not only deconstruct

55 Möhring: „Herrentiere“ und „Untermenschen“, p. 230.

56 Mieke Roscher: Tierschutz- und Tierschutzbewegung: Ein historischer Abriss. In: *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte* 62:8–9 (2012), pp. 34–40, here p. 35.

57 Möhring: „Herrentiere“ und „Untermenschen“, p. 231.

58 Ibid.

59 Ibid., p. 235.

60 Ibid., p. 243.

the myths of an “animal-friendly” Nazi policy but also counter the myth that the Reich Animal Protection Act was passed solely for propagandistic reasons. The Reich Animal Protection Act was, from the outset, fully embedded within the antisemitic, biological, and culturally racist ideologies of the Nazi system and at the same time part of their realization. In other words, understanding animal welfare and animal rights in the Nazi state will further our understanding of National Socialist society and rule as such.

7. Against anthropocentrism and human exceptionalism

“The question is not, Can they *reason*? Nor, Can they *talk*? But, Can they *suffer*?” the British social reformer Jeremy Bentham asks in his *Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation* in 1789.⁶¹ With this statement Bentham, like many other utilitarians, brought the sentience and suffering of animals to the fore and linked them to questions of animal rights: “The day may come, when the rest of animal creation may acquire those rights which never could have been withholden from them but by the hand of tyranny.”⁶² While Bentham’s inspirations were certainly in tune with the sentiments of the French Revolution, they provided decisive impulses for modern animal welfare and animal rights movements in the years that followed – even if modern animal welfare and animal rights movements have rightly criticized the pathocentrism inherent in Bentham’s ideas. In hindsight, the wording of his question seems to be of particular interest for historical animal welfare and animal rights education. In his *Principles of Morals and Legislation*, Bentham used the term “the rest of the animal creation” to describe nonhuman animals and, in a sense, moved beyond the speciesism of his day.

61 Jeremy Bentham: *Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation* [1789]. Oxford: Clarendon 1823, Ch. XVII, Section 1, IV, Note 1, p. 311: “The day may come, when the rest of the animal creation may acquire those rights which never could have been withholden from them but by the hand of tyranny. The French have already discovered that the blackness of the skin is no reason why a human being should be abandoned without redress to the caprice of a tormentor. It may come one day to be recognised, that the number of the legs, the villosity of the skin, or the termination of the *os sacrum*, are reasons equally insufficient for abandoning a sensitive being to the same fate. What else is it that should trace the insuperable line? Is it the faculty of reason, or, perhaps, the faculty of discourse? But a full-grown horse or dog is beyond comparison a more rational, as well as a more conversable animal, than an infant of a day, or a week, or even a month, old. But suppose the case were otherwise, what would it avail? the question is not, Can they *reason*? Nor, Can they *talk*? But, Can they *suffer*?”

62 Ibid.

Bentham's comments are therefore an excellent starting point for future historical animal welfare and animal rights education. Above all, reading his writings and those of his (many) successors allows us to explore the historical changes that have occurred in animal welfare and animal rights discourses. The same can be said for the German-language textbooks and readers of the nineteenth century. They, too, reflect the changes that have been constantly taking place in animal welfare and animal rights discourses, and thus provide a glimpse into the anthropocentric frameworks of early animal welfare and animal rights education. From warnings against being "bad-tempered and easily angered" by animals to the condemnation of "profane cursing and shameful cruelty to animals," the textbooks not only educated young pupils and future farmers about how to treat of animals but also introduced them to discourses of human morality, ethics, and religion.⁶³

Historical animal rights and animal welfare education may help us to realize interspecies learning projects, but even more so within the framework of an inter- and transdisciplinary educational process, it can help us to anchor the ideas of animal welfare and animal rights not only in history didactics and history teaching, but also in the learning processes of school and university environments. Here, animal welfare and animal rights education are closely connected to topics of sustainability, the climate crisis, and environmental challenges, and favor – as do ecocriticism, new materialism and post-humanist critique – a "holistic, responsible, and multifaceted understanding of our world(s)."⁶⁴

Animal welfare and animal rights education need to confront today's anthropocentrism and human exceptionalism. Considering resonance pedagogy, animal welfare and animal rights education must, as Simone Horstmann recently noted, overcome the appropriation, aggression, and dominance of past human-animal relationships.⁶⁵ The prerequisite for this is understanding

63 Weber (ed.): *Lehr- und Lesebuch*, p.84.

64 Roman Bartosch: Animals outside the Machine. In: *Anglistik: International Journal of English Studies* 27:2 (2016), pp. 147–164, here p. 148.

65 Simone Horstmann: Was und wie man über, von und mit Puten lernen kann: Einleitende Überlegungen zur resonanz- und emanzipationstheoretischen Bedeutung eines „Interspezies Lernens“. In: Idem (ed.): *Interspezies Lernen: Grundlinien interdisziplinärer Tierschutz- und Tierrechtsbildung*. Bielefeld: Transcript 2021, pp. 9–25, here p. 15. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783839455227-001> (accessed: January 21, 2022); see also Wolfgang Endres: *Resonanzpädagogik in Schule und Unterricht: Von der Entdeckung neuer Denkmuster*. Basel / Weinheim: Beltz 2020; Hartmut Rosa: *Resonanz: Eine Soziologie der Weltbeziehung*. Berlin: Suhrkamp 2016.

historical human-animal relations and how they have changed as represented in the practices, spatiality, physicality, and materiality of those relations and as outlined in the recommendations for reflection and action. This could initiate a process of interspecies education that would sooner or later put an end to the “malicious and wanton cruelty” to animals that Thomas Erskine denounced over two hundred years ago.