Affection, Literature, and Animal Ideation[1]

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Representation of non human animals in literature is an artistic endeavour that entails a highly aesthetical and ethical complexity. On the one hand, it requieres an exhaustive work on the rethoric and poetic sources of language and literature to giving an account of those who have no possibility of linguistic communication. On the other hand, the literary estrategies chosen for the representation of animals show specific ways of feeling and understanding not only non human animals and their environments, but also the place and role of humankind in the world and its creatures. This connection between feelings, literary forms and cosmovisions and ideologies is the key to exploring Spanish thinking about animals in a variety of literary samples from the Middle Ages to the present time.

Keywords: Animal Studies, Spanish Literature, Ecocriticism, Affection

1. Introduction

Literary animals are not animals but words that carry a heavy historical tradition at their backs. And as words animals are complex nets of relationships determined by their literary uses and abuses, by their never ending reformulations along the venue of literary history. Nonetheless, in spite of their textual being, when affection for animals makes itself relevant, it is possible to grasp some of the real animals that exist behind their literary appearances in poems, short stories, novels, and plays. That is the goal of the pages to come, to study Spanish thinking about animals in the vast array of forms in which animals populate Spanish literature, from medieval symbolic *topoi* to the de-animalized and humanized talking animals of the fables, from Cervantes´ dogs in dialogue about their lifes to Feijoo´s essays on cats and their intelligence, from Juan Ramón Jiménez´s poetical donkey to the sentient cow, dog, and fly in Clarín´s short stories, from that López Pacheco´s lizard that like a peasant loves the heated soil beneath to present time examples

[1] This chapter is a translation with some additions and modifications of sections of José Manuel Marrero Henríquez´s article "Animalismo y ecología: sobre perros parlantes y otras formas literarias de representación animal", *Castilla. Estudios de Literatura* 8 (2017): 258-307. All translations have been made by José Manuel Marrero Henríquez and Ellen Skowronski.

of the representation of animals where affection also plays a prominent role: Niall Binns´ vultures, cows, nightingaless, swallows, and larks, José Manuel Marrero Henríquez´s donkey, Dionisio Cañas´s birds and spiders, Fernando Aramburu´s cow, Serafín Portillo´s owl, and Aurelio González Ovies´ fishes.

2. On Medieval Animals and on the Talking Animals of the Fables

Animals are an immense source for the expression of concepts and ideas in Middle Ages. As Fernando Baños Vallejo affirms, "in Medieval Ages coexist at least the following traditions: those of the Bible and the Fathers of the Church, the pagan naturalists ---that go back to Aristotle and finds in Plinio the Elder a foundamental source for the Medieval period--- the *Physiologus* and medieval bestiaries, and the *Etymologies* of Isidore of Seville" (139).

As a challenge to the repetition and modifications of *topoi* from medieval ages to Baroque poetry, it could be considered that the best approach to non human animals could be found in fables, for fables give voice to animals and allow them to narrating in first person their thoughts and feelings. But fables use this strategy for pursuing quite different goals. The fable inserts in the animal voice a human voice that transfers to the animal the reasoning that derives from the linguistic character of the human being. The locuacity with which fables give voice to foxes, ants, wolves, cicadas, and lambs does not recognize animals in their animality but transforms them in symbols of the vices and virtues of human morality, as it is the case with "La hormiga y la pulga," from Tomás Iriarte, a fable that illustrates the value of everyday work against chatting laziness.

Francisco González Díaz, an exemplary esayist of Hispanic Modenism, very much appreciated by Ortega Munilla, the father of Ortega y Gasset, whom Unamuno critizised for knowing Latin America better than Spain, asserts that fables are a fraude, for fables do not honour the animals that they use and transform them in rational beings able to

posses the vile human understanding that by nature they lack of. In "Animalismo literario," from his 1910 book *Cultura y turismo*, Francisco González Día shows himself categorical[2]:

> Lafontaine was not satisfied enough by giving irrational beings his own eloquence, the eloquence of man expressed in a human language. In order to moralize them he made them able to reason, craftly, cowards, lovers, charitables and vindictives. He filled them with our passions and by doing so with reason and responsibility he ruined them. [... Animals] have had their nature falsified. Without *de-animalizing* them, animals are turn into rational men so that they can be vile with consciousness. [... Since] they were not aware of the dirty trick played on them, since they just have the voice that fabulists have given them, they continued keeping their eternal and dramatic silence. [...] Was it not an abuse making such mixtification without their consent? (92)[3]

3. Introducing Affection: Cervantes´ Talking Dogs

The case of the dog Berganza in the *Coloquio de los perros* is very diferent from that of the talking animals in fables. *Coloquio de los perros* can be read as an allegory of humane weakness (Riley and Forcione) or in its relationship with the picaresque novel (Márquez Villanueva), but as Adrienne L. Martin affirms, "Berganza can be many things for many critics, but he is also a dog, and as such he tells his story from a canine point of view, as much as that is possible" (28). Although to a great extend Berganza is a fable dog that represents human values and serves as a moral guide, he is also a canine autobiographical

[2] Francisco González Díaz travels to Cuba on November 14, 1914, and stays in the island until March 31, 1915, as a guest of the Asociación Canaria de Cuba [Canary Association of Cuba]. J. Ortega Munilla, who was born in the Caribbean island and is the father of Ortega y Gasset, firms the prologue of González Díaz´s chronicle *Un canario en Cuba* [*A Canary Islander in Cuba*]. Ortega Munilla highlights González Díaz as a "journalist, man of letters, orator, propagandist of social campaigns, short stories writer, psychologist of the multitudes, philosopher" (vii) and praises his press campaign in favor of the reforestation of the Canary Islands, a campaign that was the subject of "an admirable article […] by Pardo Bazán that was published in *La Ilustración Artísitica* in Barcelona" (x). Unamuno, in a letter addressed to González Díaz, scolded him for knowing Latin America better tan Spain (Armas: 423), something that Marrero Henríquez considers that allowed him, together with Tomás Morales, Alonso Quesada and Saulo Torón, to renew the national poetics of Spain of the time, enclosed from the Pyriness within, with the introduction of the Atlantic as a symbol of internationalization (Marrero Henríquez 2011).

[3] Lorraine Kerslake Young considers that anthropomorphism might be the reason why fables are a pedagogical benefit for children and accepts that anthropomorphic representations might be a useful tool to erradicate anthroporphism and could be justified or even be considered necessary for the benefit of environmental imagination and empathy with the animals (210).

narrator, with a reliable voice of great documentary value about the life of dogs in Cervantine Spain.[4]

The biographical features of Berganza´s talk allow Adrienne L. Martín to study *Coloquio de los perros* as a "rich source of information about the theatrical practices" (28) of the Golden Age. Martín alludes to the well-established use of animals in popular spectacles, from the "*venationes* and *bestiarii*, animal fights and slaughters or ritual sacrifizes in Greek and Roman amphitheaters" (28), to the fact that jugglers, acrobats, and troubadours used and trained bears, pigs, cocks, monkeys, goats, and dogs, and to the popularity of fights between wild animals and between these and domestic animals that took place in France, Italy, Spain, and England, all of them to manifest the supremacy of man over nature, as it happens with the English baiting, where an animal tied to a peg is besieged by dogs (29)[5].

It can be easily understood that, precisely for having the interludes a thrashing end, Berganza runs away and abandons his job as an actor, declaring that "in an interlude they wounded me so badly that I almost arrived to the end of my life; I could not take revenge, for I was sick then, but later, in cold blood, I did not want to" (354). Berganza´s difficult life arises the reader affection and makes the reader to thinking about a series of topics that are at the center of the contemporary debates on animal ethics: animals as inteligent beings, able to feel and think, animals as moral agents, as communicative beings, willing animals, able to remember, to learn from experience, and to make decisions.

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[4] Adrienne L. Martin affirms that in Golden Age stage "animals were used much more of what it is supposed to be" and discusses on the debates about if on stage lions, bulls, horses were "alive or mechanisms, dressed up actors, puppets, figures made of paper mache or wood, drawings or discoursive presences imagined by the public of the comedy" (29). Adrienne L. Martín comfirms that in innterludes abound lapdogs, hounds, and hunting dogs with ambient and decorative functions.

[5] On the uses and costumes in Cervantine time and their relationship with animals see Linda Kalof and Carlos Gómez Centurión Jiménez. About dogs on the stage see José María Ruano de la Haza.

It is certain that there is a moment in which Cervantes clearly embraces the relationship of speech and reasoning as the founding pillar of human exceptionalism, along the lines of Pico della Mirandola and the *Discourse of the Method* by Descartes, for "the difference between humans and brute animals is that man is rational and animals irrational" (280), but it is also certain that inmmediatly after Berganza suggests the possibility of having understanding without speech, for he has heard saying great things of dogs, that "we have a distinctive natural, so lively and sharp in so many things, that it indicates that there is little to do to demonstrate that we have a kind of understanding able of discourse" (280). Berganza points to the possibility of having understanding without speech, or fuguratively, he admits that perhaps animals "talk" without an articulated language. Further more, *Coloquio de los perros* also highlights the idea that speech and reasoning do not lead necesarily to understanding, for there are stupid lawyers and notaries, and learned people in Latin that are dumb.

Coloquio de los perros turns the relationship between language and the rationality and intelligence atributed to humans problematic. Nothing is crystal clear or evident, it seems to say Cervantes, neither the intelligence and rationality of human animals, nor the unconsciousness and mechanicity of non human animals. And even devoid of speech, Berganza has many qualities with which he clearly surpass the people he serves, he is faithfull, he does all his jobs with great resposibility, he corresponds to the affection and care that he receives, he posses great capacity for remembrance, he shows gratitude, and he inspires that confidence that is so needed in community, for, as Cipión asserts, "distrust is the worst sin in society"[6].

[6] It is significant that Berganza begins his story in the slaughter, a place that Coetzee considers an emblem of Western thought about animals. The slaughter of Seville where Berganza is born allows him at the beginning of the *Coloquio* to reflect on humans and their sensesless violence and on the extend that the cruelty of humans on animals increases cruelty among humans. Butchers with which Berganza works in the slaughter are, like his first master, Nicolás el Romo, "people of loose consciousness, heartless" (302). Out of the mistreatment of animals only disdain for life can be expected, to the point that as Berganza

4. The Affection of the Illustrated Feijoo

Affection leads to knowledge with the conviction that there is an affinity binding all beings. Without any doubt Montaigne felt that affection when he questioned human hubris and asked himself for the feelings and reasonings of his female cat. A similar affection can be found in the beautiful and well documented essay "Racionalidad de los brutos" in which Father Feijoo positions himself between those that "are so liberal with [animals] that they concede them discourse, [and those who] refuse that they have feelings" (139). With great erudition, Feijoo draws a tradition of philosophers and fathers of the church that align with each of those extremes, and then Feijoo with his independent judgment confronts Descartes (142), disagrees with Saint Thomas (154), and clarifies biblical passages at first sight opposed to his own reasoning to conclude that animals think with rationality and feel, though "for the knowledge of spiritual entities, of common and universal reasons, and the ability of reflection on their own actions [humans] are different from the brutes" (161-162)[7]. Without calling any authority, as did Montaigne a century back, Feijoo observes with curiosity and affection the movements of a cat to further describe the similarities of animal thinking with that of the human animals:

> Let us contemplate the movements of a cat since the moment he sees a piece of meat hanging in a place where it is not easy to reach it. First he stops a little pensive, as if he were measuring the difficulty of the endeavor; he already begins to resolve; he looks to the door where somebody could come in and discover his robbery; once he is sure there is no impediment there, he confirms himself in his goal: he registers the places where he can approach the meat; jumps on an chest, from there on a table; he doubts again, he measures the distance with his eyes; he knows that the jump from there is impossible, he changes his position; and in that way he continues with his attempts until he catches the prey o desperately he abandons it. Who in such a

affirms, "butchers kill with the same easeness a man than a cow; for just nothing, in a come and go, they put the knife in the belly of a person the same way the cut the throat of a bull" (303).

[7] With abundance of examples coming from his own observations, Feijoo explains the way animals reflect with silogisms, deliberate, remember, project the future and, even if in a limited manner, are able to count. In Feijoo bits the contemporary animal ethics of Peter Singer, Richard Ryder and Tom Regan when he critizises vivisection (see Lope) and also bits the bioethics that emerges as a discipline in 1970 in Van Rensseelaer´s artile "Bioethics the Science of Survial" (see Rodríguez Pardo).

> progress of procedures does not see like through a crystal glass all those intimate acts that men realize in seemingly deliberations? And now let us add a good silogistic reflection. One the arguments that we build before the cartesians to prove that brute are sensible is that we see them making the very same movements that men make guided by feelings when they confront the same circumstances; *sed sic est*, that in this case we see the cat doing all those movements that a man does while deliberating and thinking when he confronts the same circumstances. Then if the first proves that brute have feelings, the second proves that they deliberate and think (155-156).

Affection is key to both Cervantes, who adopts Berganza point of view to describe the life of animals in XVII century Spain, and Feijoo, who tries to understand the motivations of a cat before a piece of meat. Affection makes the difference between animals considered as topics and animals considered as beings with their own idiosincracy. No matter the way in which they are depicted. Fables introduce talking animals in first person but they do not show any interest for the individual who narrates, a talking dog becomes a dog when an author feels affection for the animal that is behind his literary character. That is the inmmense distance from the talking animals of tradional fables and the talking dog of *Coloquio*. And that distance is at work also in Feijoo affective essay on the rationality and feelings of animals.

5. Clarín and Naturalist Affection

Feijoo´s reflection on animals does not blur the differences between humans and other animals, but his affection reduces the huge distance imposed by human exceptionalism and brings to light the similarities of man and other animals. Something similar occurs in "Adiós cordera" a short story by Clarín, published in 1893, in the midst of Industrial Revolution and with the cultural background of Darwin´s *The Origin os Species* (1859) and of the subsequent theories of Herbert Spenser.

Against the new values of competition, exchange, exploitation, and domination of the best, Clarín´s animals stand with "their reflections on human nature, their ruminations on inter-species relationships and their ultimely demises [...and] demonstrate that […]

abstract values of love, […] intelligence and loyalty are antagonistic" (38) to industrial development. As Sara J. Brenneis asserts "Adiós Cordera" (1893), "El Quin" (1896), "La mosca sabia" (1881), and "El gallo de Sócrates" (1901) demonstrate the exceptional abilities of four animals to reason, emote, and suffer in order to allow Clarín to exploring both the interspecies similarities and the violent clashes between man and beast at a moment when Darwin´s polemical theories held a particular sway over Spanish intelligentsia (38).

Beyond the intellectual aptitute of "La mosca sabia", a wise fly that ends up learning a variety of languages, it is affection what makes characters and readers to feel connected with animals. Cordera is a cow that lives her cow life in a poor family that she has served all her life. The kids Rosa and Pinín are sentimentally attached to her, for they have been playing with her all their lifes, have helped her to bring to life her new born calves and they have also been nurtured by her milk. The irruption of the first locomotive through the valley and the newly planted telegraph wires in her pasture do not affect her but the children feel that those objects are announcing a menace. Rosa and Pinín understand that the telegraph and the locomotive are threads to both Cordera and to their own peaceful existence. Infact, their Their suspicions are confirmed when their father sells the children´s pet as cattle. The violence of her death contrasts her peaceful, rural life among humans, and as Sara J. Brenneis affirms,

> it is precisely her work ethic, loyalty to the family and unquestioning trust that lead to her slaughter. The cow´s sale and subsequent death are all quite normal within the boundaries of the capitalist system ---Cordera is an old cow who has served her purpose--- but in the story, this process is portrayed as barbaric and analogous to the sale and slaughter of humans to a political regime. (43)

6. Juan Ramón Jiménez and Modernist Affection

With higly stylized expressions of modernist, trend noticeable lyric character, *Platero y yo* incorporates to the fresco of Moguer, as if a child of the town he were, to Platero the

donkey. It is the affection that Juan Ramón feels for Platero´s life what gives him the category of a relevant character in the town. Platero plays, feels, thinks, in a depiction that draws out of him a kind of childish figure, generous, and happy. When he dies, Platero "will not go in the carriage of the town crier, to the imense marshland, nor to the cliff that is in the road to the mountains, like the other poor donkeys, like the horses and the dogs that do not have anyone to love them" (14). Juan Ramón knows Platero and after his death Juan Ramón will respect his wills. He will be buried "at the foot of the big and round pine of the Pina´s garden, that he likes so much. [And he will be] close to the happy and serene life" (14). And then, in his heaven, Platero "will see at the sunset [Juan Ramón stopping by] the yellow irises that have grown from his decomposed heart" (154). The deep friendship that binds Platero and Juan Ramón saves Platero from being the talking and fake donkey of the fables:

> The poor animals, after speaking nonsense through the mouths of the fabulists, seemed to me so hateful as in the silence of the dirty glass cabinets of the Natural History classes. [...] Then, when I saw in the circusses of Huelva and Seville learnt animals, the fable, that had been in obviblion like those papers and prices of the old school, came back as a bad dream of my adolescence. [...] It is clear, Platero, that you are not a donkey in the vulgar sense of the word, nor in the sense of the definition of the Dictionary of the Royal Academy. You are, yes, as I know and understand. You have your language, not mine, the same way I do not have the languge of the rose and the rose does not have the one of the blackbird. So, do not be afraid that I could ever, as you could have thought among my books, make of you an indescreed heroe of a fable, braiding your sounding expression with that of the fox or the goldfinch, and afterwards deducing, in cursive letters, the cold and vain morality of the apology. No Platero... (143).

7. Animal Ethics and Forms of Recent Affection

7.1. The Social Novel and the Attachment to the Earth

The path to knowing the nonhuman animal passes through the scrutiny that human beings share with other beings upon intimate questioning of the prerogatives that delineate their exceptionality. Feijoo followed this track when he doubted the reasons for human hubris upon pondering the cat's thoughts before her prey, and Cervantes similarly achieves this effect by adopting Berganza's "canine viewpoint" (Martin 28) in *Coloquio de los perros*.

Reflecting this interest to know the other nonhuman animal and assisted by the affection that dominates in authors as divergent in interests and styles as Clarín and Juan Ramón, multiple examples of this alternative sensitivity to the arrogance of humankind appear in various authors and works of the last half century. In this respect, and because of its relevance, it is worth returning to the words with which Miguel Delibes, on his accession to the Royal Academy in 1975, explains how his work aligned with the Manifesto of Rome, the first global-scale scientific study that warned of the catastrophic consequences of development, as commissioned by the Club of Rome to MIT and published in 1972 with the title *The Limits to Growth*:

> Is it not my concept of progress something that is in plain contradiction with what has come to be understood as progress in our world today? [... It is time] to join my voice to the protest against the brutal aggression against Nature that the so-called civilized societies are perpetuating by means of an unbridled technology [... and to explain *El camino*, *Parábola del náufrago The Way, Parable of the Castaway* and my whole work as a product of my] current deepest concern, a concern that, humbly, I have come to share with a few hundred-naturalists throughout the world. For some of these men, Humanity has only one possibility of Survival, as stated in the Manifesto of Rome: to curb its development and to organize community life on different foundations than those which have prevailed to this day. (15)

Delibes's declarations invite us to check whether his appraisals can be applied to all social novels, or perhaps to the one that deals with emigration to big cities and the decline of rural life. This scenario occurs in Jesus López Pacheco's *Central eléctrica* (1955), a novel in which the man of the field is conceived as a sort of animal very attached to a land that he refuses to abandon as he is affectively and instinctively linked to it and upon which his well-being and sustenance depends. In *Central eléctrica*, the narrator makes a laudable effort to put language at the service of a lizard and, by doing so at the service of the farmer. Like the lizard, the field workers form part of the earth, and pulling them from it by taking them to the power station under construction that will flood their fields is as savage an act as that of introducing the lizard into a hostile ecosystem. The

mutual understanding of man and reptile brings to the forefront the economic and social risks and the emotional costs of replacing agricultural activities with industrial ones:

> So much sun, so much sun. It is pleasant, so much sun on the round, gray scales, the feet with their claws between the grains of sand, indolently abandoned, without holding it, leaning on its whitish and soft belly that feels the earth with an immense and resounding joy that cannot be denied. So much sun, so much sun on its triangular head, eyes very open and alive, breathing the air and the sun, tongue trembling, its chest, between the front legs, swelling and deflating, and all its elongated body, gray or green or brown or all three colors at once, on the earth reveling the joy of it and so much sun and silence. Motionless, with a stillness of being old, of finished life or of something that is listening to the gliding of the stars while letting itself bathe in the light of one of them. So much sun on the scales, the tail folded in a graceful curve still pointing the way from which it arrived, so much sun on its head, oh, so much sun and so much earth under its belly, and the joy of being still in the sun and on the earth, existing, forgetting everything. [1] (13)

7.2. The Animal against its Cultural Symbolism

As the human being approaches nature, animals move away from their symbolic coding to be themselves. Niall Binns's poem entitled “Los hombres y los buitres” ["The Men and the Vultures"] is developed within this complementary movement (12-15). Divided in two parts, "Los hombres y los buitres” is a poem constructed as a metaphor in which the terms that are compared correspond to the two parts that confront each other. In the first part, the poem mentions how, on the oldest existing murals on a structure of human creation (Catal Hüyuk, Turkey), the vultures appear to strip the flesh from a corpse and, in the city of Tiermes of Roman Hispania, a mural depicts the body of the warrior that dies fighting and is devoured by vultures. Together with these testimonies of the past, contemporary descriptions exist that tell of how the remains of the deceased are offered to the vultures both at the Parsi funerals of India and in Tibet. In the second part, the poem mentions the entries of several prestigious, canonical dictionaries (*Diccionario de la Real Academia Española, Cambridge International Dictionary of English, Random House Webster's Unabridged Dictionary*) that associate the vulture with selfishness, usury, lack of scruples, abuse, and greed. Juxtaposed with the sacred consideration of the vulture of the first part of the poem to which are offered the remains of the dead, the vulture of the

second part correlates to greed and avarice. As a sort of metaphor of extensive members, the comparison of these two parts is the one that produces the effect of poetic estrangement so favored by the Russian formalists, demonstrating how human is the representation of an animal that lives outside the symbology that the culture places on him, an animal that, similar to Montaigne's female cat or Juan Ramon's donkey, acquires greater dimension than its own code, alien and unknown, in the comparison that underlies the poem.

7.3. The Shared food

As in the aforementioned dictionaries, the human being, so dignified and distinguished, so exceptional in nature's realm, establishes that the vulture and scavenger animals practice a repugnant habit that is culturally associated with greed, malice, avarice and, in general, the lack of scruples. In *Tratado sobre los buitres* (2002), the verses of La vaca cuya carne como" places this idea in perspective. The human being is not exceptional; rather, like the vulture, humans are scavengers because they eat corpses of animals that are found already dead. In this fashion, the vulture is credited with the dignity of the human being, liberating it from the cultural indignity to which the human being has subjected it. Moreover, the possibility of acting unworthily in a conscious way rests, ultimately, on the human being. Exposing what the culture veils, the verses of "La vaca cuya carne como" reveal that the worst part of the human is not simply the fact that we have eating practices similar to those carrion-eating animals:

> The cow whose flesh I eat
> was raised and cared for by someone I do not know
> taken to the slaughterhouse by someone I do not know
> electrocuted by someone I do not know
> cut in portions by someone I do not know
> injected with preservative by someone I do not know
> packaged in plastic by someone I do not know
> and eaten by me

The remains of the cow whose flesh I eat
were thrown to the floor by someone I do not know
swept from the floor by someone I do not know
picked up by someone I do not know in a box
transported to a landfill
and eaten by a vulture

Scavenger he, scavenger I (22)

7.4. Towards a Renewed Animal Poetics

The verses in the poem "El prestigio de los pájaros" by Niall Binns are dedicated to the vultures that have changed their scavenger habits for the predators' in a type of strange transformation of nature, as if, according to an epigraph of the book, "the dogs flew." The griffon vultures that attack the flocks of sheep not only reflect an established fact in the lands of Navarre, but also represent a novel alternate poetic to the birds esteemed by literature such as the blackbird, the crow, the turtledove, and the swallow. A strange event, the transformation of the vultures into predators is capable of altering the literary poetics of birds. It is no longer the human being that imposes the symbology to the animal kingdom; rather, the animal kingdom is the cultural agent that renews the poetic symbology:

The nightingale that sings in Keats's nights
The swallow that returns to Becquer's balcony
The lark that extols itself, monarch of the blue
Yes, these are indeed worthy birds.
Prestigious birds that fly
As men fly in their dreams and sing
As the poets sing
That's what my girlfriend says, and she asks me
"Why do you waste your time with the vultures?" (19)

7.5. The Dispossession of Memory and Intellect

Taken to the extreme, the conversion of the vulture into a cultural agent could lead it to assume the human being's arrogance and be able to avail itself of it symbolically at will. This path would eventually recreate the great chain of being, now with the vulture

at its top. Ever since the twisting of the swan's neck in favor of the wiser owl in the verses of Enrique González Martínez, literature has advanced on the path of approaching the other nonhuman animal, and to a great extent, that path leads to the understanding of what all animals, human beings included, share.

To follow this path, a useful tool is to rid oneself of what has made the humans arrogant beings, unable to understand those who lack reasoning derived from articulate language as demonstrated by Jesus López Pacheco, who identifies himself with the lizard in *Central eléctrica*. Dionisio Cañas, determined to break the frontiers of his reasoned perception, strives to live in unison with the earth, sensorially perceiving its heartbeat, the passing of clouds, the flowering of the almond trees, and discerning its activity as perceived by insects. In *Y comenzó a no hablar* (2008), Dionisio Cañas seeks to approach animal life through the deprivation of memory and reasoning, protected by the strength of the desire to be free of the interference of historical knowledge and intellect, of language, and without dead beings whose meaning dwells in an uncomfortable sky. One desires to leave the historical time of the human being to live the time of the cycles, the seasons, nature's recurrent and rhythmic time in which the animals adapt themselves and in which the poet, like the beetle, longs to pace himself:

> Near the sky one does not live well,
> I know because I have lived a long time
> between the earth and the sky.
> This little part
> of La Mancha is better.
> where the birds of the dawn call you,
> where the ants make
> their own ways,

where spiders prepare
their traps without forgiveness.
Near the sky there are holes
as black as your heart,
near the sky one cannot hear the
news with the puddles of blood.
One lives badly near the sky.
No, I do not want to be near heaven,
I want to be here, lying down on the ground,
listening to its palpitation, its love and its misery,
waiting for the flowering of the almond trees,
the sweet kiss of the beetle,
looking up to see the clouds go by,
so when it rains
water cleans the memories
of all those dead
that look at us from the sky,
and whom I ask
to leave me alone
far from the sky. (52)

With a gesture not devoid of humor, Dionisio Cañas, in another passage of *Y comenzó a no hablar*, is freed from his head and, in its place, a solar light bursts forth that, far from the human knowledge that measures and glorifies its power, is pure daily life, a lustrous fact that dogs and the headless man accept in its rightful simplicity:

> Today I woke up without a head. I've searched for it everywhere and I have not found it. To think, I think, but I do not know with what; perhaps it's thinking with my feet. I walk down the street and nobody notices anything. Have they all lost their heads? I do not know. The sun comes out slowly and in the void where I had a head the light shines as if it were any day in La Mancha, and I am happy and screwed because not even the dogs have noticed that I am going through the field without a head. (53)

7.6. The Dispossession of Language

With the displacement of one's head, a strategy related to the loss of memory and intellect is the shedding of language, making the means of taste and touch the most relevant senses to know. This case occurs in Fernando Aramburu's *Viaje con Clara por Alemania* (2010), in which a nearly mute young man with language difficulties seems to communicate with a cow by licking its back. Inasmuch as the Latin word *infans* alludes to those who do not speak, childhood can be considered less a chronological than a linguistic matter because it is not only through the acquisition of language, but the cultural values that are learned

through language, that the individual is considered an adult. In the case of *Viaje con Clara por Alemania,* it is not a toddler, but a young adult, unable to speak because of a disability, who is uniquely able to lick to a cow in the same way that cows are accustomed to lick one another. The adult who accompanies him feels ridiculous in the middle of the meadow licking the cow's back and cannot help but wonder if he will get sick by swallowing the eggs that the flies have deposited there or if someone will see them in what he imagines is a ridiculous and embarrassing situation, and he finds it impossible to distract himself from the animal's somewhat fetid smell. And precisely because of his own inability to immerse himself in a relationship with the other animal through touch and taste, the narrator admires his step-nephew's ability to enjoy peacefully, as if he were a cow, in the middle of the meadow licking one that seems to acquire the dimension of a congener:

> [...] I saw Kevin standing next to the cow positioned as if he were kissing it on its flank. Or maybe, I thought, he was sniffing, because these children with autism, Asperger's syndrome or whatever the boy has [...] find pleasure in the most unsuspected things and actions. The cow slowly moved its jaw, indifferent to the presence of my nephew, whose arrival had not affected it more than if a fly had settled on its back. [...] I noticed that the boy was sucking the cow's hair with a slow tongue, his eyes closed and a gesture of ostensible delight on his countenance. [...] What would my nephew taste when he sucked it? [...] "Pretty animal, huh?" "Yes". I could not bear the urge to ask: "What does it taste like?" He did not hesitate: "Like white." [...] My nephew there, I here, were both licking silently for a few minutes, without, I want to believe, any witnesses other than the six cows spread out in the meadow .... "You were right," I told Kevin. "This cow tastes like white [...] but I swear I'm full. Believe me that I can't have anymore. So, I'm going back to the canoe. " And he followed me, silent, his chin dripping with saliva.

7.7. Ecstatic Ineffability

In unattainable purity, the task of giving voice to the animal that does not speak is revealed in poetry's attempt to achieve an instant of full identification with the being who, alien to human care, makes its life in nature. Serafín Portillo, in *Mapa de las corrientes* (2008), attempts this task by transferring to the owl the feeling of ecstasy of one who, putting himself in its place, self-identifies with the morning breeze:

> One moment the breeze
> agitates the branches,
> then subsides.

At the top of the oak
the tawny owl has felt
the wind between the leaves and awakens.

In ecstasy, I say to myself, only
an instant.

The spirit is brief and then disappears.
(someone looks at a branch and suddenly,
not seeing a branch,
sees the hard
extension of the arm). (30-31)

7.8. Playful ineffability

Aurelio González Ovies, in *El poema que cayó a la mar* (2007), chooses to admit to the ineffability of knowing the other nonhuman animal through cheerful and playful verses that, with childish wisdom, accept the paradox that sustains them. As the verses reflect on the sea animals, they point to the distance between the words of the fish and those who want to give an account of them:

Since then they say that sometimes divers
see metaphor fish, coral adverbs,
Proparoxytone dolphins, monosyllabic octopuses
And very poetic algae with rhymes of salt. (7-8)

7.9. The ineffable understanding

José Manuel Marrero Henríquez, in *Paisajes con burro* (2015), contemplates the possibility of grasping the animal's understanding of things. Alongside the tawny owl of Portillo, the fish of González Ovies, the lizard of López Pacheco, or the vulture of Binns, Marrero Henríquez selects the donkey as a symbol of wisdom and liberates it from its traditional link to clumsiness. The verses of *Paisajes con burro* are determined to enter into the light of things that only the equine, on an Earth of diminished ecological and cultural biodiversity, pursues with stubborn clear-sightedness:

The hoof scrapes the ground
to bury the point
that lacks its question mark
and the strengthened sun blurs
the energy embodied in the field.

No moisture remains in things
and life evaporates
forever.

There are no voices, children,
eagles, snakes,
not even vultures,
or nightingales.

They doze in books.

Dry the paramo
and blue the sky, the stubborn donkey
scratches his question
in the ground. (7)[8]

Conclusions

Upon weighing the representational effectiveness of the different ways of incorporating animals in literature, and judging from the provided examples in the preceding pages, the intentionality of the forms of animal representation proves either as, or even more, determinant than the use of any given form. In the fable, the talking animal could testify to its life, but that potentiality is not realized because the gift of speech is merely a pretext for exposing different ideas about politics, customs and habits, morals, and even poetics and rhetoric.

Clearly, and always to some extent, that same speaking ability put to the service of documenting the animal's life could be able to bring the reader to a dynamic domain that is foreign to him or her, especially if this documentary interest is driven by affection and tries to give the point of view of the animal itself. The cicada and the ant in Aesop's fables that Lafontaine and Samaniego rework merely illustrate the distance between laboriousness and laziness; however, Berganza, in his colloquy with Cipión in *Coloquio de los perros* expresses his life experience "from a canine point of view" and brings readers closer to the dogs' life of the Cervantine period (Martín 28).

[8] *Paisajes con burro* will be published in the translation of Ellen Skowronski as *Landscapes with Donkey* in bilingual edition by Green Writers Press in March 2018.

Neither documenting nor testifying necessarily requires the presence of a talking animal like Berganza who recounts his life story. Documentation and testimony can take on different forms, such as the poetic voice of Serafín Portillo, who observes from a distance and from there tries to identify himself ecstatically with the owl sitting on a branch. Both the dog and the owl are "speaking animals," even if only Cervantes' dogs literally have articulated language. After all, reasoning and language, those qualities through which human beings have arrogated their exceptionality in Creation, can be a hindrance to accessing the knowledge of nature and the beings that inhabit it. For this same reason, Fernando Aramburu converts language into a vehicle of great effectiveness for the expression of the tactile and gustative sensations, and Dionisio Cañas cuts off his head to obtain the knowledge that is forbidden to the language and reason that Pico de la Mirandolla and René Descartes make standard bearers of human exceptionality.

Literary tradition has deanimalized animals, reducing them to topoi, clichés that are repeated and associated with ideas of varied nature, to diverse and contrary ways of being, to warlike and loving activities, and to virtues and defects that function as narrative motifs or as similes, symbols, metaphors, and emblems in poems, ballads, songs, stories, and novels. Tradition and the building of culture curtail the animality of animals, making them symbols that, with the movements at hand to defend animal rights and ecological sensitivity, struggle to free themselves from the constraints of their established use to benefit a meaningful potential ready to reveal itself if one addresses with afection its individual manner of being.

Very far from being considered in their animality, some animals in such a struggle have at least managed to avoid being repeated as mere epigonic symbols and give rise to new meanings. In the fifteenth century work *El triunfo de las donas* (1439-1441), the raven and the basilisk submit their misogynist tradition to the phylogeny of their author,

Juan Rodríguez del Padrón, and falconry birds lend themselves to the representation of characters with the opposing roles of the male hunter and the female prey and vice versa. In Góngora's *Soledades*, Huergo Cardoso finds a particularly alternative representation of the raptors that participate in the extreme allegory found in the falconry passage in which the expulsion of the Moors and the baroque writing are intertwined in a mass of dead bodies after the hunt, "whole pieces of the ruin [that] arouse a strange and pleasant pleasure" (31).

Much more fortunate have been the traditionally esteemed birds like the blackbird, lark, and dove that have been renewed as literary symbols when they consort with the griffon vulture that dives through the air with predatory habits as seen in the mountains of Navarra in Niall Binns's *Tratado sobre los buitres* (2001) and according to documentary evidence in the news by press and television. In *Tratado sobre los buitres*, the emergence of the scavenger that occupies the pages of newspapers and various media because of its strange predatory behavior not only alters the field of literary birds, but also turns a matter of biologically and scientifically documented relevance into a poetic motif. Niall Binns's book wants to know the vulture poetically in its own animality, and he lends it his pages. In doing so, for the other birds that have become literarily fossilized in their symbolic condition, their flight of renewal arrives in part. If in *Tratado sobre los buitres* a documented fact about the vultures that inhabit the mountains of Navarra inspires its pages, in *Central eléctrica*, the reptile benefits from the documentary character of the social novel of the postwar period. The drama of an agonizing peasant life can be faithfully portrayed through the narrator who identifies with the reptile that devastates and heats up on the dry land.

Jesús López Pacheco understands that the peasant and the reptile share their attachment to the land; Juan Ramón sees Platero as one child more in Moguer; Niall Binns

reveals that the human being is, like the vulture, a scavenger animal; Marrero Henríquez rescues the donkey from its symbolic indolence and selects it as a symbol of an ecological wisdom that the human being shares but has neglected; Serafín Portillo imagines an owl on a branch; González Ovies loses himself in the children's game in which only children understand the animals by seeing them as swimming metaphors or monosyllable octopuses among the salty algae; Dionisio Cañas dispenses with his head to become another animal; and, Cervantes leaves his own perspective to embrace the canine's. It is not insignificant that Fernando Aramburu uses a human being with reasoning and linguistic difficulty, a young autistic boy, to show that the best understanding with the grazing cow is achieved through the taste of its back that the boy licks with unhurried pleasure. In each of these cases, the literary word is put to the service of ways of thinking and feeling that lack the reasoning derived from the possession of articulated language and strives to account for the other animal in its own animality.

The documentary interest and the desire to bear witness are common currency of the various forms of literary representation of the animals of Francisco González Díaz, Juan Ramón Jiménez, Miguel Delibes, Jesus López Pacheco, Niall Binns, José Manuel Marrero Henríquez, Dionisio Cañas, Serafín Portillo, Aurelio González Ovies, Fernando Aramburu, and Cervantes. With affection, literature has equated the life of nonhuman and human animals; and, as in Ryder, Stone, Singer, and Regan, Coetzee and his character Costello, Pope Francis and his immediate predecessors, Feijoo, Montaigne, and the figures of ecocentrism that Sessions rescues, life and whatever of it the subject enjoys always deserves to be preserved and cared for in its rights.

There remains a significant underlying issue pertaining to the extent to which the encouragement of animal rights through animal representation in literary strategies reaches political, social, and behavioral consequences. Undoubtedly, as Oscar Horta

points out, eating habits should be the first area of influence of animal ethics and related literature, an area that must be extended to other orders of life, "if we do not conceive our reflections on moral issues as a mere exercise of intellectual curiosity, but we understand that they have to have some influence in our daily practice, this must necessarily lead us to rethink our way of life" (12).

This line of reflection, which inexorably leads to vegetarianism, is embodied by Francisco González Díaz who alludes to Bernardino Saint-Pierre, Saint Francis of Assisi, "P. Feijoo who, in his time, was a convinced animalist" (2007: 48), to the great animals in poetic and Biblical symbols, including Paraclete's dove, Saint Peter's rooster, Luke's ox, the mule of the manger, Saint Roch's dog, the horse of Saint James and Saint George, Saint Anthony's pig, Jesus's donkey at his entrance to Jerusalem, the swallows that were sanctified on Calvary, and "the birds of the sky [that] formed animated diadems around the tormented and pained head of Christ "(2007: 48) to emphasize the "supreme order of respect for the inferior lives that emanates from all Christianity [for] redemption was also done in favor of our brothers in inferiority, as Schiller calls them "(2007: 48). More than a century before the influence that ecologism has been exerting on the doctrine of the Catholic Church, from the Catechism of John Paul II's papacy and his encyclical *Centesimus Annus* (1991), to the encyclical *Caritas in Veritate* (2009) by Benedict XVI, and concluding in *Laudato Si* (2015), the encyclical of Pope Francis that places on the human being the responsibility to take care of the "common house" that is the Earth, González Diaz demonstrates that the ethical duty of his writing in defense of animal rights comes accompanied by a consistent dietary behavior because, in reality, opposite the "great social majority [that] enjoys and laughs with the carnage of the circus, sport and chicken coop [...] only pure vegetarians are authorized to oppose their veto" (2007: 50).

It is evident that Berganza is far from pronouncing a message close to the last papal encyclicals, thinking like González Díaz, or offering an apologia for vegetarianism; nevertheless, in light of contemporary animalist sensibility and ecologism, his account enhances the warning against animal mistreatment and censorship of the activity carried out in the slaughterhouses that, in fact, *Coloquio de los perros* contains. From the taste and touch of the cow's back, the heat of the earth that penetrates the lizard's breast, the birds' trill, the donkey that contemplates the wisdom of the grass that it regurgitates, the owl perched in the breeze, and the fish that swim in the alphabet, the knowledge derived from these varied sources is the same as the one that provides the vitality with which Elizabeth Costello defends the construction of a knowledge freed from a Genesiacal conceit as well as from reason and language as foundations of exceptionality. For eons, reason and language were all powerful; however, since the late 1960s when the first environmental movements emerged that sounded the initial scientific alarms about the unsustainability of the world's system of production and consumption and listened to voices demanding the safeguarding of animal rights, this idea has begun to be severely challenged.

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