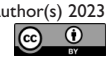
Article

International Relations
2023, Vol. 37(3) 398–422



DOI: 10.1177/00471178231192345
journals.sagepub.com/home/ire


Animalising International Relations

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Abstract

This article explores what it means to 'animalise' International Relations (IR). The posthuman move in the social sciences has involved the process of de-centring the human, replacing an anthropocentric focus with a view of the human as embedded within a complex network of inter-species relations. In a previous work we drew attention to the lack of analysis within International Relations of the key role played by more-than human animals in situations of conflict. The current COVID-19 pandemic again indicates that an analysis of international relations that does not have at its core an understanding of a more than human world is always going to be an incomplete account. The paper argues for the animalising of International Relations in order to enhance inclusivity, and suggests five ways in which this might be approached. As it becomes increasingly clear that a climate-related collapse is imminent, we argue for a transformative approach to the discipline, stressing interlinked networks and a shared vulnerability as a political project which challenges capitalism (advanced/late/carboniferous/genocidal) and the failure of states to address the concatenation of crises that life on the planet confronts.

Keywords

agency, animals, COVID-19, International Relations, relationality

What could 'animalising International Relations' possibly mean? Of all the social sciences, International Relations would appear to be the most human-focused – concentrating on the actions of state leaders, diplomats and the military, together with forms of human

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organisation – states, international organisations and transnational corporations. While 'the environment', mainly related to climate change, has become a topic of study within the discipline, this has primarily focused on state and international organisations' ways of dealing with the issues rather than the ingress of actors beyond the human. As such, International Relations as a discipline remains highly anthropocentric. By contrast, we argue here that the *practice* of international relations is thoroughly animalised. International relations occur within a context of relations with myriad other species and life forms. While we should not overlook that what we call international relations is far from a human-only zone, what students of international relations frequently overlook is the animality of the human species. As Melanie Challenger argues, 'the world is now dominated by an animal that doesn't think it's an animal. And the future is being imagined by an animal that doesn't want to be an animal'. 'This', she argues, 'matters'.[1]

This article makes the case for animalising our thinking about international relations. That it matters, in thinking about the human as animal, is where we will begin. While there has been progress in thinking about the animality of international relations, there is still a long way to go in acknowledging our relations with the rest of nature. The next section will consider how has this division with the rest of nature come about and why, in our view, this is not only significant but potentially dangerous. In the second part of the paper, we turn to an example from International Relations, the impact of the COVID-19 virus. Susceptibility to a virus highlights human animality. The pandemic also highlights the way in which human interactions with the rest of nature at a very simple and low level have the potential for global implications. The outcomes of the pandemic suggest a need for thinking about agency beyond the human, which is the focus of the third section of the paper. The final section considers what issues 'animalising' might raise for International Relations and what trajectories it suggests for the future research agenda of the discipline. We will suggest five, increasingly radical, paths that the discipline could take towards 'animalising International Relations'.

The human animal: Why it 'matters'

Timothy Morton summarises the complexities of being 'human' clearly: 'I am not bound in an impervious whole and there are parts of me that also belong to other life forms, or just are other lifeforms'.[2] There are common body parts with many other species. 'Our bodies are connections to a menagerie of other creatures. Some parts resemble parts of jellyfish, others parts of worms, still others parts of fish'.[3] Even though we think of ourselves as an 'I', we are a 'we', a multi-species assemblage. While there is some scientific debate around the numbers, even conservative estimates indicate that our bodies contain at the least the same quantity of non-human cells as human cells.[4] In core areas such as eating, defecating, reproducing and dying, our bodies perform the same functions as all other living critters on the planet.[5] Nevertheless, in the Western tradition, our animality is something from which we have increasingly sought to distance ourselves. 'Historians', notes Travis Holloway, 'have routinely separated human history from natural history, while political theorists have described politics as a distinctly human realm that is somehow completely separate from its environment'.[6] While this is a feature of Western cosmology, it is worth noting that this is both a recent phenomenon and not a view shared by

all of us as a species.[7] A range of anthropologists have highlighted that a view of a sharp distinction between the human and the rest of nature is not a consistent feature of human perspectives. A key contributor to such ideas is the French anthropologist Philippe Descola. In addition to what he calls 'naturalism', essentially the Western conception that apart from the human, other entities do not share an interior life, Descola points to animist, totemist and analogical views.[8] Animism and a related concept, 'panpsychism', are making considerable inroads into the social sciences as a way of thinking about the world. Essentially this views reality as being shared experientially across a wide range of other entities, including other species, plants and inanimate elements. The critical point is that other traditions do not share the sharp divide between nature and culture as envisioned in Western thinking.

In the Western cosmology humans are elevated above the rest of nature based on a view that while there is a shared physicality between humans and the rest of nature, there is a distinction related to the 'soul' or 'mind', that elevates the human above the rest of nature. An alternative view exists in Amerindian perspectives whereby a commonality of interiority exists but there is a differentiation of the physicality. There is a continuity of souls, while a physical differentiation leads to multiple viewpoints. For De Castro, 'Amerindians postulate a metaphysical continuity and a physical discontinuity between the beings of the cosmos, the former resulting in animism, the latter in perspectivism: the spirit or soul (here not an immaterial substance but rather a reflexive form) integrates, while the body (not a material organism but a system of active affects) differentiates'.[9]

For the indigenous population of Australia, there is also an account of human relations with the rest of nature that is highly interconnected. For Deborah Bird Rose these are 'ecologies of mutual benefit'. Ecologies are mutually beneficial regardless of species boundaries. Rather than perceiving the human species as central it is simply a player in a series of interconnectivities. In this world view 'country' includes animate and inanimate elements that are mutually necessary for survival. Mutual existence depends upon care across species boundaries of all that exists within a specific territory. Interspecies relations take a variety of different forms and 'commensalism co-exists with predation'.[10] Rather than humans at the centre point of existence they are part of a set of relations that are unavoidably networked.

The strict division between human and nature in the Western tradition is a perspective that has only emerged comparatively recently. Arne Johan Vetlesen argues that 'only since the Renaissance has all existence come to be considered, treated, and acted upon as pure matter, stripped of all features of life; a field of inanimate masses and forces operating according to the laws of inertia and quantitative distribution in space'.[11] Discussing how his son, when aged four, had the practice of greeting all the entities he would meet on a walk, but ceased the practice by the age of eight, Vetlesen points to the processes of socialisation, which deem such practices as abnormal. While many parents reading this may recognise or remember a similar disenchantment with the beings and things of the world in their own children, this idea of a clear separation of the human from the nonhuman world is the product of rigorous socialisation practices. For example, through various cultural mechanisms, children in Western/Northern regions of the world learn their differences from nonhuman animals, and that maturity is demonstrated through an

appreciation of human superiority and an understanding that humans are fundamentally different in relation to nonhuman animals.[12]

Throughout much of history, alternate sources of being have been acknowledged. This acknowledgement remains the case in non-Western cosmologies. 'Culturally and cosmologically – collectively in a strong sense – we "moderns" hail the shift from greeting trees to not-greeting them as evidence of progress, as a product of Enlightenment philosophy and the scientific explanation of the natural world'.[13] In other words, the reduction of the rest of nature to bare material life in the history of human thinking is a relatively recent occurrence. For example, in medieval Europe, it was not uncommon to put nonhuman animals on trial for alleged crimes, indicating that they were both part of a community, had intentionality, and were more than the Cartesian perception of simply being machines.[14] James Bridle suggests that 'in this they represent the last gasp of animistic belief systems as they fell into line with the Cartesian view of animals as beasts and machines – for if they lacked real feelings, souls, intelligence or political will, then they could neither stand trial, nor take any decisive role in the community'.[15] Nevertheless, the persistence of pagan ideas in western societies is an indication that this shift of thinking is not all-encompassing.[16]

Cartesian dualism, while the dominant perspective in Western thinking, has not been without challenge.[17] In a radical reinterpretation of Nietzsche's philosophy, Vanessa Lemm points to the centrality of the links between human and more-than-human animals in his thought.[18] In Nietzsche's work, Lemm finds an antagonistic relationship between culture and civilisation. Civilisation has as its purpose control, and the denial of the animal. By contrast, culture has the potential to bring forth forms of life that do not include control over the animal. The denial of the animal results in 'forms of political life [which] emerge based on domination and exploitation of humans by humans'.[19] 'What is needed', Lemm argues, 'is a new awareness of the artificial character of the very idea of species life'. Such an awareness, or change of perception, would provide 'grounds for denying validity to the division among species'.[20]

This process has sometimes been described as the 'disenchantment' of nature. For example, Horkheimer and Adorno suggest that the 'disenchantment of the world means the extirpation of animism'.[21] In their analysis of the emergence of instrumental reason, they point to how dominance over the rest of nature resulted in the processes by which human beings exert dominance over each other. Hence, for Horkheimer and Adorno, a connection exists between the forms of oppression of nature and oppression within human societies. Driven by the need for self-preservation, humans have sought various ways to seek control over the rest of nature, resulting in a capacity to control each other. The relationship between humans and the rest of nature has become a 'patriarchal one: the mind, conquering superstition, is to rule over disenchanted nature'.[22] This shift to a 'patriarchal' relationship with the rest of nature marks a distinct break with pre-existing understandings of the rest of nature as animate and intentional. Interestingly, Adorno's work is replete with allusions to the more-than-human world, and in a letter to Horkheimer, floated the possibility of writing a 'theoretical groundwork of a human society that includes the animals'.[23] That Horkheimer and Adorno understand the control of disenchanted nature to be a patriarchal relationship is prescient. It echoes some of the developments in feminism and ecofeminism on patriarchal relations with non-human nature which continues to unfold and expand.[24]

A central claim for the distinction between humans and other species is the claim that only humans display intelligence and sentience. This view is being rapidly demolished. Other species' intelligence, consciousness, and self-awareness is becoming increasingly recognised. Frans de Waal is at the forefront of questioning the distance between humans and other species. Earlier work examined the practice of politics amongst our primate cousins.[25] More recently, he has asked whether the human species is sufficiently intelligent to acknowledge the capacity of other species.[26] 'Why', he asks, 'is humanity so prone to downplay animal intelligence?'.[27] In other words, it is not just a case of demonstrating intelligence in more-than-human animals, we also need to overcome the prejudice ingrained as a core element of Western thinking. The first part is easy to achieve. He describes the latter feature as 'anthropodenial', 'the a priori rejection of humanlike traits in other animals, or animallike traits in us'.[28] Most significant is the tendency to assess other species in terms of human capacities – ignoring bodily formats or situations with which humans do not have to cope. Octopuses provide a fascinating example – the nearest we come to engaging with an alien species.[29] Octopuses represent an alternative evolutionary pathway. In evolutionary terms, you need to step back 600 million years to find a common ancestor. A significant difference between octopuses and mammals is that the neurons in their bodies are not primarily centred on their brains – instead, they are distributed, with the majority located in their arms. Where mammals and many other creatures have a centralised brain, octopuses and their closest relatives have a distributed brain function. In other words, looking for the human equivalents of brain power in other species will lead us to overlook other forms of bodily functioning. Peter Godfrey-Smith draws on the metaphor of a tool kit. 'Brains', he argues, 'are like tool kits for the control of behaviour. As with human tool kits, there are some elements in common across many trades, but much diversity also'.[30] Rather than comparing human capacities and other species, the better question to ask is how effective is a particular species' tool kit for the circumstances in which they operate. Instead of thinking about human capacity as the key indicator of intelligence, it makes more sense to think about the circumstances of other species.

Why does this rejection of our animality 'matter'? The prime indicator of this position is the Cartesian dualism, which separates humans from the rest of nature as 'exceptional'. Timothy Morton has recently described this dualism as an act of severing, by which he means 'a foundational, traumatic fissure between, to put it in stark Lacanian terms, *reality* (the human-correlated world) and *the real* (ecological symbiosis of human and non-human parts of the biosphere)'.[31] In Morton's view, there is a sharp rift between the human perspective of reality and the fundamentally 'real'. We assume here that he is referring to a Western naturalist account rather than a human perspective per se. This dualism, or severing, permits a specific account of the relationship between humans and the rest of nature to persist. In the first instance, it permits a view of the human as somehow not connected to the rest of nature. Humans, from this perspective, are 'exceptional' and not connected to the biosphere. Because we are not animals, we are not a part of nature – instead, nature is something separate from us. We are independent of nature. Secondly, it has allowed the view to persist that, due to our exceptional character, the rest of nature exists only as a resource to be enjoyed. This view is at the foundation of Western religions and the humanist project. Rather than being interlinked with the rest of nature,

we can exploit other species and produce of the planet without considering the impacts. The rejection of our animality matters then, firstly because it does not provide an accurate representation of humans,[32] and secondly because it has consequences. Specifically, the rejection of human animality engenders a false, exploitative, 'patriarchal' relationship with the rest of nature, resulting in the damaging era that has become known as the 'Anthropocene'.[33]

From a critically posthumanist perspective this view is incorrect and dangerous. The human species is not separate from nature; it is 'of nature' rather than 'in nature'. James Lovelock advocated the 'Gaia hypothesis', the view that earth's biosphere consisted of one interconnected self-regulating system which maintained life on the planet. While initially proposed as a hypothesis, it is now widely accepted as Gaia theory within the scientific community. 'Gaia theory', suggests Karen Liftin, 'awakens us to the crucial fact that human systems are embedded in and utterly dependent upon a greater whole, a fact that for many evokes a sense of wonder and awe. In a wider cultural context, Gaia theory serves not only as a model depicting the co-evolution of life and Earth's geophysical systems, but also as an archetypal metaphor for wholeness, interconnectedness, and belonging'.[34] Earth system theory, which has emerged from Lovelock's work, attempts to understand the changes occurring due to human activity. While, during the Holocene, the earth's systems maintained a balance, in the new era of the Anthropocene, human activity has unleashed forces beyond human control.

At a different level of analysis, human dependence on other parts of the natural world is frequently overlooked. Eva Meijer alerts us to the interconnected roles between worms and humans and the significant role that worms play in ploughing the earth.[35] Around one million different species of insects have been identified, and it is believed that there may be up to nine million more species yet to be identified; in terms of animal life on planet earth, they are the 'silent majority'.[36] However, insect numbers are in rapid decline. While insects might be at the bottom of the food chain, they play a significant role as a source of food for many other animals and a key role as pollinators. Additionally, they play a crucial role in the processing of organic waste. According to Oliver Milman, 'for the majority of humanity, the loss of insects would be an agonising ordeal eclipsing any war and even rivalling the looming ravages of climate breakdown'.[37] 'As insects become more scarce', Dave Goulson suggests, 'our world will slowly grind to a halt, for it cannot function without them'.[38] It is both troubling and ironic then, that one solution to food poverty and environmental crisis has been the suggestion that eating insects rather than those creatures currently commodified and consumed as 'meat', would be preferable. 'Mini-livestock' farming has been developing in poorer regions, but is also an emergent trend in Europe and North America.[39] In short, western anthropodenial contributes to crises at the macro and micro levels. At the macro level anthropogenic climate change has led to the sixth great extinction,[40] which potentially includes our own species. At the micro level different species are regarded as resources rather than species with which we share the planet, and such instrumentalism can imbricate certain species (such as animals raised for food) in global networks predicated on animal exploitation.

The dualism between humans and nature has been reproduced within the social sciences, which have traditionally considered human activity to the exclusion of the rest of nature. This notion is starting to change with the emergence of various posthuman, new

materialist, critical animal studies perspectives.[41] International Relations, as a discipline, has been relatively immune to these developments, though there are signs that this is changing with several writers drawing on ideas and concepts developed in other areas.[42]

For example, a significant contribution to such thinking is Milja Kurki's call for the development of a relational International Relations.[43] Confronting the possible demise of our species, Kurki argues that we 'seem unable not only to productively tackle our condition, but also to grasp it'.[44] The discipline of International Relations remains wedded to the human 'reality' of a sharp distinction between human and more-than-human worlds while ignoring 'the real', of the inseparability of human life with the rest of nature. Very few articles and texts within the discipline engage with the more than human world, apart from discussions of the actions of governments and international organisations in confronting environmental issues, despite calls for, and contributions to, the poshumanising of International Relations. We argue that this is problematic because it ignores a fundamental reality, and leads to conclusions that fail to engage with the central issues we confront. Ignoring human animality really does 'matter'.

COVID-19: *The Revenge of the Real?*

The starting point for Benjamin Bratton's discussion of the lessons we might learn from the recent/ongoing pandemic is that the COVID-19 represents the *Revenge of the Real.*[45] Here there is an overlap with the earlier distinction Timothy Morton discussed between a human perceived 'reality' and the ecological symbiotic 'real'. 'So much philosophy', Bratton argues, 'failed the pandemic's test'; because it had failed to see that 'entanglement is baseline, not the exception'.[46] The pandemic has revealed the gap between the human perception of separation from the rest of nature and the actuality of the human situation as a part of nature. The dramatic impact of the pandemic demonstrates the links between the human animal, the behaviour of that animal and the relations with the rest of nature. While the source of the virus remains unclear, the current balance of scientific opinion is that the origin is in animal (probably a bat) to human transmission of some kind.[47]

The spread of the virus represents an extreme example of the 'butterfly effect'. In Lorenz's original formulation was the claim that a butterfly flapping its wings in Brazil could result in a tornado in Texas.[48] In complexity thinking, systems interact in a non-linear fashion, meaning that minor effects can lead to disproportionate outcomes.[49] Lorenz's butterfly flapping its wings merely led to a tornado in Texas. The jumping of a virus between animal hosts (human and not) resulted in the shutting down of large parts of the global economy, political upheaval, and to-date a recorded 533 million cases of infection and 6.3 million deaths.[50]

The COVID-19 pandemic is an example of zoonotic spillover. Zoonotic spillover refers to the 'transmission of a pathogen from a vertebrate animal to a human'.[51] Zoonotic spillover is not a new phenomenon; previous examples include rabies, bubonic plague and HIV. Zoonotic viruses are ones that exist in the rest of nature and make the crossover into the human species. We can expect an increase in such transmissions as humans encroach increasingly on the few remaining wild spaces on the planet. With increasing pressure on the rest of nature, it is no surprise that viruses cross over to humans. The impact of human incursions into the rest of nature, David Quammen notes, has the result that 'when the

trees fall and the native animals are slaughtered, the native germs fly like dust'.[52] Furthermore, the rate at which zoonotic spillover is occurring appears to be accelerating. Recent examples include Nipah, West Nile, Ebola, Zika and MERS. Even in the pre-COVID-19 pandemic period, it has been noted that 'infectious diseases are emerging globally at an unprecedented rate'.[53]

As noted, most experts think it is likely that COVID-19 started with cross-infection between bats and humans. Bats are a fascinating species concerning viruses. There are over 1,200 species of bat, and bats have existed for 6.5 million years. Bats are host to many viruses, and it is possible that their long evolutionary experience has enabled them to develop resistance to particular infections. As bats are gregarious creatures, viruses are likely to spread within a population at very high rates. However, they tend not to get sick. One explanation proffered for this is that as the only flying mammal, their body temperature is much higher than other mammals.[54] However, as bat habitats have been increasingly encroached upon and lost, bat populations have become stressed and they have come into closer contact with humans. In these circumstances, bats appear to shed more pathogens. Research suggests that there is a link between biodiversity loss and zoonotic spillover. Felicia Keesing and Richard Ostfeld, in their analysis of the data, argue that 'biodiversity loss has been shown to often increase the risk of zoonotic disease'.[55] In addition, the case of COVID-19, as with other recent zoonotic pandemics such as avian and swine flu, MERS and Ebola, is an illustration of how human social practices and our use and abuse of other species through farming and hunting is generative of conditions where zoonotic disease might be nurtured.[56] It is then, a pertinent illustration of how the position of human exceptionalism and exploitative practices treating other creatures and organic spaces as resources for human exploitation have led to unanticipated harms, both for humans and for other animals.[57]

The virus is also a pertinent reminder of human animality. In particular, the vulnerability of the human body to viruses contracted from other species. Humans are animals, co-existing with other critters and not immune to the implications of sharing space. Rather than the separation of the human, the pandemic is a reminder that, as with the other species we share the planet with, the human body is not immune to viruses which other species host. While the dominant responses, particularly of governments of the global north, were focused on COVID-19 as a health crisis, to be addressed medically, we, along with others, have argued that COVID was more significant and more troubling than this alone. Rather, it brought into question the exploitation of other animals and nature more broadly, which has not been factored in to responses to COVID-19 by Western national governments or international organisations, and which means on-going vulnerability to zoonotic spillover.[58] It could be suggested that recently feted 'One Health' approaches address linkages between 'animal', 'human' and 'environmental' heath. However, this has been the subject of feminist and posthumanist critique as an approach which is humancentric, Eurocentric and bound up with human-animal boundary maintenance.[59]

COVID-19 pandemic has also had implications for domestic politics, international politics and the distribution of wealth across the planet. Oxfam has described the pandemic as 'the inequality virus' as it increased the already massive power disparity between the richest and poorest on the planet. Furthermore, it has highlighted inequalities in access

to healthcare at national and international levels. 'Vaccine nationalism', the practice of hoarding vaccines within one territory, has deprived many people of access to the vaccine.[60] According to Oxfam, 'the coronavirus pandemic has the potential to lead to an increase in inequality in almost every country at once, the first time this has happened since records began. The virus has exposed, fed off and increased existing inequalities of wealth, gender and race'.[61]

The pandemic has also had significant implications for geopolitics, as noted by a number of human-centred analyses. Fareed Zakaria highlighted the interconnected character of global politics and the potential for disruption due to the pandemic. He argued that 'we are in the early stages of what is going to become a series of cascading crises'.[62] Francis Fukuyama has argued that the pandemic has acted as a 'global stress test', from which some countries have emerged better than others. Based on the historical record, he fears, in the aftermath of the pandemic, the emergence of extreme cults, fascism being a possible example.[63] Even committed liberal internationalist John Ikenberry is pessimistic about the immediate future, considering that the pandemic 'will accelerate the fragmentation and breakdown of global order, hastening the descent into nationalism, great-power rivalry, and strategic decoupling'.[64] The Economist Intelligence Unit considers that three main developments will be evident. First, it will make apparent China's increasing global role and the spheres of influence that it has already started to develop. Secondly, it will accelerate existing trends concerning the rivalry between the United States and China and signal the shift in economic power away from the US and Europe toward Asia. Finally, it will lead to unpredictable changes in the relationships between the developed and developing world and between Europe and China.[65]

Jean-Paul Cabestan argues that, while in the initial phases, the government in Beijing had hoped for an increase in international cooperation, the outcome was increased tensions. Instead of 'bringing together nations to fight against a common evil, such as the battle against climate change arguably succeeded in doing in Glasgow in November 2021 (COP26), the pandemic has contributed to making competition prevail even more over cooperation in the context of a growing rivalry and perhaps a new Cold War between China and the US and, more broadly, China and the West'.[66] The pandemic has not resulted in a total reconfiguration of the international system, but it has increased the stresses, and accelerated features that were starting to emerge, mainly related to the US's relations with China, and China's increasingly assertive role in global politics. While many of these issues at a global level pre-date the pandemic, the virus has had an impact which has affected multiple levels. In other words, human relations with the rest of nature provide the context for a series of geopolitical developments.

A series of events related to human encroachments on the rest of nature, and the transmission of a virus between one animal species and another resulted in radical developments in international politics, which we cannot understand if we deny the animality of the actors involved.

The animality of the actors in International Relations

The question of who acts in international relations has long persisted in the discipline. All first-year undergraduates know that for realists, states are the central actors; for

liberals, there is a broader spectrum of actors, and some may know that for Marxists the starting point is global capitalism. The Western philosophical tradition and the view in much of the social sciences remains committed to the Cartesian vision of humans having agency with the rest of nature being inert, and acted upon. In both critical and mainstream traditions of International Relations, the actors are human individuals (politicians, diplomats) or organisations in which collective actors are human (NGOs, international organisations, militaries) or systems of relations which are generally understood to be human exclusive (such as colonial or capitalist relational systems). Yet as we suggested above, the human actors in these organisations and relations are animals, albeit in denial of their animality. Recent work in and beyond the new materialism has suggested however, that there are non-human actors and actants at work in international relations.

That there may be agency beyond the human has been a central claim across the many varieties of posthumanism/new materialism. Well-known examples are Actor Network Theory, primarily associated with Bruno Latour, Jane Bennett's vital materialism, and the increasingly influential agential realism associated with Karen Barad.[67] All of these have been criticised for producing flat ontologies with little or no differentiation between types of actors and no acknowledgement of the significance of power.[68] Several writers have suggested that non-humans actants should be considered within International Relations. For example, Stephanie Fishel argues for the 'actancy' of trees and forests as the subjects of international politics (in protective agreements necessary to safeguard forests for planetary survival), as imbricated in human movements for alter-colonial development (in tree planting, for example) and that trees themselves stand as metaphors for more productive multispecies communities.[69]

However, some caution might be exercised in extending notions of agency and in presenting the non-human as 'guides' for the human. Arguments have long been made that 'nature' might show humans what they are or what they might be. Michael Marder's provocation to 'plant thinking', for example, considers understanding vegetal life to be potentially profoundly disruptive for humancentrist understandings of the world and offers ways to understand species symbiosis. This in our view, is both a facetious attempt to undermine animal rights discourse (for example, by extending Western philosophical arguments for sentience, to plants) and provides a romanticised view of the world of plants as guides for human behaviour (where plants are understood as convivial partners).[70] We consider that in order to account for questions of agency beyond the human we need to differentiate what might be appropriate for different kinds of intervention and very different beings-in-relation. To this end in previous work, we made a distinction between three different forms of agency.[71] These provide the means to think about agency beyond the focus on the human in ways that are more differentiated and inclusive than some understandings of animal as political actors.[72] *Reproductive agency* refers to the patterns of relations in which human and non-human actors find themselves whereby their actions reproduce existing social structures. No actors (animals, both human and not) exist outside of an existing structure, and actions sometimes with minor differences have the effect of reproducing those actions. Within these structures there are, of course, many differences in terms of access to power. However, there are also possibilities of resisting the structures. *Transformative agency* relates to more traditional notions of agency, focussing on struggles over distribution of resources. While one might primarily see this

as a human-centred conception of agency, more than human actors may also be involved. Finally, *affective agency* is the agency of emergent natural systems to 'make a difference' in the world and be beyond human control, this can involve non-human species, beings and things.

For some, such as Michel Serres, the Earth is no longer 'fixed and immemorial', but is a 'subject once again'.[73] Serres' conception of the earth as a 'subject' could be a prime example of our notion of affective agency. Yet seeing earth as subject is also tricky, as it invites human comparison. While James Lovelock's well-known Gaia hypothesis used the name of the ancient Greek Earth goddess, Lovelock was very clear that this was a descriptor for the way in which the multi-levelled biological systems of the earth have self-regulatory negative feedback loops that keep conditions on planet Earth favourable to life.[74] Peter Frankopan's recent work highlights that when civilisations collapse it is frequently linked to environmental changes.[75] While Serres is accurate in his claim that the earth is not 'fixed and immemorial', this was never the case. As we move further into the epoch known as the Anthropocene, agency beyond the human is becoming more and more evident. Yet, drawn to complexity understandings of the lifeworld as a complex system, we would say however, that the Earth is a living system, not a subject. What is playing out is an unpredictable series of overlapping processes which ultimately do not include an intention.

Our three-way consideration of agency has similarities with another recent attempt to engage with questions of agency beyond the human. Clive Hamilton makes a distinction between the agency of non-human actors that have 'consequences' even if no intentions, actors that have *purposes* (in other words sentience beyond the human), and actors that have *intentions* in the sense that they can reflect on their actions, for Hamilton a primarily human capacity. He draws a distinction between 'choice, no choice, and the capacity to make considered choices'.[76] How then might we consider the 'animality of the actors in International Relations'? At the most basic level, animalisation is a slippery category and it is important to recognise that its application might have devasting consequences for both non-human and human communities; while the involvement of non-human animals in human political practices, or as the often disposable victims of human political decisions is a further vital step.[77] The most significant challenge is to see the majority of the actors in International Relations as either a particular kind of dominant animal (humans, as politicians, diplomats, soldiers, international NGO workers) or as systems resultant from the relations of these animals with others of their own kind (such as international organisations composed through intra-animal relations) or as relational systems within which all kinds of species are entangled.

What do such arguments mean for the Earth system and the multiple systems of which it is constituted? In previous work we have suggested the Anthropocene is conceptually humancentred, and that concepts such as the Capitalocene or Plantationocene better capture the ways dominant human systems of social organisation (and appropriation and extractivism) have disturbed the regulatory mechanisms of system Earth and imperilled all kinds of creatures and forms of life as a result.[78] However, Donna Haraway's conception of our current epoch as Chthulucene captures the agency of beings, things, systemic processes, networks of relations and so on, very effectively. For Haraway, the Chthulucene is the where humanity, and Western ways of being human in the world are challenged by

the powers of the earth in monstrous times of spiralling ecological devastation and species extinction. However, within this, agency of all creatures can be mobilised as the human, nonhuman animals and other beings and things are inextricably linked. These relations mean that we can and must engage with other beings and things, getting along better with them in 'staying with the trouble' of making life on a damaged planet. As she puts it: 'We become – with each other or not at all'.[79]

Returning to the point that the view of solely human agency is only a recent development, indigenous scholars have shown annoyance that Latour, Bennett and Barad are regarded as original thinkers, whereas what they are arguing has been knowledge to indigenous communities for thousands of years. For example, Jerry Lee Rosiek, Jimmy Snyder, and Scott Pratt argue that 'Indigenous thinkers and scholars developed ideas about non-human agency thousands of years earlier than contemporary philosophers of science'.[80] While acknowledging that there are many different paths to knowledge, indigenous scholars find it problematic that other scholars seldom reference their work on more-than-human agency. One example is the work of the Michigan Saagiig Nishnaabeg scholar Leanne Betasamosake Simpson.[81] Simpson has a markedly different understanding of international relations from conventional thinking. As opposed to a territorial understanding based on state sovereignty, the view is one of multiple networks sharing the same space. Simpson argues that for the Nishnaabeg, 'internationalism has always been a part of our intellectual practices'.[82] These practices acknowledge a shared responsibility, respect and relationships with more-than-human entities. Internationalism is understood as a

> series of radiating relationships with plant nations, animal nations, insects, bodies of water, air, soil, and spiritual beings in addition to the indigenous nations with whom we share parts of our territory. Indigenous internationalism isn't just between peoples. It is created and maintained with all living beings.[83]

Simpson gives an example of this internationalism related to relations with the deer nation. At one point, deer, a substantial part of the Nishnaabeg diet, disappeared from the territory. After various adventures, a group of ambassadors met up with the representatives of the deer nation. The latter complained that they had not been treated with respect. 'The Nishnaabeg were no longer honouring them. They had been wasting their meat and not treating their bodies with proper respect'. As a result, the deer nation had decided not to participate in relations with the Nishnaabeg. The Nishnaabeg ambassadors listened to the representatives of the deer nation for several days. They then made promises to uphold their respect for the deer nation by agreeing to carry out ceremonies every time they took an animal. Following the agreement, the deer nation returned. The story represents an account of the way relations are understood with the more-than-human. 'There is an assumption on the part of the Nishnaabeg that the deer have language, thought and spirit-intellect, and that intellect is different than the intellect of the Nishnaabeg because they live in the world in a different manner than the Nishnaabeg, and they therefore generate different meaning'.[84]

Such alternate cosmologies influence but are not acknowledged in Western political writing on human relations with other animals. As such, they engage in 'ontological

capture' – undermine the radical potential of alternate cosmologies and ultimately reinscribing Western understandings of the world.[85] For Sue Donaldson and Will Kymlica, wild animal populations, such as deer, might be understood as 'sovereign nations' with territorial boundaries that are shared and overlapping with other creatures, including humans.[86] Yet this does not capture the fundamentally *relational* quality of the encounter described by Simpson. 'Interspecies relations', says Rafi Youatt, 'is not just a human understanding of the world (although it is that) but is also an effort to map very material and biological human-non-human relations'.[87] In the mapping of such relations, we would want to argue that animalising International Relations should be characterised by a more fundamental disruption to humanist categories and assumptions. Below, we raise the question of how disruptive this might be for a discipline called International Relations, and whether if it were animalised, it would be International Relations at all.

Animalising International Relations: Five recommendations

In this final section we return to the question with which we began – 'What could animalising International Relations possibly mean?' We consider that there are five aspects in which International Relations might animalise. Some of these are more challenging for disciplinary norms than others. Before we outline these, it is helpful to take account of where International Relations 'is', and here, the charting of the inclusion of animals in Sociology by Bob Carter and Nickie Charles is instructive. Carter and Charles draw on early evaluations of feminism for the transformation of Sociology in order to identify four phases. While they describe them in relation to gender and not nature/species, we would describe these as first, an exclusively human era when nonhuman animals were not a research focus; second, critique of such neglect; third, growth in the number of studies which 'add in' animals; and fourth, full theoretical integration of species into the discipline. They suggest Sociology is between stages two and three, with a critique of the lack of attention to non-human animals on the one hand, and a burgeoning interest in human-animal relations and the growth of the interdisciplinary field of human-animal studies on the other.[88] They do not presume the smooth progression of integration however. Certainly, some consider such work to be marginalised and perhaps career-damaging. Rhoda Wilkie, for example, describes sociological animal studies as 'tainted scholarship' and far from the mainstream.[89] On such an axis, where might International Relations be placed? We consider that the discipline has been subject to critique and of 'adding in', although both these developments have taken place to a lesser degree than elsewhere in the Social Sciences.[90] We are far from full integration, and while this Special Issue is a contribution and a statement for inclusion, we think considering non-human animals as worthy of scholarship is likely to remain at the margins for some time to come. In this context, in what ways might International Relations be animalised?

First, International Relations might add non-human animals into empirical scholarship – as actors/actants, as victims of human violences both fast and slow, as subjects for consideration in human-centred political organisations at various levels. In doing so, it might think about soldiers and security agents, forced migrants and victims of war as not exclusively human and so on. *Second*, scholarship might seek to develop existent political concepts in less anthropocentric ways, a conceptual additional approach.

Importantly, this also requires the understanding of humans as animals, and thinking about the implications of this for future scholarship. *Third*, the reimagining of International Relations must engage with the intersected hierarchies of differences in the here and now, including interrogating human privilege and supremacy. As a consequence, *fourth*, International Relations might transform itself by being open to radical relationality in the sense suggest by Haraway and far more recently by Milja Kurki. For Kurki, taking relationality seriously is revolutionary for the discipline because it enables the necessary conversations to be had on posthumanism, decoloniality, ethics, science and democracy.[91] Following on from this, *fifth*, in an entangled and relational International Relations, more pluriversal understandings and practices are required.[92] These three latter possibilities, in our view, are all both necessary and interlinked. The pluriverse cannot be *pluralist* as not all words in the worlding world are equally nourishing of flourishing, or even, of survival. Accepting relatedness is neither fixed or uncontested – there are multiple new materialisms, multiplicities of the pluriverse and multiple barriers based on extractions and exploitations. The question is *what* worlds build liveable worlds; and *how* do they? We now elaborate on these five potential avenues for the 'animalising' of international relations as a field and International Relations as a discipline.

The first two approaches to animalising international relations/International Relations might be seen as *additive approaches*. The *first* way in which non-animals might be 'added in' should be relatively uncontroversial – they simply need to be recognised as affecting of, being affected by and as agential beings within the practices of diplomacy, security, trade and warfare. They can be included as victims of development, of terrorism or of climate change and pollution, they might be the subjects or the providers of international aid. International Relations as stands is incomplete without the inclusion of the rest of nature. The additive approach has the benefit of accounting for absences and omissions, such as the significant role which animals have played historically in the conduct of warfare, for example,[93] or the ways in which companion dogs (and indeed other animals) are imbricated into political performance – such as the dogs of the White House.[94]

The *second* approach – conceptual extension – is also an additive approach. However, there are fierce debates on the usefulness of extending existent political concepts to include nonhuman animals. They are fraught because the question of what it means to be human is up for debate, and the dangers of anthropomorphising animals in order to include them in categories such as rights and sovereignty are strong.[95] Nevertheless, one way of animalising International Relations is through the extensions of political concepts and categories such as rights, justice, community, cosmopolitanism and so on. In addition, as feminist scholarship has found, simply adding another dimension of life or experience or a different group into the frame, is not straightforward, because what we are looking at changes with the addition of multiple lens, frames and objects of study.[96] Multiple forms of exclusion combine in unpredictable ways and therefore the examination of mutual constitution has also proved difficult in feminist research using an intersectional framework.[97]

In this paper we have suggested that a relational approach to international relations might account for a very diverse array of 'actors', but that their acting needs to be reconceptualised in a tripartite way. This indicates the need for a *transformative* approach,

rather than adding animals into the scope of International Relations scholarship. There are three ways in which we consider that such transformation might be achieved.

The first of these, our *third* recommended way for animalising International Relations, is by recognising human privilege and dominance, and the ways this is bound up with the constitution of intersected intra-human domination and the dominant understanding of what it means to be human. Critical International Relations scholarship has given attention to the ways international relations are classed, gendered and racialised and has researched the impact of development, international trade and colonialism have generated and sustained human inequalities at various levels. Considering the hierarchy of species and the ways these map into/onto exclusions/expulsions/appropriations, should be a task to which critical International Relations scholarship is open. Yet as elsewhere in the social sciences, even critical scholarship has held fast to the species barrier, 'drawing the line' that is rarely breached, between human and other animals.[98] Forms of privilege, like those of domination and oppression function in ways which make them hard to discern – or at least, for the privileged. Drawing on privilege theory, Simon Springer argues that the predominant social science imagination, even in critical scholarship, remains 'firmly rooted in prioritizing the emancipation of humans in human spaces for human usages'.[99] Wrestling with human privilege and acknowledging human domination – or anthroparchy – is key for critical scholarship to admit 'the animal'.[100] In addition to acknowledging privilege and power, we have argued that taking seriously the idea that humans are animals really does matter. Taking on board the human status as an earth-bound creature in webs of dependencies with others means that our understanding of the world shifts. Bruno Latour goes as far as to suggest we abandon the human as a category altogether, and we are allied with both Latour and Haraway, in positing that we are terrans, of the earth.[101] Latour's chosen term for humans is terrestrials or 'the Earthbound' and thinking like a terrestrial, he argues, leads to a very different perspective on the world in which the key political question for terrestrials is 'discovering how many *other beings* they need in order to subsist'.[102] This then, is about relationality in a deep sense. A sense that specifies that we are co-constituted and interdependent.

This brings us to the *fourth* axis of animalising International Relations – radical relationality. Critical scholarship has operated with different kinds of relational ontology. An analysis of the traditional Western approach to knowledge would point to the following elements: culture/nature dualism positing a sharp divide between the human species and the rest of nature; an appeal to scientism as the final arbiter of truth, assuming the possibility of a value-neutral account of the world while rejecting other forms of knowledge transmissions, especially oral traditions; and a view of progress wherein there is a linear notion of time, and societies move through various stages each one more advanced than the last.[103] A central issue is related to the context in which, in European thought, the world is understood in terms of a division between culture and the rest of nature. Indigenous scholars, Marie Battiste and James Henderson argue, 'view every way of life from two different but complementary perspectives: first as a manifestation of human knowledge, heritage and consciousness, and second as a mode of ecological order'.[104] Certainly, there is a need for respectful engagement with indigenous epistemologies in the development of new materialist perspectives. What interests us, however, is that this is an increasingly important conversation that is burgeoning in International Relations scholarship, certainly

as evidenced in some conference panels. Our hope is that such conversations will be transformative of the scope and ways of knowing within the social sciences. This is vital, we think, in overcoming the 'ontological parochialism' of the dominant narratives of International Relations.[105] We prefer the term 'cosmology' when considering different ways of knowing, which encompasses a broader range of beliefs, ideas, and ways of living based on the experiences from day-to-day existence and which are captured by the notion of the 'pluriverse'. Alternate cosmologies, are characterised by both diversity and *situatedness*; resisting what Haraway has famously referred to as 'the god trick'.[106] The 'view from above' which underpins the 'scientific', 'rationalist' epistemes of modernity has considerable ethico-political consequences because it hides a very specific position (male, white, heterosexual, colonising, human) and renders all other positions invalid and subjective, thereby erasing the subjectivity and presence of alternate understandings of the world. It is, as Haraway puts it, 'a conquering gaze from nowhere'.[107]

This is compatible with the adoption of a critical perspective on species hierarchy and human domination and in our view, is a *fifth* element we would recommend for the animalising of International Relations. Early articulations of the notion of the pluriverse by Mignolo suggest a challenge to the hegemony of a western epistemology and allows us 'to imagine epistemic diversality (or pluriversality) and to understand the limits of the abstract-universals that have dominated the imaginary of the modern/colonial world'.[108] Mignolo goes to some lengths to argue that this is not a relativist position, and is not one that rejects universal claims. Rather it is 'the rejection of universality understood as an abstract universal grounded in a mono-logic'.[109] This is certainly not to cede to a relativist epistemology – as feminisms of various kinds have pointed out, rather, this is a false logic for

> the alternative to relativism is not totalization and single vision [. . .]. The alternative to relativism is partial, locatable, critical knowledges sustaining the possibility of webs of connections called solidarity in politics and shared conversations in epistemology. Relativism is a way of being nowhere while claiming to be everywhere equally. The 'equality' of positioning is a denial of responsibility and critical inquiry.[110]

It is also no accident, in our view, that Mignolo's conception of the pluriverse was influenced by the work of complexity biologist Humberto Maturana and his conception of the 'multiverse'. In contrast to the universe as a world built on truth without parentheses – unqualified, unconditional – the multiverse is plural, multiple and dialogic.[111] Ultimately, within pluriverses there is no definitive position on relationality between species. However, in our view, some are more hospitable to such thinking and we would encourage International Relations theorists to engage with such perspectives. In much of our work to date, we have drawn on complexity frameworks to suggest the co-constitution of worlds in ways that question human positionality and emphasise the co-constitution of people and of 'society' with multiple species and things. In developing the position of complex ecologism we argued that there are multiple axes of domination through which exclusions, expulsions, extractions and violences operate.[112] More recently, we have suggested the need for a critique of Western notions of 'the human' and Western understandings of civilisation and progress drawing on altercolonial, feminist and critical perspectives in political ecologism and animal studies.[113]

The final three of these five recommendations – critique of species hierarchy, radical relationality and pluriversal engagement – challenge the discipline of International Relations in significant ways, ethically, ontologically and of course, epistemologically. These are not new challenges. Rather, there are parallels with the ways in which feminist and postcolonial scholarship has pushed International Relations to broaden its scope and vocabulary. An emphasis on relationality pushes the discipline in diverse and historically unconventional directions. There is however a further question which raises fundamental issues concerning epistemology and disciplinary coherence. Does a stress on relationality operate at the expense of the notion of the 'international'? As many scholars writing about environmental crisis before him, Latour also wishes to abandon the concept of territory, for dwelling. What would International Relations look like without territories and regions in relation? Ultimately, the challenge of animalising International Relations raises the question as to whether we should any longer be speaking of 'the international' or the kinds of political, economic and cultural relations between territories and regions. International Relations is a discipline human-exclusive from its foundations.[114] There have been recent defences of the 'international', alleging that without it, there will be no discipline of International Relations. Rejecting what he sees as the inevitably 'hybrid' approaches of posthumanist IR and drawing on Justin Rosenberg's (2017) conception of the international as 'the consequence of societal multiplicity', Olaf Corry has argued that we might integrate humans with nature in International Relations by understanding the existence of 'a multiplicity of societies, each in metabolic exchange with its environment'.[115] In our own work, we have tried to understand the 'international' as series of complex international systems in an attempt to move away from the traditional disciplinary focus on states.[116] Yet Corry's endorsement of Rosenberg's understanding of 'the political that generates societal multiplicity by dividing the world into multiple units'[117] sounds very much like an endorsement of the traditional definition of the international. That is, as meaning involvement of, interaction between or encompassing more than one nation, or beyond nation-state boundaries. While alternatives to the term international have attendant difficulties, it maybe that revisiting, reconceptualising and perhaps renaming the international is also a necessary posthumanist task since this is arguably the defining focus of our discipline.[118]

Conclusion

While International Relations as a discipline has an anthropocentric origin, history and present, international relations as practice and process involves a wide array of species, with different properties and powers and excising different kinds of agency – affective, reproductive and transformative. We have argued that it is highly dangerous, for humans, other animals and for the non-human living world, that International Relations has been dominated by an animal which does not think it is an animal, and which has long tried to sustain both separation from and domination over the non-human animate lifeworld.

In answering the question of how and why International Relations might be animalised, we have offered five recommendations. We strongly hope readers will at least be open to the conservative suggestion of 'adding in' the nonhuman animals that make up international relations as it is practiced. We would also hope however, that some will be

persuaded that we must take the human animal seriously, and that critical scholarship might check its anthroprivilege and become more inclusive in addressing human domination and its intersections with intra-human oppression and domination. Reimagining how, in 'advanced' societies, we can reconfigure relations with each other and the multiplicitous critters with whom we are constituted is the key ethico-political challenge of this century and we consider that the revolution of relationality in International Relations is a vital component of this task. Western feminism has long been engaged in developing its own epistemological innovations that enable silenced voices to be heard and overlooked people, beings and things to be recognised. Feminist epistemology has developed through grappling with multiple challenges of difference. Thus Raewyn Connell has recently suggested, in response to the pluriverse, that a 'mosaic epistemology' is required that is open to context, specificity and difference.[119] Certainly an array of alternative perspectives have much to say about imagining worlds differently and contain rich sources for developing different visions and ways of being which challenge imperial human logics. Multispecies collaborations will be key in learning to live on a damaged planet.

Is this too much to ask? Are the risks of the animal challenge – unpacking and unpicking, reconceptualising and perhaps reinventing International Relations – too great to bear? We would say there is much to gain. Primarily this is the development of a less partial and more inclusive discipline that is better equipped to respond to the challenges of the Anthropocene/Capitalocene and its others, and can be more open to interdisciplinarity by understanding the human as animal.

Funding

The author(s) received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

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Notes

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2. Timothy Morton, *Humankind: Solidarity with Nonhuman People* (London: Verso, 2017), p. 122.
3. Neil Shubin, *Your Inner Fish: The Amazing Discovery of our 375-Million-Year-Old Ancestor* (London: Penguin Books), p. 182.
4. Alison Abbott, 'Scientists Bust Myth that our Bodies Have More Bacteria than Human Cells', *Nature*, 8 January 2016. DOI: 10.1038/nature.2016.19136.
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6. Travis Holloway, *How to Live at the End of the World: Theory, Art and Politics for the Anthropocene* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2022), p. 76. An exception to this would be the work of the Annales School, and particularly the work of Fernand Braudel. See Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II* (2 volumes) (London: Fontana, 1975).

7. In using the term cosmology, we draw on the work of Jairus Grove, who also uses the terms 'forms of life' to mean 'not just a diversity of opinions about the universe but distinctive practices of tilling the earth, water management, creativity, revolutionary thinking, aquaculture, human-animal ecologies, as well as political and ethical practices'. Jairus Grove, *Savage Ecology: War and Geopolitics at the End of the World* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2019), p. 56. Also see, Giorgio Shani, 'IR as Inter-Cosmological Relations?', *International Politics Reviews*, 9(2), 2021, pp. 306–12.
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11. Arne Johan Vetlesen, *Cosmologies of the Anthropocene: Pansyschism, Animism, and the Limits of Posthumanism* (London: Routledge, 2019), p. 155.
12. See Matthew Cole and Kate Stewart, *Our Children and Other Animals* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2014).
13. Vetlesen, *Cosmologies of the Anthropocene*, p. 219.
14. Erica Fudge, 'Two Ethics: Killing Animals in the Past and in the Present', in The Animal Studies Group, *Killing Animals* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2006), pp. 99–119.
15. James Bridle, *Ways of Being: Beyond Human Intelligence* (London: Allen Lane, 2022), p. 253.
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17. Decartes argued that there were two aspects to reality, *res cogitans*, an incorporeal mind or soul, and *res extensa*, in effect everything else. For Descartes only humans experienced *res cogitans*, and to be more accurate only a certain subset of humanity (ie not women or non-Europeans). While dualism as an explanation of consciousness is now limited to a minority of proponents, the distinction between humanity and the rest of nature remains a central element of Western thinking. For a clear discussion of Cartesian dualism see John Hawthorne, 'Cartesian Dualism', in Peter van Inwagen and Dean Zimmerman (eds), *Persons: Human and Divine* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 87–98.
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21. Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical Fragments* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2002), p. 2.
22. Horkheimer and Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, p. 2.
23. Cited in Detlev Claussen, *Theodor W. Adorno: One Last Genius* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008), p. 240.
24. There is a considerable literature here, including for example Carolyn Merchant's historical account *The Death of Nature: Women, Ecology and the Scientific Revolution* (San Francisco, CA: Harper and Row, 1980) and Greta Gaard (ed.), *Ecofeminism: Women, Animals, Nature* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1993) through to more recent work reflecting the

development of established concerns and new areas of intersectional scholarship, for example Erika Cudworth, Ruth E. McKie and Di Turgoose (eds), *Feminist Animal Studies: Theories, Practices, Politics* (London and New York: Routledge, 2023). Contributions to this collection demonstrate the longevity of concern for animals in feminist scholarship and activism.

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26. Frans de Waal, *Are We Smart Enough to Know How Smart Animals Are?* (London: Granta, 2016).
27. Frans de Waal, *Are We Smart Enough*?, p. 3.
28. Frans de Waal, *Are We Smart Enough*?, p. 25.
29. Peter Godfrey-Smith, *Other Minds: The Octopus and the Evolution of Intelligent Life* (London: William Collins, 2017), p. 9.
30. Godfrey-Smith, *Other Minds*, p. 51.
31. Morton, *Humankind*, p. 13.
32. We are the multicellular, heterotrophic, motile, respiring 'animals' biology would have us be, and with that, comes our organic interrelations and dependencies.
33. The term 'Anthropocene' has entered the mainstream to indicate the disastrous impact of (some) humans on the rest of nature. The first appearance in print is Paul Crutzen and Eugene Stoermer, 'The Anthropocene', *IGBT Newsletter*, 41, 2000, pp. 17–8. We have misgivings about the term, briefly summarised in reference removed for anonymity. Since 2000 a number of alternates have emerged, which point to forms of social organisation or production, or sub-sections of humanity. For example, capitalocene, Jason Moore, *Capitalism in the Web of Life: Ecology and the Accumulation of Capital* (London: Verso, 2015); plantationocene, Donna Haraway, Noboru Ishikawa, Scott F. Gilbert, Kenneth Olwig, et al., 'Anthropologists Are Talking – About the Anthropocene', *Ethnos*, 81(3), 2016, pp. 535–64; eurocene, Jairus Grove, *Savage Ecology: War and Geopolitics at the End of the World* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2019).
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38. Dave Goulson, *Silent Earth: Averting the Insect Apocalypse* (London: Vintage, 2022), p. 4.
39. Rhoda Wilkie, '"Minilivestock" Farming: Who is Farming Edible Insects in Europe and North America?', *Journal of Sociology*, 54(4), 2018, pp. 520–37.
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41. See for example Nik Taylor and Richard Twine (eds), *The Rise of Critical Animal Studies* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2014); Rosi Braidotti, *The Posthuman* (Cambridge: Polity, 2013); Stephanie R. Fishel, *The Microbial State* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018); Nigel Clark and Bronislaw Szerszynski, *Planetary Social Thought: The Anthropocene Challenge to the Social Sciences* (Cambridge: Polity, 2020); Alexis Pauline Gumbs, *Undrowned: Black Feminist Lessons from Marine Life* (Edinburgh: AK Press, 2020).
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