**Returning to the Animal:**

***The Christian Discourses* and the Refusal of the Future**

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**Abstract**. This essay offers a reading of Kierkegaard’s discourses on the lily and the birds (from Matthew’s gospel) in dialogue with Heidegger’s exploration of the animal in *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics.* It argues that a critical link can be made between Kierkegaard’s threefold schema of animal, pagan and Christian, and Heidegger’s categorisation of stone, animal and world. No direct connection is posited between these, but they are mutually illuminating in the related but distinct ways they deal with issues of human uniqueness and what it means to relate freely and meaningfully to a world. Both thinkers remain committed to a version of anthropocentrism while trying to disrupt settled notions of what it means to be human; ultimately, however, it is argued that Kierkegaard redirects the attention of the reader in a more radically non-humanistic way.

**Keywords**: Kierkegaard, Heidegger, animal, animality, humanism

‘Paganism forms the opposition to Christianity, but the lily and the bird form no opposition to either of these contending parties – they play outside . . .’[[2]](#footnote-2) (CD 9)

These words are from the introduction to Part One of Kierkegaard’s *Christian Discourses*, which is titled ‘The Cares of the Pagans’. It sets up the threefold structure which organises each of the individual discourses which follow. There is the pagan: full of worldly anxiety and forgetful of God. There is the Christian: freed from such care and lostness by becoming nothing before God. And then we have, taken together, the lily and the bird: characters from the gospel text of Matthew chapter 6, whose role is to be our teachers.

The lily and the bird are unusual teachers. They do not address us directly; rather we are repeatedly urged to look at them, to consider them, to pay attention to them. More radically, of course, they seem to be so far below the level of human religious striving that having them in such a text appears to be a joke. The introduction explicitly recognises this – and, later, Kierkegaard calls the lily and the bird a ‘superfluity’.[[3]](#footnote-3)

This threefold structure, then – pagan, Christian, lily and bird – is an unusual one. Is it a hierarchy, a progression, a dialectic? However we define such things, the lily and bird do not seem to fit: they are outside opposition. They do not work by any logic of comparison. And, of course, this is partly the point: these are teachers of the good news that we do not need to live by the rules of craving and anxiety, which are so rooted in comparison – whether that is comparison between people or between this day and the future.

So: the lily and bird are superfluous. And yet: there is comparison, of a sort. Through paying attention to them, the difference between the pagan and the Christian is thrown into relief. And the superiority of the Christian over the lily and bird is affirmed: what they are by nature, the Christian is by choice.

My aim here, then, is to explore the stakes of this tension: between the lily and bird as beyond all comparison and opposition on the one hand; and, on the other, the way they are still part of drawing distinctions.

I am going to do this in conversation with Heidegger. Now, as we know, Heidegger famously said that there is more to be learned philosophically from Kierkegaard’s edifying writings than his theoretical ones, with the exception of *The Concept of Anxiety*.[[4]](#footnote-4) But I have a more specific thought in mind: and this concerns the role played by nonhuman life in defining what is distinctive about human existence.

Why take this focus? First: I want to argue that what Kierkegaard says about the pagan, the lily/bird and the Christian is echoed by what Heidegger says about the stone, the animal and the human. I am not claiming that there is any direct line of dependency here: but Heidegger’s respect for the edifying discourses is at least suggestive of the possibility that he is drawing on Kierkegaard’s insights for his own work.

If that was all I had to say, it might be of passing academic interest, but no more. So, secondly, I aim to draw out the contrasts and tensions between Kierkegaard and Heidegger, and the reasons for this. And thirdly, I will argue that the animal – here standing for nonhuman life in general – plays an ambiguous role for each thinker. In some ways, both thinkers still want to privilege the possibilities of human existence; but they are both aware that traditional ways of doing this only serve to prop up human delusions about their own superiority, and a refusal to face human despair and craving. They approach the animal, not just to domesticate it, to use it to assert human worth, but in a spirit of attentiveness, of aliveness to the question posed to us by the nonhuman. Both fall back into unreflective ways of thinking which place the human at the centre of the world; but it is ultimately Kierkegaard, I claim, who offers the clearest vision of our way out of this impasse. I will end by sketching out how I think he does this. Contrary to how we might often read Kierkegaard as stressing temporality and striving into an unknown future, I will argue that the lily and bird teach us to refuse the future as the source of our comparative anxiety.

So these three elements will be woven together: first, seeing how Kierkegaard and Heidegger echo one another; second, exploring the differences and tensions; and third arguing for the encounter with the nonhuman as the way out of anxiety.

Very little attention has been paid to Kierkegaard’s attitude to nonhuman creatures. An exception is an article by Darren Zook, which explores the moral status of animals through various tropes in the authorship. My approach here is different, in that I am not focused so much on Kierkegaard’s direct evaluation of animals as his invitation to the reader to encounter their otherness, and so to undermine our presumptions. That said, I share with Zook a concern for the polyvalence of Kierkegaard’s imagery, and echo attention to ‘a persistent and unresolved inconsistency in Kierkegaard’s views on the moral status of nonhuman species that partially compromises the integrity of his larger philosophical projects.’[[5]](#footnote-5)

**Heidegger’s evocation**

The text in which Heidegger explores animality in most detail is *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*.[[6]](#footnote-6) His reason for doing so is to clarify what is meant by the concept of world, and through that to evoke Dasein’s proper mode of being. Straight away, we can see that the animal is being used as a means to an end. But Heidegger is not just going to replicate traditional ways of asserting human superiority over animals. Such an approach would be superficial, treating humans and animals as sets of characteristics which could be quantified. It would reduce them to naturalised objects, and so it would not get to the *Being* of Dasein.[[7]](#footnote-7)

So Heidegger rejects crude forms of anthropocentrism. The animal should be understood on its own terms, in terms of the being essential to it. And this is in keeping with his philosophical approach in this text. He continually rails against the kind of philosophy which is just about writing books which take detached positions about their objects. Instead Heidegger calls us into a fundamental experience. As he puts it, the task of philosophizing is ‘*not to describe the consciousness of man but to evoke the Dasein in man’*. This can only be done through questioning – not the kind of questioning which expects a direct answer, but one which is ‘*capable of keeping this interrogative space open’*.[[8]](#footnote-8)

This is, then, an evocative text: it calls to us. Prior to the long section on animal life, Heidegger has approached his task by exploring boredom. He is not interested in boredom as a merely psychological state, but in what it reveals to us about the nature of Being and our relationship to Being. Boredom is an attunement, a way in which Being resonates within us, even as it refuses to be disclosed to us. At its most profound level, boredom is that state in which beings as a whole refuse themselves to us, but do so in a way which is ‘telling’ – a way which evokes the possibility of our access to being.

This is what leads Heidegger to consider the notion of world, since, in its basic form, the world for any entity is those beings which are accessible to it. And what emerges from this definition is a further set of problems: what does *access* to beings mean or consist of?

In turning to the nonhuman, Heidegger sets aside the phenomenological approach he has taken so far, and opts for a comparative one. The aim is to allow Dasein to be evoked in its essence; this can be done by paying attention to Dasein’s fundamental moods, but also through a kind of comparison, in which the proper essence of Dasein comes to light.

Thus we arrive at the well-known thesis about the stone, the animal and the human. The stone is worldless. The animal is poor in world. The human is world forming. Instantly, before we get into the details of what this means, we seem to have a hierarchy. Perhaps the words are different, but the old philosophical anthropocentrism appears to be at play.[[9]](#footnote-9)

But it is important to recognise that Heidegger genuinely wants to avoid this dogmatic anthropocentrism. And there are two main reasons for this.

First, this is not simply a case of saying humans are rational, animals are not. Rationality and consciousness – at least in the way the philosophical tradition has often defined them – are not the defining attributes of the human as Dasein. The characterisation of the human as conscious rational subject over against an objective world is a metaphysical error. It obscures the fundamental relatedness of Dasein to its world. And it turns beings into mere objects to be grasped and represented by an ego. This image of thought drains existence of its relationality and access to being as such. It is no exaggeration to say that, for Heidegger, it is at the root of Western nihilism.

Secondly, and more positively, Heidegger insists that he is not defining the animal merely in relation to the human, but seeking its own essence. Animality does not need humanity to be what it is. Moreover, keeping the question of animality open also helps us to avoid falling back into dogmatic, reductionist accounts of either animal life or human existence.

Both of these points relate to the basic orientation of Heidegger’s text. While – unusually for him – he engages at some length with biology and zoology, he is not seeking an objective description or analysis of animal and human being. His aim is to clear the space for an evocation, to invite us to be shaken, even terrorised out of our habitual insensitivity to Being.

**Resonances and Tensions**

There are general resonances with Kierkegaard’s discourses here, despite all the obvious differences of form and tone: Kierkegaard too is writing to call us out of a life view which is closed in on itself, lost in inessential chatter, or burdened by the anxiety of passing time. Writing to upbuild, Kierkegaard lacks both detachment and authority. The upbuilding draws us out into self-activity, evokes or awakens a capacity for resolution, for patience, for joy.

However, beyond these generalities, there are more specific connections. As we have seen, Heidegger offers a threefold account of how the beings relate to a world. The stone has no access to world; the human actively forms a world, relates to it as such: it has a hermeneutic of the world. The animal is in a middle position: it clearly relates to and interacts with what is around it, but for Heidegger it lacks the capacity to encounter beings as beings. The animal lives in what Heidegger calls a disinhibiting ring: different beings provide stimuli which draw the animal, out of its organic capacities, into instinctual activity. But it cannot form its world through active interpretation; it cannot project its understanding on the world or itself.

Now compare this account to the way Kierkegaard sets up the relationship between pagan, Christian and lily/bird: ‘Compared with the bird’s lightness, the pagan is heavily burdened like a stone; compared with the Christian’s freedom, the bird is still subject to the law of gravity’.[[10]](#footnote-10) Or again: ‘The bird is the light, the transient traveller. The rich Christian who became ignorant travelled ceaselessly and further away. The rich pagan remained heavy, like a stone, upon the earth . . .’[[11]](#footnote-11)

The bird functions as a teacher here because it is carefree. It simply is what it is, without anxiety. It falls below the level of the Christian, who relates to God with an awareness of God as God, because the Christian has *become* what she is through resolution. But it soars over the pagan, who is bound to the earth: a stone. Now, on one level, calling the pagan a stone is metaphorical, whereas Heidegger is concerned with the being of actual stones. But I think it is significant: the pagan is stone-like because he is bound, stunned into insensitivity to what is other by his self-inclosed anxiety. Despite this anxiety, the pagan is, in a sense, asleep: locked in a dream world in which he sees only according to his own measure. The pagan, says Kierkegaard ‘never moves from the spot’, in the sense of being fixated in self-torment.[[12]](#footnote-12) As Heidegger also recognises, the human can sink lower than the beast: in forgetting spirit, the pagan bypasses the bird and falls into the condition of the stone: his human preoccupations should not mislead us, because it is precisely these preoccupations which deny him access to what is other than himself. The pagan lacks a world.

Kierkegaard’s concerns here are different from Heidegger’s, but there is a connection: Kierkegaard too is calling human being into question, and, by means of the comparative analysis, seeking to call it into its most intense mode of existence. The animal is a waymarker. Attending to it can point us away from our despair and evasion; but ultimately, it must be left behind. As human, we can never be the animal (Heidegger writes of the difficulty of transposing ourselves into the being of the animal), and, indeed, this is not the point: we exist, we project ourselves beyond immediacy, and our salvation lies in recovering a new immediacy on the other side of reflection. The animal is a signpost, but never a destination.

However, this is not the whole story. At the end of Heidegger’s exploration of animality, he sounds a note of caution. In aiming to uncover the essence of Dasein, has he missed the essence of the animal? It may only be from the human perspective, he admits, that the animal is seen as poor in world; although he does then attempt to sidestep that objection by arguing that it was the development of the human essence he had in mind all along.[[13]](#footnote-13)

As for Kierkegaard, the tension is closely related to the problem of comparison. Comparison is, after all, a root of our anxiety, our dissatisfaction with being what we are, our distraction by the haunting future. The bird and lily offer an image of life without comparison, life which is what it is without having to project itself into alternative possibilities. However, in order for that image to work, we have to engage in precisely what it seems to warn us against; we have to compare ourselves to the bird, the bird is compared to the pagan and the Christian.

Is this a performative contradiction in Kierkegaard’s text? Rather than answer that question directly, I want to approach it sideways, by drawing out what I think are some of the modes in which the lily and the bird function as teachers. There are two of these modes I think are especially significant: looking and expressing.

**Looking and Expressing**

Looking is perhaps the more obvious mode of how the lily and the bird teach: we are repeatedly instructed to look at them. And this is not a casual glance, nor a look of detached and analytical investigation. It is the look of attentiveness, a being-with the nonhuman in order to let it affect us and re-orient us. Turning our gaze from the concerns in front of us and the future anxiety taunts us with, we give our patient attention to the lily and the bird. The mode of looking is important, because it is not simply a relationship between perceiving subject and perceived object; but a transformation of what attention is. It stands in contrast with the worried glance or oppressed stare of the pagan, who is ‘continually looking ahead’ – and precisely because of this, falls into the pit.[[14]](#footnote-14)

This look is not direct; the question is *how* we look. The rich pagan ‘sees only in darkness’. The bird ‘sees nothing’ thanks to its blissful ignorance, the rich Christian also ‘sees nothing’, because earthly distinctions lose their validity and definition in the perspective of the eternal.[[15]](#footnote-15) This unseeing answers to the invisibility of God. In ‘The Care of Lowliness’, Kierkegaard refers to Christ as the prototype. The Christian does not see the prototype with his own eyes, but nevertheless ‘he often sees the prototype’ – every time poverty and lowliness are forgotten in joy, ‘then he does see the prototype – and then he himself looks more or less like the prototype’.[[16]](#footnote-16) Christ, then, is not seen directly, but expressed in the joy which forgets distinctions. The virtues – of patience, faith, humility, love – are intrinsic to the quality of the look, a looking which does not see directly.

The look, of course, is intimately related to the moment. In Danish and German, the moment is literally the glace of an eye. It is in connection with the moment that Heidegger invokes Kierkegaard in *Fundamental Concepts*. The claim he makes is a grand one: ‘What we here designate as 'moment of vision' is what was really comprehended for the first time in philosophy by Kierkegaard – a comprehending with which the possibility of a completely new epoch of philosophy has begun for the first time since antiquity.’[[17]](#footnote-17) For Heidegger, we are driven to the possibility of this moment of vision by the experience of a mood such as profound boredom: the moment is the resolute disclosure of Dasein to itself. The moment is the gateway to an authentic expression of Dasein’s essence.

Kierkegaard of course writes about the moment in various works, but it appears several times in the 1849 discourses on the lily and bird. ‘[O]nly by silence does one find the moment,’ we are told – in fact ‘the moment *is* only in silence’.[[18]](#footnote-18) The moment cannot be anticipated by our ordinary projects and plans. It interrupts the flow of life – and it is striking that Kierkegaard uses an animal metaphor here: ‘it comes softly, with a lighter step than the lightest footfall of any creature’. In the second of these discourses, we read that the bird ‘understands only one thing, but understands it unconditionally – that now is the unconditional moment’.[[19]](#footnote-19)

Here, I think we are beginning to see Kierkegaard moving in a more fundamentally different direction to that of Heidegger. Heidegger’s animal can only ever be deprived, from our point of view, whatever wonderful capacities it has. It is inscribed within the circle of instinct and denied access to being as such. And this means the moment of vision remains subordinate to a human perspective: it returns Dasein to itself, discloses it to itself, but renders it less capable of genuine encounter with what exceeds the human. The vision is turned inward.

Of course, Kierkegaard too is often concerned to emphasise human distinctiveness; but another note sounds throughout these discourses. The lily and bird really do ‘play outside’ the scope of human determinations, comparisons. They call into question the advantage of self-conscious awareness or language. Without guile or effort, they are the best possible teachers, who teach by being what they are. As David Kangas puts it, ‘the lily and the bird can intervene in order to reorganise the human gaze upon itself’.[[20]](#footnote-20)

This is all very well, you may say, but surely all of this still serves a human end. Kierkegaard has no interest – much less even than Heidegger – in real flesh and blood animals. They are merely ciphers, a blank canvas on to which we symbolically project alternative modes of existence. We look at them, but the look is never returned.

This is a common criticism of the philosophical tradition of drawing radical distinctions between humans and animals. For one thing, as Derrida often pointed out, it is a form of conceptual violence to reduce all the immense, evolving diversity of nonhuman life to the single category of the animal. For another, it flies in the face of mounting ethological evidence which ascribes to different animal species various forms of complex communication, social rites, tool use, future planning, mourning, play, deception and so on.

There is undoubtedly some truth in applying this critique to Kierkegaard. However, I think it underestimates the way in which the lily and bird ‘play outside’ the game of human comparison. This genuine otherness is underlined by their lack of concern for our spiritual projects. If they do not ‘look’ at us, this is not a matter of the actual focus of their eyes, but of their indifference to the play of glances which constitutes the human, intersubjective realm.

In Kierkegaard's zoo, the assumption is that animals exist in their cages, whether real or imaginary, to be regarded and looked upon by watchful, reflective human eyes. The unintended implications are quite different, and in true Kierkegaardian fashion, they seem full of anxiety-producing potential: perhaps in Kierkegaard's zoo, humans, too, are in cages, and when they cast their reflective gaze out onto other nonhuman species, they must continually ponder the meaning of the moment when the gaze is returned.[[21]](#footnote-21)

Just now, I quoted a reference to the unconditional moment in which the bird lives. It is this unconditionality of which the lily and bird are not merely an arbitrary symbol, but a living expression.

This is most explicit in the 1849 discourses, which focus on the qualities of silence, obedience and joy. In being silent, the bird is not literally noiseless, but devoid of human chatter and distraction. And when it is objected that this is easy for the lily and bird as they cannot speak, the discourse responds ‘You are not to say that’, but to exist before God and so ‘fold up all your plans into less space than a period’.[[22]](#footnote-22) There is silence in nature even ‘when the day vibrates with a thousand strings and everything is like a sea of sound’. Of the sea itself, we read that it would be an injustice to say it roared – we would be listening in the wrong way: ‘If however, you take time and listen more carefully, you hear – how amazing! – you hear silence’.[[23]](#footnote-23) In this paradox of hearing, the bird says ‘everything will take place in due season; but Kierkegaard adds ‘yet, no, the bird does not say this; it is silent, but its silence is expressive [*talende*], and its silence says that it believes it’.[[24]](#footnote-24) In this silence it knows when the moment comes.

The bird says by not saying. This is not a learned ignorance, not the overcoming of the distractions of reflection - but it *is* nevertheless an expression, a saying which interrupts our language and ruptures our world. In this expressive silence, there is ‘something divine’.

This unconditional expressive veneration is not to be diluted with comparisons and rationalisations. Nor is the unconditional obedience of the second discourse, because the lily and bird know the unconditioned in a masterly way.[[25]](#footnote-25) And when the third discourse speaks of the unconditional joy of the lily and bird, Kierkegaard stresses that, in living wholly in the present, the gospel teachers ‘certainly are not thoughtless’.[[26]](#footnote-26)

Where, in the earlier discourses, there was always a reminder that the Christian was, in a sense, higher than the lily and bird, here there is an implicit refusal of this way of thinking. It is a distraction; the Gospel says, you *shall* learn from them. They are not thoughtless, they communicate and express the unconditional by being what they teach. Human reflection cannot dismiss this as merely instinctive, or easy or less significant: no, it must go *derude*: out there – and learn from the lily and the bird, without correlating them to human projects and preconceptions. The future must be silenced, so that the unconditional may speak.

**Conclusion**

Both Kierkegaard and Heidegger, I have suggested, can be charged with introducing nonhumans into their texts for merely instrumental reasons: to clarify human distinctiveness, or to be symbolic catalysts for human upbuilding. The structural similarities between their accounts – whatever the differences of tone and content – reinforce such distinctions. They can both be challenged for their unreflective investment into a human-animal binary, and for failing really to attend to the nonhuman other.

However, I have argued that there is much more to the work of both thinkers than just continuing the narrative of human superiority. It may seem that Heidegger is the more promising in this respect: he does want to attend to the essence of animality itself, and is aware of the limitations of his approach. Ultimately, he does not manage to square this circle, but he provides impetus to further philosophical encounters with animality in its otherness.

In this light, Kierkegaard’s discourses appear much more narrowly focused on human edification. He presupposes that the structures of human spirit and reflection make the task of our existence the central drama of creation. There is none of Heidegger’s interest in engaging with zoology; the lily and the bird are merely figurative devices to change the focus of our awareness.

Nevertheless, I have argued that the way Kierkegaard turns to the lily and bird starts to unpick these anthropocentric truisms. For one thing, what they direct us towards radically calls into question what we have assumed the human to be: we are built up – to become nothing before God; or, as David Kangas argues, we are led to the lily and bird to unlearn our way of being human, to let go of the projects and plans by which we attempt to construct a purpose in life, and to embrace instead the ‘whylessness’, the gracious purposelessness of the moment. The moment cannot be assimilated into any existing temporal horizon or structure of anticipation. Rather than the moment launching us on to an anguished path of striving for a future end, it launches us into an unconditional silence, in which we ‘let reality be the criterion of itself…let it unfold as it will unfold’.[[27]](#footnote-27) It is precisely as superfluities that the lily and bird teach us this much.

But this suggests we need to take a further step: the nonhuman can’t merely be a means to an end, the symbolic ladder we climb to attain this liberated state, only to leave it behind. Kierkegaard increasingly calls us really to look at the nonhuman; to hear what it expresses; to submit to its authority; to be exposed to the different thought it articulates. In this vision, nature is not merely the sublime backdrop to human striving, but the resonant being to which we belong. Here, outside, under the sign of expressive play, there is certainly contingency, suffering and hardship, but they no longer amplify in the dead and empty spaces of an all too human future. For Heidegger, Dasein is world forming because it asks the question of Being and so access beings as such. But as Nicola Masciandaro argues, *all* life takes place ‘in the space of, or *as* the question, above all, the question of itself, of its being itself’.[[28]](#footnote-28) *Really* to attend to the nonhuman is to hear this implicit question, this surprise and joy over the sheer fact *that one is*. This questioning outstrips our stubborn trust in human reflective capacities, which funnel the question into discursive and teleological forms (‘for what future do we exist?’). Rather, ‘Examining the fundamental structure of questioning leads more and more into in- and transhuman zones where the question of what the question is has already flown the cage of autonomous reflective consciousness’.[[29]](#footnote-29) The question precedes us: it is already there when we look at nature as the expression of what there is, as resonance in dissonance, as joy in suffering, as what is said and thought in the lily and the bird’s being and playing-in-the-world.

Here we need to surrender the superficiality of human reflection to a more intuitive knowing, in which, to echo Meister Eckhart, all creatures speak God. *How* we look at creation matters; but that how is made possible by a creaturely presence which pre-exists our reflection. Our staring into the future must be interrupted, our eyes filled with what flies free, so that our self-concern may be emptied. It brings to mind a passage from Iris Murdoch’s *The Sovereignty of Good*:

‘I am looking out of my window in an anxious and resentful state of mind, oblivious of my surroundings, brooding perhaps on some damage done to my prestige. Then suddenly I observe a hovering kestrel. In a moment everything is altered. The brooding self with its hurt vanity has disappeared. There is nothing now but kestrel.’[[30]](#footnote-30)

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2. Søren Kierkegaard, *Christian Discourses/The Crisis and a Crisis in the Life of an Actress,* trans. Howard and Edna Hong(Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), p. 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. On the rhetorical and dialogical form of Kierkegaard’s discourse material, see George Pattison, *Kierkegaard’s Upbuilding Discourses: Philosophy, literature and theology* (London: Routledge, 2002). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (Oxford: Blackwell, 1962), p. 278n. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Darren C. Zook, ‘Kierkegaard’s Zoo: Humanity, Nature, and the Moral Status of Animals’ in *History of Philosophy Quarterly* July 2006, Vol 23 No 3, 263 – 276: 263 [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Martin Heidegger, *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, trans. William McNeil and Nicholas Walker (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995). For fuller discussions of Heidegger’s writing on animality and further literature, see Matthew Calarco, *Zoographies: The Question of the Animal from Heidegger to Derrida* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008) and Marc Fellenz, *Moral Menagerie: Philosophy and Animal Rights* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2007). [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Due to the necessity for focusing this essay, and the relevance of the material, I am limiting myself to this earlier phase of Heidegger’s work where the analytic of Dasein is central. This leaves open the strong possibility of whether Heidegger’s later work (including his meditations on the ‘fourfold’) open up more radical breaks with anthropocentric thinking. With thanks to Duane Williams for clarifying this point. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Heidegger, *Fundamental Concepts,* p. 174. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Heidegger, *Fundamental Concepts,* pp. 176ff. The ongoing anthropocentrism of the text is a key focus for Jacques Derrida in *The Animal that Therefore I Am*, trans. David Willis(New York: Fordham University Press, 2008); see also Calarco, *Zoographies*. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Kierkegaard, *Christian Discourses*, p. 22. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Kierkegaard, *Christian Discourses*, p. 35. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Kierkegaard, *Christian Discourses*, p. 79. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Heidegger, *Fundamental Concepts,* pp. 270ff. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Kierkegaard, *Christian Discourses*, p. 21. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Kierkegaard, *Christian Discourses*, p. 35. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Kierkegaard, *Christian Discourses*, p. 43. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Heidegger, *Fundamental Concepts,* p. 150. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Søren Kierkegaard, *Without Authority,* trans. Howard and Edna Hong(Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), p. 14. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Kierkegaard, *Without Authority*, p. 29. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. David Kangas, *Errant Affirmations: On the Philosophical Meaning of Kierkegaard's Religious Discourses* (London and NY: Bloomsbury, 2017), p. 123. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Zook, ‘Kierkegaard’s Zoo’, p. 274. This invokes a whole tradition of mediation upon the animal gaze, notably in Derrida *The Animal that Therefore I am* and, classically, in John Berger, *About Looking* (London: Bloomsbury, 2009). [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Kierkegaard, *Without Authority*, p. 17. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Kierkegaard, *Without Authority*, p. 13. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Kierkegaard, *Without Authority*, p. 26. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Kierkegaard, *Without Authority*, p. 38. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Kangas, *Errant Affirmations*, p. 149. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Nicola Masciandaro, ‘Unknowing Animals’ in Michael Austin et al (eds), *Speculations II* (Earth: punctum books, 2020), pp.228-244: 235 [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Masciandaro, ‘Unknowing Animals’, p. 237. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Iris Murdoch, *The Sovereignty of Good* (London: Routledge, 2001), p. 82. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)