

ANIMAL ETHICS AND THE PHILOSOPHY OF ITS EXISTENCE

An Outline of the Theory of “Common Beliefs”

Mohsen Shiravand; Sepideh Razi

University of Isfahan, Islamic Republic of Iran

email: m.shiravand@ltr.ui.ac.ir

Abstract

Countless scientific efforts have been made for tackling the environmental crises and a relative success is achieved in awakening of different nations as regards the seriousness of the ever-increasing crisis. The current essay is also an effort in the same spirit. The goal of this essay is providing an outline of the Theory of “Common Beliefs”. This essay proves that animals like humans have such common beliefs as monotheism, prophecy and resurrection. Moreover, due to the difficulty of the acceptance of this idea for the mainstream minds, the possibility of the existence of such a claim is demonstrated based on the philosophical principles of Mulla Sadra. The method used in this research is documented-analytical using library sources. The main source of this study is Holy Quran, the exegeses of Quran, Islamic traditions as well as the works of Sadra and his followers. Among the results of the present research are making this claim acceptable in view of the rational and philosophical principles, creation of a spiritual, peaceful and even humane sense in the domain of environment, establishment of an environmental law based on a generous interaction between the man and the animal and arrangement of the interreligious dialogues among the religiously grounded cultures.

[tak terhitung usaha ilmiah dalam menghadapi krisis lingkungan dan cukup banyak keberhasilan yang dicapai dalam kebangkitan beberapa negara serius merespon pertambahan krisis. Dengan semangat yang sama, artikel ini ingin menyajikan outline teori Common Belief yang membuktikan bahwa binatang

seperti halnya manusia menerima prinsip monoteisme, takdir dan kebangkitan kembali. Mengingat kesulitan penerimaan ide ini bagi orang awam, kemungkinan eksistensi klaimnya dapat ditunjukkan berdasarkan prinsip filosofisnya Mulla Sadra. Artikel ini menggunakan metode analisis dokumen dengan sumber utamanya adalah Qur'an, tafsir Qur'an, karya Mulla Sadra dan murid-muridnya. Beberapa kesimpulan menunjukkan bahwa klaim bisa diterima secara rasional dan filosofis, penciptaan spiritualitas, kedamaian, masuk akal dalam konteks lingkungan, dan kemapanan hukum lingkungan berdasarkan hubungan baik antara manusia dan makhluk hidup (binatang) serta mengatur dialog lintas keyakinan dengan latar budaya masing-masing¹.

Key Words: Environment, Animals, Transcendent Theosophy, Monotheism, Prophecy, Resurrection.

A. Introduction

Today in the global arena, the chosen paradigm of the defense of animal rights is Peter Singer's Model. Peter Singer (1946-) the Australian moral philosopher in his *Animal Liberation* has set the focal point of his argument on the idea of "commonality of pain and suffering among the man and the animal".¹ Having declined the dominant old stereotype of the human supremacy over other creatures due to his enjoyment of "reason", Singer argues that every creature that is capable of having a sense of pain and suffering has certain interests and man is obliged by ethics to observe its interests inasmuch as of every other beneficiary being.² Accordingly, he insists on the principle of equal consideration of interests and seeks to apply it as to the animal species.³ Thus, he denies human speciesism

¹ Peter Singer, *Animal Liberation: The Definitive Classic of the Animal Movement* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2009), pp. 250–88.

² Peter Singer, *Practical Ethics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), pp. 107–12. Singer's main conclusion: a) Beings have interests just in case they are capable of suffering. b) Human beings and many non-human animals are capable of suffering. c) Therefore, human beings and many non-human animals have interests.

³ Peter Singer, 'Practical Ethics', in *The Animal Ethics Reader*, ed. by Susan J. Armstrong and Richard G. Botzler (New York: Routledge, 2017), pp. 32–60. The fundamental interest that entitles a being to equal consideration is the capacity for "suffering and/or enjoyment or happiness".

as it is informed by a type of racism.⁴ He believes that “racists violate the principle of equal consideration of interests whenever a conflict occurs among the interests of their own classes and those of other individuals from another race given the higher value that they attach to the interests of the members of their own race. The sexists also violate the principle of equal consideration of interests defending the interests of their own sex. By the same token, the proponents of speciesism allow the interests of their own specific species to trespass the interests of the members of other species”.⁵ Accordingly, there is no difference between animals and humankind in view of “Being Capable of Suffering”. Nevertheless, one should confess that the model proposed by Singer is focused on the convergence of the human and animal interests in pain and suffering in order to tackle the environmental crisis. Although this proposed model is considered to be a step forward and is praiseworthy in its own turn, its most important objection is provocation of emotions.

In fact, Singer’s theory instead of giving birth to environmental knowledge among cultures is more grounded in human feelings. To put it otherwise, Singer’s theory needs to be founded upon trustable environmental teachings if it is to become an intercultural environmental discourse. The focal framework of this theory is hinged on the shared sense of suffering and pleasure in animals and humans as a self-evident truth. The possibility of success of this theory in different cultures, then, is relative and weak. Indeed, despite the global fame that *Animal Liberation* has earned, the main reason of the failure of the proposed theory is its escape from knowledge. In fact, one can say that the most significant teaching of Singer’s theory is that animals like us humans suffer from certain things while they are pleased with other things. Then, we need to take this into consideration in our calculations. If we reflect this theory more, we would understand fast that instead of providing an argument, this model is based on a moral “advice”. In other words, if someone refuses to accept this moral advice and only makes a decision based on his own personal interests, what should be done? Is it not so that in our individual and social decisions, we take our own interests

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ Peter Singer, ‘All Animals Are Equal’, *Philosophic Exchange*, vol. 5, no. 1 (1974), p. 88.

into consideration as well as those of the other living beings that serve our interests?

The author believes that man is a being that in every decision gives priority to his own interests whether the long-term interests or the short-term ones. Accordingly, in present essay we seek to propose a new model in environmental ethics. The “Common Beliefs Model” is the solution of this article for encounter with the animals. This article struggles to show that based on the arguments offered in Transcendent Theosophy and Islamic environmental doctrines, animals share the triple religious principles of *monotheism*, *prophecy* and *resurrection* with human being. According to Islam, all animals are monotheist creatures and enjoy prophetic plan and believe in the resurrection. This model has numerous benefits. Firstly, it takes human interests into account. It should not be forgotten that the real actor in environment is human being and his decisions are taken based on the protection of interests. Then, religion has given a positive answer to human interests and considered the observation of animal rights as the prerequisite of human enjoyment of the otherworldly rewards. Secondly, according to this model one can design new environmental rights based on religious doctrines that support the equality of animals and humans in rights. Thirdly, since Islam is one of the three major Abrahamic Religions, this model has a good capacity for religiously grounded intercultural dialogues. Fourthly, this model has a good emotional capacity too, but not feelings based on the individual ephemeral emotions, rather based on rational arguments grounded in religious knowledge. Of course, one needs to take it into consideration that the acceptance of such a belief among animals is deemed to be impossible due to the dominant common-sense view of the animals. Thus, we have to first philosophically explain the rational possibility of such a doctrine along with Quranic evidence and prophetic traditions in order to overcome the strangeness that creates the latter view. In this study, we demonstrate that according to Islamic wisdom and religious doctrines, environment and particularly animals follow such evaluative principles as monotheism, prophecy and resurrection. In this essay, we refer to these evaluative affairs as the axiological foundations of environment.

B. Environmental Monotheism

Perplexities of this world is beyond what is deemed by man. There are numerous secrets in this world that man is unable to understand them. What is clear and rationally well-grounded is that believing everything has its own requirements and particular implications and admittedly the belief in monotheism is not exception to this. One of the significant requirements of monotheism is the problem of worshipping and the latter is not possible unless after knowing the worshipped. The knowledge of the worshipped does not happen but through consciousness and intelligence. As a result, if we want to study the issue of worshipping in animals, we need to demonstrate first the existence of intelligence in these creatures. If we are not to become entrapped by circle, there is no way for using the Quranic verses and prophetic traditions in order to prove the existence of consciousness and intelligence in animals. Thus, we proceed to examine the rational arguments that Transcendent Theosophy offers in this regard.

1. Examination of the Arguments of the Existence of Consciousness and Intelligence in Animals

To explain and study this issue, we need to outline two key and vital steps in preparatory form in order to be able to provide a better evaluation of it. These two steps are concerned with two key principles in Transcendent Theosophy: i.e., 1) Primacy of Existence and 2) Analogical Gradation of Existence. The Primacy of Existence in Mulla Sadra's philosophy is the basic foundation of all principles and branches in regulation and engineering of his philosophical and transcendental thinking. In the present discussion, this issue also plays a key and significant role, because Sadra's view of existence and its primacy regardless of every other thing is followed by such requirements as the debate of the reality and tenuity. According to these principles, existence has a priority over essence of the reality and tenuity type. Based on this type of priority and posteriority, when the level of *Existence Itself* is considered, there is no sign of essence and the existence is of primacy.

Moreover, in the second step, i.e., the principle of Analogical Gradation of Existence, if a being is more perfect than the other being, or in other words, its existential level is higher, this is indeed a token

of the fact that its effects are more. For example, an inanimate object occupies the space in three dimensions as its effect but the plant that is a more perfect entity than the inanimate object in addition to the occupation of space has growth and feeding while animal as a being even more perfect than the latter in addition to all the aforementioned effects enjoys sensation and volitional movement.

Therefore, according to Sadra, existence is of primacy and represents an analogically graded reality and the Reality of Existence qua Reality of Existence has real properties such as knowledge, power, will and so on and so forth. Now given the preliminary points that were noted in the discussion of Analogical Gradation of Existence, the real properties of this Existence that has unity despite its diversity and vice versa, are also present in all diverse entities and this is indeed a flow-like presence of the type of the flow of the Truth of Existence. As a result, all real properties of existence including knowledge and consciousness exist in all diverse entities and levels of existence in a flow-like form. This is also the case with the animal level and since intelligence has its origin in knowledge, animal owns intelligence too. Of course, it needs to be mentioned that given the problem of “analogical gradation of existence” as well as the problem of “reality and tenuity”, the intensity and weakness of these properties in every level is proper to the very level where these diverse beings are present.

And since the Existence is a unique reality that flows through all beings in different analogically graded fashion in view of perfection and deficiency, likewise her real properties which are knowledge, power, will and life are flowing through the whole flow of existence in a form that is known only to those who are true mystics.⁶

When we demonstrate that the claim of the existence of consciousness and intelligence in animals is not only plausible rather it is necessary according to Sadra, the acceptance of the knowledge leading to worshipping for the animals becomes easier in conscience.

⁶ Muhammad ibn Ibrahim Mulla Sadra, *al-Hikmat al-Muta'aliyah fi 'l-Asfār al-'Aqliyyah al-Arba'ah*, vol. 9 (Teheran: Dar Ihyā' al-Turāth al-'Arabi, 1981), p. 117.

2. Explanation and Examination of the Problem of Worshipping in Traditional Sources

The existing evidence of Quranic verses and prophetic traditions as regards the issue of worshipping in animals suggest that this issue can be studied under two distinct categories of general worshipping and monotheism as we discuss them hereunder:

● General Worshipping

Part of Quranic verses and prophetic traditions describing the natural beings and animals refer to “worshipping” and “monotheism”. Of course, it is evident that what is referred to as worshipping in plants and animals in Quranic verses and prophetic traditions is of a special type. We will pursue this discussion contemplating on supplication. The study of religious texts suggests that there are two types of supplication or worshipping:

- *Legislative Worshipping:*

Divine prescriptions given to man through the prophets constitute the legislative worshipping (supplication). this supplication is in verbal and practical forms. Verbal invocations amount to saying such prayers as “Allah is the Greatest”, “Glorified is Allah” and “Thanks to Allah” while the practical invocation is also of legislative supplication. Accomplishment of the religious obligations such as Hajj, paying alms, ritual sacrifice is considered to be among the legislative supplication.

- *Genetic Worshipping:*

In some verses of Qur’an not only man rather all creatures in the world have been introduced as glorifying the Lord God. According to Quranic verses, intelligence is not particularly for the man, rather the whole world including the tiniest elements of the universe enjoy perception, intelligence and primordial rationality. According to the idea of intrinsic intelligence, the world as a whole is glorifying the Lord. This type of primordial glorification is instinctual and thus, no evolution happens in it. In his commentary of Qur’an entitled *Nemuneh*, Ayatollah Makarem Shirazi argues:

The universal glorification of all elements of the world refers to the genetic supplication that takes form in all creatures in the language of ecstasy, because every creature has an order, an exact and well-calculated order which refers to a God who is pure and sublime and at the same

time owns the properties of perfection. Therefore, the wonderful order of the universe in every corner is supplication and glorification.⁷

In *Tafsir Al-Miẓan*, Allama Tabatabaei consider the essential need of all creatures in this world to God to be a proof of the existence of a continuous genetic glorification in all creatures. For need is itself the best evidence of the existence of the One who tackles the need.⁸ Ayatollah Tayyib also believes that genetic glorification represents the language of spiritual thirst in creatures.⁹ To put it otherwise, every creature as such refers to the existence of the Creator. Genetic glorification includes all living beings and inanimate things. In other words, according to the teachings of the Islamic religion, the seven heavens, the earth, plants and animals glorify the Lord in a genetic form.¹⁰ Mulla Sadra as a commentator of Qur'an refers to this type of glorification as Essential Poverty.¹¹ This is indeed a poverty that flows through the whole fabric of the universe and among all creatures. In *Tafsir Al-Miẓan*, Imam Sajjad (peace be upon him) is quoted to have stated that "birds every morning glorify the Lord and ask for their livelihood, and this is in fact the morning supplication through which the creatures ask their God to give them their daily food."¹²

There are numerous Quranic verses and prophetic traditions that address this type of worshipping in living beings and animals:

"The seven heavens glorify Him, and the earth [too], and whoever is in them. There is not a thing but celebrates His praise, but you do not

⁷ Nasser Makarem Shirazi, *Nemooneh Interpretation*, vol. 13 (Teheran: Islamic books house, 1995), p. 470.

⁸ Muhammad Husayn Tabatabai, *Al-Miẓan, An Exegesis Of The Qur'an*, vol. 13, trans. by Mohammad Baqir Mousavi Hamedani (Qom: Seminary Teachers Association, Islamic Publications Office, 1999), p. 149.

⁹ S. Abdul Hussein Tayyib, *Atib Al-Bayan Fi Tafsir Al-Quran*, vol. 8 (Teheran: Sabtin Institute, 2007), p. 259.

¹⁰ S. Abdul Hussein Tayyib, *Atib Al-Bayan Fi Tafsir Al-Quran*, vol. 10 (Teheran: Sabtin Institute, 2007), pp. 59–60.

¹¹ Muhammad ibn Ibrahim Mulla Sadra, 'The Treatise on The Resurrection of Things', in *The Collection Of Philosophical Treatises*, vol. 1, ed. by Saeed Nazari Tavakoli (Teheran: Islamic Wisdom Foundation Publications, 2010), pp. 76–7.

¹² Muhammad Husayn Tabatabai, *Tafsir al-Miẓan*, vol. 7, trans. by Mohammad Baqir Mousavi Hamedani (Qom: Seminary Teachers Association, Islamic Publications Office, 1999), p. 149.

understand their glorification. Indeed, He is all-forbearing, all-forgiving.” (Qur’an, 17: 44) “Have you not regarded that Allah is glorified by everyone in the heavens and the earth, and the birds spreading their wings. Each knows his prayer and glorification, and Allah knows best what they do.” (Qur’an, 24: 41)

“Certainly We gave David our grace: ‘O mountains and birds, chime in with him!’ And We made iron soft for him.” (Qur’an, 34: 10)

“We disposed the mountains to glorify [Allah] with him at evening and dawn.” (Qur’an, 38, 18)

“The Thunder celebrates His praise, and the angels [too], in awe of Him, and He releases the thunderbolts and strikes with them whomever He wishes. Yet they dispute concerning Allah, though He is great in might.” (Qur’an, 13: 13)

“Whatever there is in the heavens and whatever there is in the earth glorifies Allah, and He is the All-mighty, the All-wise.” (Qur’an, 59: 1) Imam Sadeq (peace be upon him) is quoted to have stated that “David left his house for the desert and when he was reciting the Psalms, there was no mountain, stone and bird that did not join his choir” (Majlesi, 1984, vol. 14: 25).

In Ayyashi’s commentary of Imam Sadeq (peace be upon him), it is related that the meaning of Quranic verse “There is nothing but glorifying Allah” is the universal glorification of God. Even the fissures on walls are indications of the glorification of the Lord God as these show the wall’s need for repair (essential poverty).

Here three points are noteworthy: firstly, every creature glorifies Allah in its own particular language. Secondly, glorification of the creatures is one and the same as the expression of inability, poverty and need. Thirdly, this glorification is *real* not something mental and allegorical.

- Monotheism

According to Quranic doctrines, all animals rather the nature and environment with all its envioning ecosystem are theist and monotheist. In Qur’an, we have two types of verses that deal with the environmental monotheism. Part of these verses have clearly introduced the creatures as monotheists and states: “Do they seek a religion other than that of

Allah, while to Him submits whoever there is in the heavens and the earth, willingly or unwillingly, and to Him they will be brought back?" (Qur'an, 3: 83). Allama Tabatabai the great commentator of Quran believes that Islam mentioned in this verse is genetic (existential) Islam not legislative. For the word "submits" in this verse relates the act of genetic submission of the residents of the heavens and the earth to the Lord in an eternal past. Another part of the Quranic verses has dealt with monotheism in interrogative language. For example, in the story of hoopoe and Solomon, when the hoopoe departed Palestine to Yemen and returned, she described this long journey for Solomon as follows: "I found a woman ruling over them, and she has been given everything, and she has a great throne. I found her and her people prostrating to the sun instead of Allah, and Satan has made their deeds seem decorous to them—thus he has barred them from the way [of Allah], so they are not guided- so that they do not prostrate themselves to Allah, who brings forth the hidden in the heavens and the earth, and He knows whatever you hide and whatever you disclose" (Qur'an, 27: 23-25).

There are a number of theological points in these verses that indicate human stature. Firstly, in these verses, divine names and properties such as divine knowledge and power inspire animal episteme. Secondly, these verses present the monotheism in animals.¹³ To state the matter differently, contemplation of these verses clearly demonstrates the avoidance of animals from polytheism in favor of monotheism. In first part of the verse the hoopoe vividly denies the worshipping sun and considers only Allah to be praiseworthy. The last part of the verse expresses a type of rebuke and wonder in interrogative tone in following words: "so that they do not prostrate themselves to Allah, who brings forth the hidden in the heavens and the earth, and He knows whatever you hide and whatever you disclose."

Regardless of Quranic verses concerning the monotheism in natural creatures, Allama Tabatabaei the greatest commentator of Holy Quran demonstrates the monotheism in animals via a philosophical argument. He holds that the world with all its creatures is essentially poor

¹³ Abdullah Javadi Amoli, *The Tasnim: Tafsir of the Holy Quran*, vol. 10, ed. by Ruhollah Rezqi, Ali Ayoubi, and Waliullah Isazadeh (Qom: Isra Publishing Center, 2012).

and every poor entity proves a “One Lord”. He has considered the world to be in itself mere poverty and the need to the Exalted God in a way that these creatures are in need of Allah in their essence, properties and states and need is itself the best evidence of the existence of the One whom the creatures need. Therefore, all creatures in this world with their essential poverty and need bespeak of the existence of an existentially rich and perfect Creator. Moreover, he believes that the general and dominant order governing the world that has made everything interconnected and established an indescribable union and intertwinement among the creatures is another reason for the monotheism in non-human creatures. For all creatures of the world with the language of their imperfect and needy genetic essence call a “Unique and Perfect God” who is free from the need and deficiency.

C. Environmental Resurrection

Resurrection is one of the other common aspects of man and animals. No doubt, this issue is very interesting and provide the man with certain questions: how is the animal resurrection? Given the fact that one of the requirements of resurrection is having an incorporeal soul that can continue her life without the body. Do animals have such an immortal incorporeal soul? The expanse of these questions requires them to be rationally examined and the possibility of such thing to be demonstrated before turning to the Quranic verses and prophetic traditions.

1. Examination and Demonstration of Immaterial Soul for the Animals:

Although early philosophers believed that the animal faculties of human soul are material and flow through the body, animal soul, i.e., imagination, is also an entity that flows through the body that disappears with the death and does not have any resurrection. However, Sadra has a distinct view given the foundations of his own perspective.

To explain Sadra’s claim, we need first to study the material thing. Generally speaking, material thing is either 1) united with the matter or 2) contained in it, or 3) contained in the body and flowing through it or 4) contained in the body and not flowing through it. These four alternatives all similarly cause the material thing not to survive without matter and

the body but they are different from other points of view. For example, if materiality of a thing has its own origin in unitary composition with matter or immanence in it or the immanence of flow in the body, material extended thing gets body as a result of its extension, and along with the hypothetical or external division of the body, it is also hypothetically and externally divided; in other words, such a thing is in the level of matter and body, and in the words of Sadra, it is existentially united with the matter; and if the materiality of the thing is resulted from the non-flow-based immanence in the body, it will lack the secondary extension and as a result, it is not divided with the division of the body, even in a hypothetical form. Such a thing is in a level beyond matter and body, and in the words of Sadra, it has a little immateriality, because it is just like the incorporeal entities in view of its indivisibility.¹⁴

Those forms the actuality of which in the matter is not preceded by another potentiality are existentially united with the matter just like the elementary forms ... As if it is purely material divided by its division; but if there is a form the actuality of which takes place by means of another potentiality, no doubt that potentiality is a mediatory means and has a lower level than that form, then that form seems to be higher than material type and it is the soul that owns a higher level than the first physical matter, because it has a share of the heaven and immateriality even if it is little.¹⁵

In explanation of this issue, Sadra suggests that such souls as animal souls are not divisible with matter, because soul does not act unless by employment of faculties and employment is a type of agency and the supremacy of the agent over his own act is necessary. As a result, the employer, i.e., soul, has a higher existence than the employed, i.e. material faculties. On the other hand, animal soul despite its union with the body is not flowing through the latter and is not divisible and this demonstrates one type of immateriality even in diluted form for these

¹⁴ Muhammad ibn Ibrahim Mulla Sadra, *Al-Shawahid al-Rububiyya fi Manahij al-Sulukiyya*, 3rd edition, ed. by Sayyid Jalal al-Din Ashtiyani (Qom: Bustan-i Kitab Institute, 2003), p. 322.

¹⁵ Muhammad ibn Ibrahim Mulla Sadra, *The Transcendent Wisdom in the Four Mental Travels*, vol. 8 (Beirut: Dar Al-Ihya' Al-Torath Al-Arabi, 1981), pp. 16–7.

material entities.¹⁶ With this argument, the possibility of the existence of an immaterial soul that has perception and consciousness can be proven for the animals in a philosophical fashion. Given this rational and philosophical presupposition, we proceed to assay the prophetic traditions.

2. Explanation and Examination of the Problem of Animal Resurrection in Traditional Sources:

Qur'an and Islamic traditions have not considered the problem of resurrection to be limited to man and the Jinn, rather they introduce the animals and the living beings on the plant to enjoy an equal status. In several verses, Qur'an clearly endorsed this fact:

“Among His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth and whatever living creatures He has scattered in them, and He is able to gather them whenever He wishes.”(Qur'an, 42: 29).

“There is no animal on land, nor a bird that flies with its wings, but they are communities like yourselves. We have not omitted anything from the Book. Then they will be mustered toward their Lord.”(Qur'an, 6: 38).

“When the wild beasts are herded together (in the human habitations).” (Qur'an, 81: 5).

“and the birds [as well], mustered [in flocks]; all echoing him [in a chorus].” (Qur'an, 38: 19).

3. Exposition of Quranic Verses

To answer to the “expanse” of the problem of resurrection, our contemplation on the verse 29 of Chapter 42 of Holy Quran will be working. The indication of “living creatures” in this verse is supposed to include a wide range of beings that live on earth such as human being, animals and even insects. This is not exclusively referring to the angels. Since the word “living creatures” is categorical in one sense, it is applied to all living beings on land and on air. “Gathering together” in this verse indeed refers to the event of the resurrection of the living beings on

¹⁶ Muhammad Husayn Tabatabai, *Nibayat Al-Hikmah*, vol. 2, 2nd edition, trans. by Ali Shirvani (Qom: Book Garden, 2008), p. 115.

Doomsday. Thus, as the majority of the exegetes have unanimously remarked, this verse indeed speaks of the resurrection of all living beings including the man and animals on Doomsday.

Mulla Sadra has also considered the issue of the resurrection of creatures to be decisive and argued that the denial of this fact is against human primordial nature and demonstrates the existence of a problem in human perceptual system. He believes in the resurrection of the creatures as well as their punishment on Doomsday.¹⁷ Relying on the idea of substantial motion, Sadra argues that the universe as a whole is in motion by its essence and substance. Then, “living creatures” represent all natural substances and creatures that live in the material world. Thus, not only all animals, rather all entities have resurrection like man.¹⁸ Regardless of taking “animal” as the extension of “living creature” in this verse or extending it to the point where it can cover all entities on the planet, Islamic teachings consider the issue of animal resurrection to be doubtless and decisive.

4. Foundations of Resurrection of Animals:

The assessments of traditional sources show that the resurrection of animals has two significant and key bases and we need to examine these two foundations.

- **Animals as a Nation:**

Holy Quran has not restricted the issue of resurrection to mankind, rather extended it to all living creatures. *Then they will be mustered toward their Lord.* But the significant point in this context is that resurrection is preceded by intelligence and interrogation and the latter in turn comes after a volitional life associated with rationality. Accordingly, this question is raised: is animal life volitional and intelligent too? It seems that the key to the understanding of resurrection lies in the word “nation”. According to this verse, birds and all animals on land form nations and communities a la humans that have common goal and there is no difference between them and human beings from this point of view. Islamic commentators contend that nation refers to a group the members of which share a “unique goal”. This single and unique goal includes such domains as

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

religion, language or a unique tradition. In fact, nation includes a unique aspect that mobilizes many towards the realization of the same goal.¹⁹ Allama Tabatabaei believes that contemplation on animal life leads us to the fact that animals have “individual and social beliefs and ideas” just like the mankind and the movements and behaviors they show in the path of their survival in order to avoid their annihilation all endorse this idea.²⁰ He offers an argument and suggests that the biological specificities and beauties used in the structures of animals demonstrate the existence of intelligence and understanding in individual and social life of animals. Allama’s argument is as follows:

First, the complicated effort and struggle that animals show of themselves just like mankind towards providing their needs including feeding themselves, satisfying their lust, and finding a house leaves no room for any doubt of the fact that they have intelligence, beliefs and ideas that generally inspire them to pursue their interests and defy the damages. Second, the precision and elegance used in civilization building and industry by some animal types such as ants and honey bees leads one to the idea that animals just like mankind enjoy the aesthetic faculty and all these prove the existence of intelligence and a kind of rationality in animals.

● **Animals, the Perceiver of Moral Good and Bad**

The important point that can itself serve as a beginning for demonstration of animal resurrection is the reflection on the previous point. If animals really have their own beliefs and their life has been designed based on intellectual goals, shouldn’t we accept that they have to observe certain injunctions? If we accept this, they are undoubtedly the perceiver of good and bad, ought and ought not and hence the perceiver of the justice and injustice. Allama Tabatabaei relegates the demonstration of this point to the difference between the individuals of a species in their modes and character. In fact, the difference that exists in modes and character of say two feisty and gentle horses or roosters is itself an endorsement of the injunctions and ought/ ought not among animals.²¹ According to Quranic teachings, animals have understanding

¹⁹ Tabatabai, *Tafsir al-Mizān*, 7: 111.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 7: 105.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 7: 106.

and intelligence and based on this understanding and rationality, they have designed certain ought and ought not in life (even in some species like honey bee, these designs as well as the ought and ought not, are visible in their job). This itself reveal the important point that animals have the power of discretion of good and bad, ought and ought not, justice and injustice. The problem of resurrection of animals, then, is based on the discretion they have in moral injunctions.

Here we mention some of the Islamic traditions concerning the animal resurrection:

Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) saw a leashed camel while its saddle was on its back. His Highness asked: who is the owner of this? He should prepare himself for its complaint on Doomsday.²²

In a tradition, we read that on Doomsday, a sparrow complains to Divine Justice: “My Lord! That person has killed me without any reason.”²³

As to the Doomsday and otherworldly punishment, an interesting tradition has been quoted from Abazar Ghaffari: “Once I was at the service of His Highness the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him). Meanwhile, two goats stated to fight. His Highness stated: Do you know why these goats are horning each other? The disciples had nothing to say. If you do not know, but the Lord knows it and on Doomsday He will judge them, His Highness said.”²⁴

Holy Prophet of Islam (peace be upon him) is quoted to have stated: “On Doomsday the rights of people are retrieved as far as the horned goat that has beaten the hornless goat will be punished” (Baghdadi, 1995: 2/ 111; Alusi, 1996: 15/ 255).²⁵

● **Reasons of Animal Resurrection**

²² Muḥammad Bāqir Majlisī, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 6 (Teheran: Islamic Library, 1984), p. 276.

²³ Husayn Taqī al-Nuri Tabarsi, *Mustadrak al-Wasail wa-mustanbat al-masail*, vol. 8 (Qom: Al-Albays Institute, 1988), p. 304.

²⁴ Abu Jaʿfar Muḥammad ibn Jarir ibn Yazid Tabari, *Tafsir al-Tabari*, vol. 7 (Beirut: Dar al-Maʿrifah, 1992), p. 120.

²⁵ Ali ibn Mohammad ibn Ibrahim ibn Khalil al-Baghdadi, *Lobab al-Taʿwil fi Maani al-Tanzil*, vol. 2 (Beirut: Dar Al-Kutub al-Ilmiya, 1995), p. 111; Mahmud ibn ʿAbd Allah Alusi, *Rub al-maʿani fi tafsir al-Quran al-ʿAzim wa-al-sabʿ al-mathani*, vol. 15 (Beirut: Muassasat al-Risalah, 2015), p. 255.

In this part, we need to examine the wisdom behind the resurrection of the creatures. What wisdom does exist behind the resurrection of creatures and animals? Mulla Sadra, Sheikh Tusi and Sheikh Tabarsi allude to the suffering and hardship through which the animals undergo in this world.²⁶ In fact, divine justice requires this animal resurrection to happen in order to compensate the pain and suffering imposed to the animals either through their slaughtering for the use of their meat or via using them for cargo carriage and generally for covering up all types of the services offered by them to mankind. As a result, one can state that animal communities are not purposeless gatherings that are formed merely out of physiological needs, rather animal communities have their origin in the will and intelligence and are in accordance with the generic goals that occur completely upon choice and will. Then, one should consider these goals not to be restricted to this world and extend its scope right into the otherworldly life.²⁷

As a matter of fact, we cannot deprive a major part of universe of the movement towards the eternal happiness and perfection only on the pretext of their serving human causes. Several Quranic verses have persuaded mankind to reflect on animal life and also the issue of the universal resurrection of all creatures from the inanimate entities, plants, animals to mankind. Then, divine mercy and wrath and understanding reward and punishment are also extended to the animals.²⁸ Moreover, given the previously mentioned points, one has to consider animals to be of divine primordial nature. In fact, all that has convinced man to get himself prepared for attending the divine tribunal is also the case with the animal community. According to this vision, if human resurrection is nothing but retrieval of actions and as a result, answering the type of our choice in worldly life, animal resurrection cannot be anything but their accountability before their own choices in the world.²⁹

²⁶ Muhammad ibn Ibrahim Mulla Sadra, 'The Treatise on The Resurrection of 'Things'', in *The Collection Of Philosophical Treatises*, vol. 2, ed. by Saeed Nazari Tavakoli (Teheran: Islamic Wisdom Foundation Publications, 2010), p. 11; Muhammad Ibn-al-Hasan at-Tusi, *al-Mabsut fi Fiqh al-Imamiya* (Teheran: al-Maktaba al-Murtadawiya li-Ihya, 1972), p. 129.

²⁷ Tabatabai, *Tafsir al-Mizān*, 7: 111.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 7: 115.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 7: 111–7.

D. Environmental Prophecy

Now if animal resurrection is possible from a rational perspective and decisive from the point of view of religion, this important question is raised that whether this resurrection is based on prophetic obligations and teachings? In fact, if animal life in worldly sphere has a religious program so that their resurrection to be regarded as similar to the human resurrection? Allama Tabatabaei has passed this question in silence and believes that Quranic teachings and Islamic traditions suggest that since animals do not enjoy the delicacies and nuances of human knowledge, the scope of their obligation is not as wide as that of man. Animals despite having a share of understanding and intelligence do not enjoy the “intellectual complication and depth” of mankind.

But it is needless to say that mere partial perception in animals cannot address this issue. Then, we have to refine our past ideas and turn to the question if animals can perceive universals? Can we offer a rational argument of this issue? To answer these questions, we have to explore the rational premises in order to be able to offer a rational proof in this regard.

1. Examination and Demonstration of Perception of Universals by Animals

Generally, philosophers distinguish human mind from the animal mind in view of its ability to “universalization” and this is exactly why man is referred to as a rational animal but the truth is that the importance and superior property of man as compared to animal lies in his capability of understanding of the “Secondary Intelligible”, because the abstraction of the secondary intelligible is a higher degree of abstraction and generalization. Of course, thanks to the faculty of generalization, mind is able to make universal notions but it is by means of the secondary intelligible that it can make necessary propositions that in turn are the basis of inductions by these universal notions that allow him to enjoy logical thinking. Having said these, if we define man as “philosophizing rational animal” or “philosophizing animal” in the sense that man is an animal that can perceive universal philosophical notions, a more comprehensive, perfect and correct definition has been indeed offered of man. This very issue suggests that animal has the power of abstraction

and generalization and the true differentia of mankind is his ability of abstraction and understanding of the secondary intelligible.³⁰

The following phrase from Sadra's "Four Journeys" endorse the above idea: "But rational soul refers to the rational substance that perceives the pure rational truths .. and this does not exist in most people."³¹

As we see in the phrases, Sadra claims that a rational soul that has reached the degree of rational immateriality is able to perceive the pure intelligible and most people lack such a quality and the majority of them cannot perceive notions without imagining the words that imply them. Then, if we contemplate inside ourselves, we would conceive that we are not able to think without imagining words and thus, when we are thinking, instead of arranging universal notion in the form of rational propositions that are supposed to form rational syllogisms, we are arranging the words that refer to them in a way that thinking turns into self-talk and speaking to oneself. Thus, the other name that has been used to refer to man is "actualized animal" and "potentially capable man".

Having said these, as an explanation of the quality of the universal perception in animal, one can argue that when the behaving creature reacts to an object or an action, this is not because it has encountered this particular object or action, rather it is due to the reaction it shows to this particular object or action that is under a universal notion. There are also behavior and reactions among animals that are not possible unless via the perception of universals. For example, horse reacts to the lash or leash. This reaction has its origin in the first strike of lash it has experienced and since then, whenever it sees the lash even if it is different from the first in view of the form, color, size, time, situation and the person who strikes, it shows the same reaction. If the horse was just able to partially perceive something sensible, it would have never reacted to another lash that has completely different features as compared to the first lash. This is itself an evidence of the fact that the horse is able to perceive the

³⁰ Morteza Motahari, *Collection of Works: Sayr-i falsafa dar Islam, Kulliyat-i 'ulum-i Islami (Mantiq, Falsafa), Sharb-i manẓuma*, vol. 5 (Teheran: Sadra Islamic Philosophy Research Institute (SIPRI) Publication, 2012), p. 276.

³¹ Sadra, *al-Hikmat al-Muta'aliyah fi 'l-Asfār al-'Aqliyyah al-Arba'ah*, 9: 371–2.

universal lash and there are countless similar cases among the animals.

Finally, one can arrange such an argument around the second axis of philosophical explanation: *First Premise*: Some behaviors are based on the perception of the universal. *Second premise*: Such behaviors grounded in perception of the universal can be seen in the animal. *Conclusion*: Therefore, animals are also able to perceive the universals.

2. Explanation and Examination of the Problem of Prophecy in Traditional Sources

Religious teachings suggest that animals have insight and it is wrong to consider them as shallow-minded creatures. We should not regard animal as a stupid and silly creature. Using Quranic verses and prophetic traditions, the author believes that animals in every age are following the prophet of their own time. Moreover, if intelligence, will, volition, obligation and discretion of good and evil are among the foundations of animal souls, they need certain archetypes for their actions in this field. The dialogue of hoopoe with Solomon as related in Chapter 27 of Holy Quran shows that this animal's intelligence is originated in prophetic teachings not the specific level of consciousness in the creature. Ayatollah Jawadi Amoli contends that animals are capable of acceptance of religion.³² He believes that it was indeed the prophetic enlightenment that provided the hoopoe with such knowledge and wisdom. If we reflect on the verses 24 to 26 of Chapter 27 of Holy Quran, we would observe teachings that are firstly of an extraordinary religious burden that is not the result of observation and experience, secondly, these teachings are not grasped by human rational faculty let alone by animal. Such teachings as the prostration of man for someone but Allah, Satan, decoration of actions by Satan, guidance and misleading (Holy Quran, 27: 24), divine knowledge of the heavens and the earth,³³ oneness of God, Lordship in Divine Throne,³⁴ are not for a religiously minded man rather for a bird.

Can such metaphysical teachings be achieved without prophetic

³² Abdullah Javadi Amoli, *The Tasnim: Tafsir of the Holy Quran*, vol. 25, ed. by Ruhollah Rezqi, Ali Ayoubi, and Waliullah Isazadeh (Qom: Isra Publishing Center, 2012), pp. 174–5.

³³ *Ibid.*, 25: 25.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 25: 26

intervention? In addition to the above verses, there are several traditions all of which bespeak of the animals' enjoyment of prophetic teachings. Below we mention some examples of these teachings:

It is quoted that once the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) was among his disciples and a Bedouin Arab who had hunted a lizard and carried it in his sleeve entered. He alluded to Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) and asked who is this man? He is the Messenger of Allah, the people answered. The man turned to the Prophet and impudently addressed him as follows: I swear to Al-Lat and Al-Uzza, I hate no one like you. And if my tribe did not call me hasty, I would have hastened and killed you fast. What has caused you to speak this way? the Prophet asked. The Prophet invited the Bedouin to Islam. I will not convert to Islam as long as this lizard believes it. Then the man threw the lizard on the ground. The Prophet addressed the lizard and it replied in Arabic: Your Highness! You have grasped the Doomsday. Whom you worship? the Holy Prophet asked. I worship the one whose throne is in the heavens and his path is in the sea and his mercy is in the paradise and his punishment is in the hell, the lizard said. The prophet said: Who am I? You are the Messenger of the Lord of all worlds and the Seal of all prophets and the one who accepts your prophecy is happy and the one who refuses to accept he will suffer a heavy loss, the lizard answered. The Bedouin said: I came here while I hated no one as much as you but now you are the most beloved one by me. I testify that there is no God but Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, the Bedouin said.³⁵ Nevertheless, Quranic verses and prophetic traditions of animals all endorse the existence of a life around the prophetic teachings in this world. Of course, it is evident that animals enjoy prophetic teachings and obligations in proportionate to the level of their consciousness, intelligence and knowledge.

E. Concluding Remarks

Explanation and examination of every issue is more secure when it is first and foremost based on rational argument and method and this is a fact evident to everyone. No doubt, demonstration of the possibility of the hypothesis of common beliefs among the animals due to its strangeness is one of those issues that needs to be addressed in this way as this paves the path for the continuation of the examination of other

³⁵ Muḥammad Bāqir Majlisī, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 17 (Teheran: Islamic Library, 1984), p. 407.

reasons.

Religion and axiological principles of monotheism, prophecy and resurrection are not restricted to mankind and animals are also religious. Relying on the common beliefs among man and animal, we can hope to present a new and successful model. This model strengthens the idea of “environmental spirituality” in its maximum form. According to the clear teachings of Islam, animals are monotheist creatures. Their life is based on such religious principles as monotheism, prophecy and resurrection. It is needless to state that such a perspective of animals leads to the denial of exclusive evaluative specificities of mankind and extends the scope of religious life right into animal kingdom. It is natural that in such a space in addition to creation of environmental spirituality, the common grounds of man and animal are increased and man should pay further attention to animals in his decisions than past. It is clear that such a view of animals will lead to the falsification of the proposition: “Man is the only creature who is of essential value.” In fact, by demonstration of the religiously grounded axiological foundations for animals a new proposition takes form, i.e., “Animals are of essential value without human existence”.

Authoring a new environmental law in which the factors of religiosity of animals is taken into account is one of the other benefits of this model. In this new legal system, due to the existing religious commonalities, we should expect the decrease of human supremacy over animal and as a result, the decrease of their suffering and pain.

The other point is that this model depicts an Abrahamic perspective of animals and will contribute to the expansion of interreligious dialogues in those societies that have a religious culture. According to the statistics, among 4.5 billion believers of Abrahamic religions, there are 2.5 billion Christians, 1.8 billion Muslims and 14 million Jews. The existence of dominant monotheist population, on the one hand, and geographical scattering of this population, on the other hand, provide a valuable opportunity for creation of an interreligious discourse.

It is noteworthy that in this research, there is no negative view of the use of the meat of animals by man. The existence of the common beliefs does not imply the ban of the use of animal meat, rather it is an emphasis on the axiological foundations of animals. We should not forget that the key religious figures have used meat and even in Islam the ban

of the use of meat is abominable. This study sought to demonstrate the emphasis on the essential value of animal as a religious entity. It is needless to say that the acceptance of this issue will prioritize the issue of non-exploitation of animals and necessity of observation of animal rights.

Among the weaknesses of the present study is the lack of the comparative studies on other Abrahamic Religions. The author hopes this gape be filled by other researchers in the domain of ethics. The following conclusions can be drawn from this model: 1) Demonstration of the “possibility of existence of the common beliefs among animals” disillusion the minds of this issue and paves the path for further research; 2) Expansion of the scope of axiological features of monotheism, prophecy and resurrection right into the borders of animal life; 3) Creation of a wider and even more humane view of animals; 4) Establishment of a new environmental law due to the founding of legal equity between man and animals; 5) Elimination of “I” and insistence on “We” in our moral decisions. (Because the animals are considered to be part of our ecological citizens); 6) Creation of a more peaceful and spiritual sense in encountering the animals; 7) Establishment of interreligious dialogue in religious cultures.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Alusi, Mahmud ibn `Abd Allah, *Rub al-ma`ani fi tafsir al-Quran al-`Azim wa-al-sab` al-mathani*, vol. 15, Beirut: Muassasat al-Risalah, 2015.
- Amoli, Abdullah Javadi, *The Tasnim: Tafsir of the Holy Quran*, vol. 10, ed. by Ruhollah Rezqi, Ali Ayoubi, and Waliullah Isazadeh, Qom: Isra Publishing Center, 2012.
- , *The Tasnim: Tafsir of the Holy Quran*, vol. 25, ed. by Ruhollah Rezqi, Ali Ayoubi, and Waliullah Isazadeh, Qom: Isra Publishing Center, 2012.
- al-Baghdadi, Ali ibn Mohammad ibn Ibrahim ibn Khalil, *Lobab al-Ta`wil fi Maani al-Tanzil*, vol. 2, Beirut: Dar Al-Kutub al-Ilmiya, 1995.
- Majlisi, Muḥammad Bāqir, *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 6, Teheran: Islamic Library, 1984.
- , *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 17, Teheran: Islamic Library, 1984.
- Motahari, Morteza, *Collection of Works: Sayr-i falsafa dar Islam, Kulliyat-i `ulum-i Islami (Mantiq, Falsafa), Sharb-i manẓuma*, vol. 5, Teheran: Sadra Islamic Philosophy Research Institute (SIPRI) Publication, 2012.
- Sadra, Muhammad ibn Ibrahim Mulla, *al-Ḥikmat al-Muta`aliyah fi `l-Asfār al-`Aqliyyah al-Arba`ah*, vol. 9, Teheran: Dar Ihyā' al-Turāth al-`Arabi, 1981.
- , *The Transcendent Wisdom in the Four Mental Travels*, vol. 8, Beirut: Dar Al-Ihya' Al-Torath Al-Arabi, 1981.
- , *Al-Shawahid al-Rububiyya fi Manahij al-Sulukīyya*, 3rd edition, ed. by Sayyid Jalal al-Din Ashtiyani, Qom: Bustan-i Kitab Institute, 2003.
- , 'The Treatise on The Resurrection of Things', in *The Collection Of Philosophical Treatises*, vol. 1, ed. by Saeed Nazari Tavakoli, Teheran: Islamic Wisdom Foundation Publications, 2010.
- , 'The Treatise on The Resurrection of Things', in *The Collection Of Philosophical Treatises*, vol. 2, ed. by Saeed Nazari Tavakoli, Teheran: Islamic Wisdom Foundation Publications, 2010.
- Shirazi, Nasser Makarem, *Nemooneh Interpretation*, vol. 13, Teheran: Islamic books house, 1995.
- Singer, Peter, "All Animals Are Equal", *Philosophic Exchange*, vol. 5, no. 1, 1974, p. 16.

- , *Practical Ethics*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979.
- , *Animal Liberation: The Definitive Classic of the Animal Movement*, New York: Harper Perennial, 2009.
- , "Practical Ethics", in *The Animal Ethics Reader*, ed. by Susan J. Armstrong and Richard G. Botzler, New York: Routledge, 2017, pp. 32–60.
- Tabari, Abu Ja'far Muhammad ibn Jarir ibn Yazid, *Tafsir al-Tabari*, vol. 7, Beirut: Dar al-Ma'rifah, 1992.
- Tabarsi, Husayn Taqi al-Nuri, *Mustadrak al-Wasail wa-mustanbat al-masail*, vol. 8, Qom: Al-Albait Institute, 1988.
- Tabatabai, Muhammad Husayn, *Al-Mizān, An Exegesis Of The Qur'an*, vol. 13, trans. by Mohammad Baqir Mousavi Hamedani, Qom: Seminary Teachers Association, Islamic Publications Office, 1999.
- , *Tafsir al-Mizān*, vol. 7, trans. by Mohammad Baqir Mousavi Hamedani, Qom: Seminary Teachers Association, Islamic Publications Office, 1999.
- , *Nibayat Al-Hikmah*, vol. 2, 2nd edition, trans. by Ali Shirvani, Qom: Book Garden, 2008.
- Tayyib, S. Abdul Hussein, *Atib Al-Bayan Fi Tafsir Al-Quran*, vol. 8, Teheran: Sabtin Institute, 2007.
- , *Atib Al-Bayan Fi Tafsir Al-Quran*, vol. 10, Teheran: Sabtin Institute, 2007.
- Tusi, Muhammad Ibn-al-Hasan at-, *al-Mabsut fi Fiqh al-Imamiya*, Teheran: al-Maktaba al-Murtadawiya li-Ihya, 1972.

