
THE ANIMAL CLAIM

Sensibility and the Creaturely Voice

TOBIAS MENELY

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS
CHICAGO AND LONDON

2015

sibility, the humanization of animals, and the animalization of humans—that remains in play through the twentieth century, from Charles Dana's diagnosis of "zoöphilpsychosis" as a nervous disorder defined by an obsessive sensitivity to animal suffering to Hannah Arendt's rejection of the Rousseauian politics of pity.

CHAPTER I

The Significant Voice:
Address and the Animal Sign

Books for young children teach animal names by relating them to the signature vocalization of the species: the *woof* or *meow*, *bah* or *neigh*. Thus they revise the hexameral tradition of Adam's naming by fiat by linking the word with a creaturely voice that precedes it. The animal vocalization serves as a transitional object, a kind of echolalia that is not intrinsically meaningful but provides an entrance to the symbolic, the domain of customary meanings. But there is another sense in which animals are known by their voices, not in taxonomic distinctness but in creaturely affinity. Rousseau observed that cattle low mournfully when brought to the slaughterhouse. A dog wags its tail and barks at its master, Henry More reminded Descartes. A wounded ox, Bernard Mandeville noted, will bellow, sigh, and groan in its suffering. Lowing, tail wagging, barking, bellowing, sighing, and groaning cannot be confused with the passions to which they give expression. Whether we characterize these vocal and gestural expressions as intentional or instinctive (an insecure distinction, in any case), they convey states of passion, fulfilling the canonical definition of the sign given by Peirce: "something which stands to somebody for something in some respect or capacity. It addresses somebody, that is, creates in the mind of that person an equivalent sign, or perhaps a more developed sign."¹ Particularly difficult to conceptualize, in the case of animal expression, is the issue of address, the implication that the sign is not just information adventitiously happened upon but directed, sent forth.² Address implies an act of framing or facing. The animal gestures and vocalizations establish a relation, anticipate a reception, appeal for a response. To whom—to what "somebody"—are they directed? Even if we decide that the uneasy lowing of the livestock brought to slaughter is pure reflex, what about the bovine appeal to the husbandman, with clear impli-

cations of relation and obligation, described by Thomson in *The Seasons*: "The cattle from the untasted fields return / And ask, with meaning low, their wonted stalls"³

This chapter situates sensibility, as a semiology of creaturely affect and address, in relation to a number of canonical accounts of human obligation that contrast the imperatives given by the spoken word with those of the creaturely voice. To begin, I turn to three exemplary premodern considerations of creaturely proximity: the two cosmogonies in Genesis, the political and linguistic philosophy of Aristotle, and René Descartes's correspondence with Henry More on the animal sign. I focus on what these widely discussed episodes in the history of Western anthropocentrism assume about the situation of communication, the relation between addresser and addressee. I next offer a brief overview of eighteenth-century sensibility as a semiology of sympathetic communication and the vocal imperative that offers an explicit alternative to the Cartesian paradigm. What is distinctive about sensibility is its attribution to the animal of not only semiotic legibility but a capacity for address, a turning toward that elicits response. Finally, I locate one afterlife of sensibility in the writings of two twentieth-century philosophers, Levinas and Derrida, for whom the addressive voice of the animal presents an unrelenting theoretical and ethical impasse, suggesting that the enigmas of the animal claim are with us still.

DOMINION: VOICE AND SPEECH

The foundational scriptural accounts of creaturely relation, the two cosmogonies in Genesis, confront the unsettling likeness of animals by staging man's unique relation, at the moment of his creation, to the divine speech act and the name. After he brings forth the "living creatures" that move through the air and sea on the fifth day, God's speech alters from primordial creation to blessing: "And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth." The divine blessing imparts the creative faculty of generation to the living creatures. It does not imply that the animals are answerable in a linguistic sense, but it does recognize that animate beings are uniquely subject to both spoken imperatives and earthly depredations. As Rashi explains, "Because they are decimated, captured and eaten they required a blessing."⁴ On the sixth day God forms the land animals and then "man in his own image." Two aspects of this likeness are made evident when in the next line the function of divine speech again changes. God addresses man

and woman: "And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion [*radah*] over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth."⁵ The introduction of the direct object ("unto them") indicates that human community with God will be linguistic. Human beings are addressed by God. Not only the form but also the content of this inaugural communication signals humankind's unique place in the creation, for God's very first statement is, in Augustine's words, the "divine ordinance" that establishes humankind as God's regents on earth.⁶ At this point the difference between humans and the other living creatures has no clear ontological content. All creatures are *nephesh chayah* (living, breathing beings), all partake of God's blessings and the imperative to procreate. The difference is political. The Hebrew word *radah* (literally, "to tread") characterizes a sovereign's rule over his subjects. The implications of the dispensation have been variously interpreted as a justification for absolute exploitation or as imposing an obligation of stewardship according to which human beings are answerable to God for their treatment of animals.⁷ In either case, however, God, having allocated the fruits of the earth to man and beast alike, *authorizes* human dominion with a verbal command, an address to which humans are uniquely subject. Why does he do this? Why is the relation between man and beast so clearly political, not the natural consequence of innate difference but the result of a command constitutive of the relationship it describes? Animals, we might conclude, are the living beings whose subjection requires a performative speech act, whose relation to human beings is the first concern of political speech.

What precipitates the creation of the animals in the second telling is God's recognition of Adam's solitude: "And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone, I will make him an help meet." Having come into the world before the animals, Adam is incomplete, and he is offered the possibility of discovering companionship among the other living creatures, who, like him, are formed of the blood-colored earth (*adamah*): "out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air, and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof." As the animals parade before him, the question of community is held in suspension.⁸ Though Adam seeks society among the creatures, he discovers only autonomy, his unique faculty for knowing and naming. Adam, after all, names the animals before he has anyone, besides God, with whom to converse. As Hobbes writes, Adam, a "philosopher

alone by himself," employed words as "marks" to serve his memory rather than as "signs" for communication.⁹ Or, as William Cowper characterized Adam in a late poem: in granting to "all creatures" a "name significant," he "learned not by degrees, / Nor owed articulation to his ear."¹⁰ In his first distinguishing act, Adam accepts his linguistic being in his capacity to discriminate, in his own mind, among the manifold living creatures. The action of naming appears to establish his relation to the animals as one of difference ["there was not found an help meet for him," necessitating the creation of woman], which is why Genesis 2:18-20 is widely read as continuous with 1:26-28. Authority is made immanent to Adam's speech, as the act of denomination confirms the original dispensation, providing "a sign and a proof of dominion," in the words of Bishop Bramhall.¹¹ There is a long-standing debate about the source of Adam's names—whether it is to be found in divine inspiration (*onomathesia*) or experience, whether the names are necessary or arbitrary—but the implication of his naming is clear. As Hegel writes, "Adam's first mediating action in establishing his dominion over the animals consisted in his granting them names; thus he denied them as independent beings and he transformed them into ideals."¹² Naming is an act of mastery continuous with God's first command (which supplies the transcendental origin of law), the moment wherein Adam achieves self-presence, and not community, at the expense of the animals whose passionate being is occluded in the ideality of the name.

Political communication in Genesis is nonsymmetrical. Adam and, by extension, mankind are God's representatives, endowed as his magistrates by his prior voice and answerable only to him. Aristotle, by contrast, characterizes political communication as a matter of formal equivalence, the categorical symmetry between addressor and addressee. This model of communicative reciprocity provides the theoretical basis for contract theory, even though Aristotle's polity is noncontractual. It is in the *Politics*, not his writings on natural history or semantics, that Aristotle establishes the crucial distinction between voice and speech:

Now that man is more of a political animal [*zoon politikon*] than bees or any other gregarious animals is evident. Nature, as we often say, makes nothing in vain, and man is the only animal who has the gift of speech [*logos*]. And whereas mere voice [*phone*] is but an indication of pleasure and pain, and is therefore found in other animals (for their nature attains to the perception of pleasure and pain and the intimation of them to one another, and no further), the power of speech is intended to set forth the expedient and the inexpedient, and therefore likewise

the just and the unjust. And it is characteristic of man alone that he has any sense of good and evil, and the like, and the association of living beings who have this sense makes a family and a state.¹³

What distinguishes the instinctual association of gregarious animals like ants, bees, and baboons from the political relations formed among human beings is communicative reason: spoken deliberation about matters both practical and philosophical.¹⁴ The polis is a community (*koinonia*) of rational speakers, a domain of justice that develops historically, extending outward from the family to the state. By contrast, animal communities, mediated by mere voice, are forever circumscribed in time and space. Speech supplies the grounds for inclusion in a just community, a community that can speak of justice, because according to the principle of reciprocity only beings capable of dialogue, of addressing and being addressed, are due justice. Like the hierarchical relation of the rational soul to the passions, the human relation to brute animals is nonreciprocal: "When there is such a difference as that between soul and body, or between men and animals . . . the lower sort are by nature slaves" (*Politics*, 10). Or, as Aristotle states in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, "Neither is there friendship toward a horse or an ox, nor to a slave *qua* slave. For there is nothing *in common* to the two parties."¹⁵ Because the horse or ox is a means to an end, a "living tool," rather than an end in itself, and is unable to enter into the circuit of discursive reciprocity, the communicative exchange that facilitates common life, neither friendship nor justice may be extended to it.

In the *Politics* the categorical distinction between *phone* and *logos* secures the horizon of community by separating human from animal. In his more analytical writings, however, Aristotle accepts a mental continuum between humans and other animals and finds it difficult to maintain any categorical distinction between voice and speech, both of which signify.¹⁶ Indeed, even in the famous passage in the *Politics* voice is said to disclose pain or pleasure, a foundational dichotomy that will organize any discussion of expediency or justice. The Greek word denoting the vocal intimation of pleasure and pain in the *Politics* is *sēmainein*: to give signs. *Sēma*, from which we get both "semantic" and "semiotic," is for Aristotle a general term that may refer to a signal, symptom, mark, or symbol. The principle of meaning in the *sēma* is, first and foremost, associated not with its origin but with its conscious interpretation. A sign is anything from which a thinking being might derive information.¹⁷ Hence voice must signify in a specific way to distinguish it from merely evidentiary signs, such as thunder. In *De Anima*, Aristotle characterizes *phone* as originating in

a sentient being's imagination: "Voice then is the impact of inbreathed air against the 'windpipe' and the agent that produces the impact is the soul resident in these parts of the body. . . . What produces the impact must have soul in it and must be accompanied by an act of imagination [*phantasia*], for voice is a sound with a meaning."¹⁸ *Phantasia* is the cognitive faculty, shared by humans and animals, that mediates through time between sense impressions and internal images or between images and ideas. Imagination enables a living being to perceive meaningful information in an environment, to compare experiences, and to transform information and experience into purposeful activity, including communication. To apprehend meaning in a vocal sign, then, is to recognize the one who emits it as a sensing, imagining being—as an interpreter and creator of signs. Aristotle, in other words, ascribes to vocal expression a quality he does not ascribe to signs in general: a directedness, an intention to mean.

In *De Interpretatione* Aristotle turns specifically to semantics, the significance of words and sentences, although here too he stresses the inseparability of voice and meaning. "Logos de esti phone semantike": speech is a signifying voice—or, "a sentence is a significant spoken sound" (*De Interpretatione*, 16b).¹⁹ Indeed, his most explicit statement on linguistic meaning in *De Interpretatione* does not depart greatly from the definition of vocal significance in *De Anima*: "Spoken sounds [*phonaí*] are symbols [*symbolon*] of affections in the soul [*pathémata tes psyches*], and written marks symbols of spoken sounds. And just as written marks are not the same for all men, neither are spoken sounds. But what these are in the first place signs [*semeia*] of—affections of the soul—are the same for all, and what these affections are likenesses of—actual things [*pragmata*]—are also the same" (16a).²⁰ Here Aristotle introduces two important distinctions, departing from Plato and establishing the triadic model of the sign that would be developed by Augustine and the scholastics.²¹ The symbolic relation of the signifier, whether spoken or written, to what it signifies is conventional, whereas the mimetic relation between a mental impression (a signified) and the things of the world (referents) is natural. It is the conventional quality of human voice, its availability for arbitrary signification, rather than any mental origin of meaning, that introduces the distinction between symbolic speech and animal expressivity: "I say 'by convention' because no name is a name [*ónoma*, also translated as "noun" or "word"] naturally but only when it has become a symbol. Even inarticulate noises (of beasts, for instance) do indeed reveal something, yet none of them is a name" (*De Interpretatione*, 16b). It is more difficult to establish the difference between human and animal with regard to any natu-

ral dimension of meaning, the relation of mental impressions to objects, for *pathémata* encompasses a range of cognitive phenomena, from sensations to opinions to *phantasia* (De Cuypere and Willems, "Meaning and Reference," 321). It is only if we substitute for *pathémata* the preexistent knowledge (*nous*) of a being with a rational soul—if, in other words, we presume the prior categorical identity of the human as a rational animal—that speech (*logos*), which in itself never fully transcends the passions and the voice, can be understood [tautologically] as the source of human exceptionality. It is not that in Aristotle's analysis of meaning there is no difference between animal voice and human speech, signs and symbols, *phone* and *phone semantike*, but that these phenomena meet at a point of semiotic indistinguishability, such that any absolute distinction between them appears arbitrary.

For Aristotle, what in a descriptive or analytic register appears to be a subtle and even unsupportable semiotic distinction between types of meaning turns out in a prescriptive or political register to be decisive. It is decisive in that it reflects a decision, the sovereign decision that founds the political order. This is why Giorgio Agamben, at the beginning of *Homo Sacer*, cites the canonic paragraph distinguishing voice from speech in the *Politics* as exemplifying, even inaugurating, the "structure of exception" in Western political thought.²² It is a "supplement of politicized language," as Agamben puts it, that enables man to overcome his status as a living being (*zoon*) and enter the realm of collective life (*bios*) (3). The political relation conceptualized by Aristotle, in Agamben's reading, begins not in the constructive reciprocity of communicative reason, but in the initial exclusion of animal voice: "The living being has *logos* by taking away and conserving its own voice in it, even as it dwells in the *polis* by letting its own bare life be excluded, as an exception, within it" (8). To enter human community, in this sense, is to disavow one's own voice, as well as the voices of others, to "except" the *phone*, the affective expressivity associated with living being, as a prerequisite for speaking with others about common life. The *Politics* begins with a decision that establishes the political domain by defining what kinds of speech—in fact, whose voices—will matter, will mean something. As Jacques Rancière observes in a reading of the *Politics* that recalls the root of *logos*, the verb *legein* (to gather, to count, to account): "Politics arises from a count of community 'parts,' which is always a false count, a double count, or a miscount."²³ The political domain does not begin in speech, no more than it begins with the distinction between animal and human, for it is the political that, in the first instance, affirms this privileging of spoken communication, this

account of identity. In Rancière's words, "Politics exists because the logos is never simply speech, because it is always indissolubly the *account* that is made of this speech: the account by which a sonorous emission is understood as speech, capable of enunciating what is just, whereas some other emission is merely perceived as a noise signaling pleasure or pain" (23).

René Descartes is the most infamous among the clutch of early modern and modern philosophers whose denial of the significance of animal voice supplies a foundational condition for modern epistemology and ethics. "We must not confuse speech with the natural movements which express passions and which can be imitated by machines as well as by animals. Nor should we think, like some of the ancients, that the beasts speak, although we do not understand their language," he states in his 1637 *Discourse on Method*.²⁴ Animal expression, from the cry of pain to the mimicry of magpies, is simply an extension of physical motion, the meaningless reflex action of a being without mental intention. "They cannot show that they are thinking what they are saying," he asserts. Our human speech, by contrast, signifies rational ideas, conveying the ideational substance (*res cogitans*) from one mind to another. Indeed, it is the fact that we use "words, or put together other signs, to declare our thoughts to others" that enables an observer to distinguish human beings from automatons. In the reciprocity and mutual recognition facilitated by spoken language, in what Élisabeth de Fontenay calls "the answering word," we know that another is more than a mechanical body.²⁵ Articulate, inventive language use and rational behavior are the two forms of indisputable evidence we have of another's consciousness. The Cartesian individual affirms his own existence by virtue of his thoughts, not least his capacity for doubt, but he requires the mediation of signs, which are corporeal things (*res extensa*), to know that other people have an intellect similar to his own. Like the pineal gland, the linguistic sign turns out to be one of those mysterious ontological intersections, resistant to dualistic explanation, where the rational soul penetrates and controls physical matter.²⁶

The status of the sign is at the crux of the debate in Descartes's correspondence on animal automatism with Henry More. Indeed, More's rejection of the *bête machine* is a foundational moment in the development of sensibility as a semiology concerned with animal signs and human response. Though an early advocate of Cartesianism in England, More wrote to Descartes in 1648 objecting to the mechanistic conception of animal life, a "deadly and murderous sentiment."²⁷ In his initial letter, More allows that animals "are not able to speak, nor can they plead their cause before a judge." Yet, he points out, when domesticated creatures beg for

food, "they are quite aware of what they want"—indeed, of the "meaning" of their "sounds"—and, moreover, their signs are effective, "since, thanks to such sounds, their desires are gratified" (50–51). Anybody who lives with dogs witnesses proof of "inner consciousness," a capacity to communicate and recognize other minds (51). Birds sing and listen, evidence of "sense and reflexion." Animals address us and may, in turn, be addressed. We might, More writes optimistically, use our "words [to] restrain the ferocity of wild beasts." In reply, Descartes acknowledges that his claims about animal cognition defy common sense: "there is no preconceived opinion to which we are all more accustomed from our earliest years than the belief that dumb animals think."²⁸ Just as he finds evidence for the rationality of the human stranger in spoken "words," he finds reason to doubt animal mind based on their signs, which, he claims, are involuntary, corporeal, and altogether nonideal. Animals signify as smoke signals fire, without intention or address. Horses and dogs are trainable, he allows, and, indeed, "all animals easily communicate to us, by *voice or bodily movement*, their natural impulses of anger, fear, hunger, and so on" (365, my emphasis). While vocalization and gesture may convey sensation from an animal to a human being, however, "it has never been observed that any brute animal has attained the perfection of using real speech, that is to say, of indicating by word or sign something relating to thought alone and not to natural impulse." This definition of the sign is arrived at through a peculiar negation: the word refers to an idea wholly untainted by passion. We may know ourselves and the world, according to Descartes, without reference to embodied experience. Words convey this knowledge. Replying to Descartes, More offers a more comprehensive definition of the sign, asking: "Do not dogs nod 'yes' with their tails, as we do with our heads? Do they not often by little barks beg for something to eat at table? Nay, more, sometimes touching their master's elbow with their paw, as respectfully as they can, they remind him by this fawning sign that he has forgotten them" (54). Not only do the canine signs express sensate states, passionate rather than ideational, but they also refer to objects in a shared world and to an affective relationship, that between dog and master. They are, moreover, rhetorically effective, a source of social agency. At the root of the disagreement between Descartes and More, then, are differing conceptions of the sign. Descartes defines the sign narrowly, as an instrument for conveying preexisting rational ideas. More defines the sign broadly, as expressing passions, referring to objects, invoking relationships through direct address, and even acting in a common world.

As for Aristotle, for Descartes a nuanced and perhaps indefensible se-

miotic distinction, between signs attesting solely to ideas and signs motivated by passions, has decisive consequences for moral community. In his letter to More, Descartes does not say that animals cannot experience or communicate pain, as he does, so notoriously, elsewhere ("pain exists only in the understanding").²⁹ He says only that they lack reasoned speech, a capacity to refer to an idea of pain rather than pain itself. Yet this distinction—between one who can abstract one's pain into the ideality of the word and one for whom pain is always merely pain—serves to render the suffering of animals morally inconsequential. "Thus my opinion," he tells More, "is not so much cruel to animals as indulgent to human beings—at least to those who are not given to the superstitions of Pythagoras—since it absolves them from the suspicion of a crime when they eat or kill animals" (366). What Descartes does not explain in his letter to More is why one might persistently misunderstand animal signs so as to ascribe to them moral significance, why this nonlanguage of voice and gesture produces a feeling of commiseration to which one might assign an ethical imperative. In other words, what causes the discomfiture—indeed, the bad conscience—of one who harms animals? If his opinion is not cruel, as More had suggested it is, why describe its implications in religious terms, as an indulgence for a sin already committed? Absolution is, of course, an extension of absolutism.

In these canonic accounts of creaturely proximity—Judeo-Christian, Greek, and early modern—the conceptualization of semantic meaning, defined in opposition to animal voice, establishes a conclusive limit to ethico-political responsibility. To be responsible is to be responsive to the imperative of the word. Speech confronts an absolute limit: it cannot create community among living beings. It lifts humans from nature, the condition of sensate and finite bodies, into history, the pursuit of the just society, only insofar as it transcends the animal voice. Yet these three exemplary cases of Western anthropocentrism also record hesitation, ambivalence, and anxiety about the significance of other animals, such as the odd moment when Adam searches for a companion among his fellow creatures, or Aristotle's investigations outside the *Politics* of the semiotic inseparability of *phone* and *logos*, or Descartes's admission that animals do "communicate with us." This dissonance, the compulsion to claim dominion and the uncertainty about its foundations, is symptomatic of the peculiar hold that other animals have on us. The question of *how* we

justify dominion, rationalizing and staging our sovereignty as we police the borderlands of creaturely likeness, has been widely examined. A more difficult question is *why* we justify dominion—why, if human identity is self-evident and human community securely self-enclosed, there is even a need for the anthropocentric account, the "deflection" or disavowal that establishes the human exception.³⁰ Can we not sense in the elaborate emphasis on the uniqueness of human speech and the inarticulacy of animal voice a response to the communicative pressure of a nonhuman claim?

The disavowal of animal voice as a mode of meaningful address offers a characteristic instance of what Jean-François Lyotard terms a *differend*, a case where a party "is divested of the means to argue," is harmed and given no "means to prove the damage."³¹ The perfect crime, Lyotard points out, is one where the victims are silenced, their testimony deemed meaningless. The *differend* encompasses the "genres of discourse," whether formal rules or informal conventions, that preclude us from hearing animal voices or recognizing the meaning of animal signs. Indeed, Lyotard considers the "animal" to be "a paradigm of the victim" because animals are "deprived of the possibility of bearing witness according to the human rules for establishing damages, and as a consequence, every damage is like a wrong" (28). In a short "Supplement to *The Differend*," Lyotard turns specifically to the semiotic status of what he calls an "affect-phrase," the signs of "pleasure and pain" that Aristotle associates with animal voice, including "growlings, pantings, sighs," and "*gesture*."³² While in *The Differend* the nonsignificance of animal voice is given as an instance of dispossession, in the "Supplement" Lyotard stresses the intrinsic incommensurability between natural expressivity and conventional language. Elaborating on a distinction ascribed to Aristotle, Lyotard argues that the vocal or gestural affect-phrase lacks an addressee. Affective expressivity is evidentiary but noncommunicative, subjective rather than intersubjective: "the affect-phrase is not originally sent to somebody" (109). That it ever arrives—becoming meaningful insofar as it is taken up by an interpreter—is an accident. Like Aristotle, Lyotard defines community in terms of formal reciprocity: "the concourse of voices, their sharing, does not make up a community properly speaking (which requires addressors and addressees), but a sort of communicability or transitivity of affects without the expectation of return" (110). Like Descartes, he sees in the ideality of verbal language a transcendence of the passions that enables rational reflection and social reciprocity: "in contrast to the *phone*, [the word] has lost all immediate affective value" (108). For a community of speakers, then, the meaning of affective signification can only be negative, "able to

suspend or interrupt" spoken discourse (105). Of course, because voice is the condition of spoken articulation, this suspension or interruption, this haunting "remnant" or trace of animal affectivity, is intrinsic to all meaning and to every community (106).

There is a diverse countertradition as ancient as anthropocentric metaphysics, a persistent minority of thinkers who have explicitly recognized the claims articulated in animal address. "Why should it be a defect in the beasts, not in us, which stops all communication between us?" asks Montaigne in his *Apology for Raymond Sebond* (1580).³³ "We can see they have means of complaining, rejoicing, calling on each other for help or inviting each other to love," he continues. "They do so by meaningful utterances: if that is not talking, what is it? How could they fail to talk among themselves, since they talk to us and we to them?" (23). As both Descartes and More acknowledged, Montaigne offered a particularly powerful modern rejoinder to the tradition of metaphysical humanism premised on animal silence. Descartes also rejects the "superstitions of Pythagoras," a reminder that in antiquity a number of philosophers spoke *contra* Aristotle of interspecies communication. In "On the Eating of Flesh," Plutarch complains that we "assume that when they utter cries and squeaks their speech is inarticulate," and the Neoplatonist Porphyry wrote a vegetarian tract, *On Abstinence from Flesh*, in which he observes, "Since . . . what is vocally expressed by the tongue is reason, in whatever manner it may be expressed, whether in a barbarous or a Grecian, a canine or a bovine mode, other animals also participate of it that are vocal."³⁴ Throughout history and across cultures, beast fables and folk traditions have recognized animal articulacy. As I argue, however, it is only in the long eighteenth century that, in the West at least, the meaningfulness of the claim borne by animal signs came to be widely *accounted for*, in Rancière's sense, in moral and political philosophy, in popular art and literature.

SENSIBILITY, THE NATURAL SIGN, AND THE CREATURELY VOICE

In *Of Grammatology*, Derrida characterizes the "eighteenth century"—"the Age of Rousseau"—in terms of a "crisis" that opens a "breach in logocentric security" and "restores the rights of sensibility, the imagination, and the sign" (98). This "crisis" was a reconceptualization of communication that stresses the relation of the "sensible sign" not to the "idea," and thus to the rational will of the cogitating subject, but to the passions, the passive subjection of one who feels. Derived from the Latin *sentire* ("to be

aware"), sensibility describes the affective susceptibility of a sentient being, passion as an opening to the world and an openness to the passions of others. Whether physiological, sympathetic, or aesthetic, this sensitivity was widely conceptualized in semiotic terms. After Descartes, it is often the sensible sign, in its narrowly linguistic and broadly semiotic manifestations, that is given the role of mediating between body and mind.³⁵ Indeed, it was Henry More who coined the word "sensorium" in 1647 to identify the corporeal medium of sensate communication. In his influential account of sensibility's materialist origins, G. S. Rousseau remarks that "the *nerve* emerged as 'the *signifier*' in every nontranscendental theory of "human behavior."³⁶ Anatomists treated the sensate body as a system coordinated by the "communication" or "sympathy" of the nerves, while moral-sense philosophers employed these very terms to describe the harmonizing of individual interests in an emerging commercial society. What defines this communication, whether it mediates subjectivity or society, is its affective content. As Derrida puts it in his discussion of Rousseau, the individual's "auto-affectation" is externalized, brought to the "outside, the exposed surface of the body," in a form that "signifies," enabling the individual to be "affected by," and to affect, "the other" (165). Those qualities of being that are the most socially meaningful, the passions, manifest on the surface of the body, which is figured not as a barrier of mute flesh but an expressive instrument. Critics have long noticed that the "somatic utterance"—the expressivity of voice, countenance, and gesture, the blush and tear, the trembling body—plays a crucial role in eighteenth-century literature.³⁷

While Locke, envisaging a science "called *Semeiotike*, or the doctrine of signs, the most usual whereof being words," precedes Saussure in taking the word as the exemplum by which all signs will be judged, other Enlightenment thinkers inverted this approach.³⁸ They regarded natural signs, such as the vocal and gestural signs with which animals express passions, as paradigmatic of signification because temporally prior to the invention of words. As an example, consider the account of natural signification given by the Scottish common sense philosopher Thomas Reid in his *Inquiry into the Human Mind* (1764). Reid uses "language" as a general term encompassing all the "signs which mankind use in order to communicate their thoughts and intentions, their purposes and desires."³⁹ He distinguishes between artificial signs, those given by agreement or custom, and natural signs, those that "have a meaning which every man understands by the principles of his nature." The communicative "elements" of natural language include "modulations of the voice," bodily "gestures,"

and the "features" of the face [94]. Human strangers who lack a common language, Reid notes, "can converse together . . . ask and refuse, affirm and deny, threaten and supplicate," and it is only because of such natural communication that human beings could have come together in order to invent conventional language [94-95]. This primary language of voice and gesture is shared with other animals. "Even the brutes," he writes, "have some natural signs by which they express their own thoughts, affections, and desires, and understand those of others" [93]. A chick, for instance, innately understands the commands of its dam (the example of communication among chickens in theorizations of the sign goes back at least to Augustine). This preconventional language, Reid notes, even facilitates communication across species boundaries. Nonhumans comprehend the human voice: "a dog or horse understands, by nature, when the human voice caresses, and when it threatens" [93-94]. Reid regards these natural signs, common to all creatures, as having many of the qualities of artificial signs. They are intentional, rather than merely evidentiary; they are addressive, directed toward others; and they are potentially efficacious, able to motivate action.

It is with reference to this natural language that Enlightenment thinkers, following Henry More, articulated their objections to the *bête machine* hypothesis and the cruelties it sanctioned. In his physicotheological treatise *The Wisdom of God Manifested in the Works of Creation* [1691], the naturalist John Ray observed our native human capacity to read and respond to animal signs:

Should this be true, that Beasts were *Automata* or *Machines*, they could have no Sense or Perception of Pleasure or Pain, and consequently no Cruelty could be exercis'd towards them; which is contrary to the doleful Significations they make when beaten or tormented, and contrary to the common Sense of Mankind, all Men naturally pitying them, as apprehending them to have such a Sense and Feeling of Pain and Misery as themselves have; whereas no man is troubled to see a Plant torn, or cut, or stamp't, or mangled how you please.⁴⁰

Ray discovers evidence of animal mind not by analogical reasoning or behavioral observation but in the animal's capacity to signify and in our intrinsic capacity to understand these significations. We innately recognize a difference between plants and animals, first-order ontological knowledge derived from the legibility of animal passion. For Ray, the distinction between speech and voice does not disappear—"Speech is an Action more

peculiar to Man, and which more distinguishes him from Brutes, than the *Hand*" [363]—but the creature's "doleful significations" have a self-evident epistemological status, as well as straightforward ethical implications.

Similarly, the political economist Bernard Mandeville, in *The Fable of the Bees* (1714), argues that our automatic receptivity to creaturely expressivity, which he details vividly, gives lie to Cartesian skepticism:

When a large and gentle Bullock, after having resisted a ten times greater force of Blows than would have kill'd his Murderer, falls stunn'd at last, and his arm'd Head is fasten'd to the Ground with Cords; as soon as the wide Wound is made, and the Jugulars are cut asunder, what Mortal can without Compassion hear the painful Bellowings intercepted by his Blood, the bitter Sighs that speak the Sharpness of his Anguish, and the deep sounding Groans with loud Anxiety fetch'd from the bottom of his strong and palpitating Heart; Look on the trembling and violent Convulsions of his Limbs; see . . . his Eyes become dim and languid, and behold his Strugglings, Gasps and last Efforts for Life, the certain Signs of his approaching Fate? When a Creature has given such convincing and undeniable Proofs of the Terrors upon him, and the Pains and Agonies he feels, is there a Follower of *Descartes* so inur'd to Blood, as not to refute, by his commiseration, the Philosophy of that vain Reasoner?⁴¹

The bull's bellows, sighs, and groans are marks of sentience, not pain itself but the externalization of pain in a shared world. The felt facts of creaturely being are indubitable. Knowing establishes its firm ground not in the drama of internal cogitation, as for Descartes, but rather in the "convincing and undeniable Proofs" of another's passions.⁴² The modulations of voice and expression, the cries and groans of the animal, signify unequivocally, in contrast with the ambiguity, deceit, and equivocation characteristic of human language. As Matthew Lauzon observes, for thinkers confronting the Enlightenment's "crisis of representation," "the example of an unambiguous animal language was intended to be redemptive," approximating a prelapsarian form of communication.⁴³ "The natural cries of all animals," Edmund Burke writes in his *Philosophical Enquiry* (1757), "never fail to make themselves sufficiently understood; this cannot be said of language."⁴⁴ With respect to the interpretation of animal signs, there is no question for these thinkers of projection, appropriation, or anthropomorphism. There is no suggestion that the claim to read or know an animal mind is a fiction. Reversing the Cartesian skepticism that carries

over into modern epistemologies of animal mind (and other minds), these thinkers, writing in the diverse fields of natural history, political economy, and aesthetics, regard creaturely expression as intrinsically discernible. What grounds their certainty is neither the self-presence of cogitation nor the empirical clarity of the external fact, but the signifying power of the voice.

Ray and Mandeville both identify the human as an active oppressor, agential in a physical, instrumental sense. We beat and torment, wound and injure. In this corporeal domain, animals are passive and vulnerable. Surprisingly, though, in the domain of communication these positions are reversed. The animal is active, intentional, and articulate as it addresses a human witness, clamoring for recognition. Its voice, as a plea or entreaty, is efficacious. It is in this communicative relation that the human, as addressee, is passive, moved by the animal voice. Consider the scene of slaughter described by Mandeville, a rhetorical contest in which the pathetic power of the bull's voice proves, at least hypothetically, more compelling than the Cartesian's propositions about animal automatism, which appear nakedly sophistic, if not altogether solipsistic. Voice asserts its priority, both temporal and rhetorical, vis-à-vis conventional language. "Reason excites our Compassion but faintly," Mandeville writes; it is "the Symptoms of Misery" that "affect our Understanding" (173). The mechanist's very commiseration with the expressive animal, and the disavowal that follows, refutes the theory of the *bête machine*. Mandeville makes a similar point about how scripture justifies dominion. Confronted with the "Pangs" of an animal suffering a "violent Death," "most People" will refer back to God's sanction: "all Things being allow'd to be made for the Service of Man, there can be no Cruelty in putting Creatures to the use they were design'd for" (173). Yet, writes Mandeville, "I have heard Men make this Reply, whilst their Nature within them has reproach'd them with the Falshood of the Assertion." Mandeville sees in claims of human exceptionality and unfettered dominion an anxious response to a prior apprehension of creaturely likeness. The very deflection of the animal sign is evidence of its irrepressible eloquence.⁴⁵

Sensibility is concerned not only with first-order signs and vocal proximity—the community established in the contiguity of bodies, "the face-to-face of countenances and the immediate range of the voice" (Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, 138)—but also with the ways in which affect signs are reflected, refracted, and remediated. As an account of ethical responsibility, for instance, sensibility emphasizes not the individual's active will but a receptivity to the affect sign, a sensitivity that is made virtuous

only through the additional mediation of reflection or representation. The capacity to vocalize a claim to moral consideration is creaturely, even if responsibility for such claims is definitively human. Similarly, Enlightenment aesthetic theory develops around the problem of the reflexive, second-order mediation of natural signs. The "fine arts," Reid observes, are founded on "*the natural language of mankind*" (111, emphasis in original). While conventional signs facilitate abstract cognition, natural signs "give force and energy to language" (96–97). Great orators and poets, according to Reid, recover a communicative power that has been "unlearned" in the learning of culture. In the four chapters that follow, I consider some implications of sensibility's model of the natural sign—and of its remediation in poetic language, print culture, and political debate—for the Enlightenment's conceptualization of interspecies community. Creaturely address instigates a response, whether deflective or reflective, that is both a continuation and a transformation of the semiotic process, not unlike the dynamic described by Peirce of a sign which "addresses somebody, that is, [which] creates in the mind of that person an equivalent sign, or perhaps a more developed sign." It is, I will suggest, just such an understanding of communicative heterogeneity, of intersecting yet incommensurate signs, that underlies the widespread sense, in the eighteenth century, that the just community—limited neither by the immediate range of voice nor the distinctively human participation in the symbolic domain—is still to come.

THE MIDDLE VOICE IN LEVINAS AND DERRIDA

The questions to which sensibility turns us—of the nature and force of the sign (as such) and its relation to the appearance in history of a responsibility irreducible to any categorical imperative or linguistic speech act—remain unresolved. To establish one context for my reading of eighteenth-century sensibility, then, I will briefly consider the reemergence of these aporias in the ethical thought of the two twentieth-century thinkers who most compellingly repositioned the genealogy of morals as the history of an untimely communicative injunction—a "preoriginal saying," as Emmanuel Levinas writes.⁴⁶ Levinas's term for the communicative receptivity by which one is made answerable to another is, as it happens, *sensibilité*: "an exposure to others, a vulnerability and a responsibility in the proximity of the others, the-one-for-the-other, that is, signification" (*Otherwise*, 77). Or, in short, an appropriate motto for the eighteenth-century conversation this book recovers: "signification is sensibility" (67).

This formulation offers more than a felicitous etymological echo, for Levinas's thought is in many ways continuous with the ethics and aesthetics of sensibility.⁴⁷ *Sensibilité* is a semiotic condition related to what he calls *saying* (*le Dire*), the active unsettling of the *said* (*le Dit*), a communicative act irreducible to semantic convention. "Saying," he writes, is "anterior to verbal signs, anterior to linguistic systems" (17). Its imperatives reside not in those conventional meanings, the mastery of which defines our status as socialized beings, but in a corporeal proximity that is communicated "on the surface of the skin, at the edge of the nerves" (223). Like Hume, Levinas characterizes identity as a coming-after, a condition of being placed in-relation passively and passionately to another's signification. This belatedness of identity is explicitly *creaturely*. The "privilege of the Other," he writes, "ceases to be incomprehensible once we admit that the first fact of existence is neither being in-itself (*en soi*) or nor being for-itself (*pour soi*) but being for the other; in other words that human existence is a creature."⁴⁸ By discovering responsibility emerging in the "absolute passivity of being a creature, of substitution," Levinas offers an alternative to the self-consciousness and intention, always inseparable from linguistic reason, that characterize Kantian deontological ethics.⁴⁹ Responsibility derives neither from conventional agreements nor from imperatives established in the individual's goodwill, but rather from our passionate responsiveness to another's passionate vulnerability.

The significance of the other is, for Levinas, communicated most powerfully in the "expressive" face: the human gaze and countenance. As has been widely observed, it is in the ontology of the human visage that Levinas, having conceptualized a foundational ethical injunction in nonlinguistic signification, turns away from other animals and isolates the human exception. Our exceptional status derives not from our linguistic being but from our capacity to find ourselves in relation to others who share our species form, the unique human ways in which we come face-to-face. This stable form—morphological resemblance, the human imago—circumscribes the domain of meaningful signification, the domain in which we may find ourselves addressed, faced by another. The similitude that brings the wholly other into the sphere of our responsibility is disclosed in a signification that is not verbal but is still intrinsically human. In a 1986 interview Levinas was asked about the categorical distinctiveness of the human face. His answer attests to uncertainty regarding the identity of the animal, an instance of the equivocation so frequently encountered in philosophical anthropocentrism: "One cannot entirely refuse the face of an animal. It is via the face that one under-

stands, for example, a dog. Yet the priority here is not found in the animal, but in the human face."⁵⁰ A similar ambivalence, a conditional granting of ethical consideration to other animals followed by a reiteration of absolute human primacy, is found in Levinas's well-known meditation, in "The Name of a Dog, or Natural Rights," on Bobby, the friendly canine who treated Levinas and his fellow prisoners in a Nazi internment camp like "men," making this dog "the last Kantian in Nazi Germany, without the brain needed to universalize maxims and drives."⁵¹ Generally Levinas concludes that the animal does not have a face, does not face or address us, does not precede or call upon us. "The being of animals is a struggle for life . . . without ethics," he observed in the 1986 interview (72). Yet this disavowal of the animal, based on a narrow but decisive conceptualization of signifying address, is unexpected, for Levinas's account of community seems uniquely open to explaining how we do and have come to enter into shared life with other creatures.

Derrida is "surprised" by this turn from the nonhuman in the work of a philosopher whose "thinking of the other" would seem to "privilege the question and the request of the animal," whether an "audible or silent appeal" (*The Animal*, 113). While Derrida recognizes in Levinas the same defensive posture characteristic of metaphysical humanism, the foundational exclusion of animality as the condition for thinking community, he increasingly follows Levinas, as well as the Enlightenment philosophers of sensibility, in characterizing responsibility in terms of a responsivity instigated by an affect sign—a call or cry, a passionate voice. In contrast with the self-relation of the Kantian subject, who speaks to himself categorically, and the linguistic reciprocity described by contract theorists, for Derrida we are, in the first instance, called upon. We are addressed in what he, in the canonical early essay "Différance" (1968), refers to as the "middle voice": *différance* is that which "is neither simply active nor simply passive, announcing or rather recalling something like the middle voice, saying an operation that is not an operation, an operation that cannot be conceived either as passion or as the action of a subject on an object."⁵² Derrida explicitly links the middle voice—an unusual grammatical form, in which a verb is inflected in such a way that the status of the subject, as active or passive, is ambiguous, or in which the subject is reflexive, acting on itself—with the address of the other in Levinas's ethical thought.

Of course, the primary aim of Derrida's early work was to question the "transcendent dignity" of the voice. Aristotle's *phone*, he explained in an interview with Julia Kristeva, "is the signifying substance *given to consciousness* as that which is most intimately tied to the thought of the

signified concept. From this point of view, the voice is consciousness itself.⁵³ In contrast with written language, speech affirms a model of communication that represses the constitutive role of the signifier, which, in its material exteriority, would interrupt the subjective self-presence that guarantees knowledge as well as the consistency of communication. "Communication," for the phonologocentric thinker, "presupposes subjects (whose identity and presence are constituted before the signifying operation) and objects (signified concepts, a thought meaning that the passage of communication will have neither to constitute, nor, by all rights, to transform)" ("Semiology and Grammatology," 23). No less than the individual identity, the *human* identity of this self-present speaking subject, this Adamic being, is established before he enters into communication, and thus community, with others. In *Of Grammatology*, Derrida positions both Aristotle and Rousseau in this phonologocentric tradition, which conflates voice with the ideality of meaning and the self-presence of the thinking subject so as to obscure the differential work of the signifier, the passivity that is the condition of action, the nonmeaning that enables meaning.⁵⁴

Yet, as Derrida acknowledged, "the history of the *phone*" is "fully enigmatic," for voice is no less proximate to the animal passions than to human ideation.⁵⁵ To consider the voice, he observed, is to confront the "problem of the cry—of that which one has always excluded, pushing it into the area of animality, or of madness" (*Of Grammatology*, 166). Voice produces a passionate excess resistant to the linguistically mediated "idea"—resistant, above all, to an understanding of verbal communication as active and ideational, given the way no vocalized utterance is ever altogether free of impassioned inflection. In his later "ethicopolitical" writings, and specifically in his turn to what in an interview with Jean-Luc Nancy he called the "question of the animal," Derrida seems to have reconsidered the status of voice, specifically focusing on its place in an "ethics and politics of the living."⁵⁶ Metaphysical humanism is premised, after all, on the exclusion of creaturely voice, as that which does not properly signify, that which, as passionate passivity, cannot respond or reciprocate.⁵⁷ As Derrida puts it, the sundering of loquacious man from the silent animal has had the effect of restricting the sphere of obligation and justifying "a noncriminal putting to death"—a sacrificial logic he terms "*carno-phallogocentrism*" ("Eating Well," 278, 280). In his interview with Nancy, Derrida challenges the doctrinal Kantian account of the formation of the responsible subject based on "presence to self." As for Levinas, for Derrida responsibility begins in responsivity, our status as beings who are

addressed, given self-definition only in the passivity of an "acquiescing to language" (261). To be addressed by a voice—and, as we will see, particularly an animal voice—is to be placed in what Derrida regards as the exemplary situation of ethics: to experience an injunction in the interruption of the very categories (self, human) that stabilize identity, to experience a claim irreducible to any categorical imperative, to be confronted with a decision for which there is no rule to follow.⁵⁸ One model for this interruptive address, this "call," is friendship, which is why Derrida, signaling a rethinking of the problematic of the voice (and, specifically, a response to Heidegger), asks whether the "voice of the friend [can] be that of an animal" (278). The origin of "this voice . . . the call [*Ruf*] that provokes or convokes 'conscience'" (275), he affirms, exceeds any assumptions about the intrinsic "humanity of language" (277). While there remains an "undisableable" sense in which "man is the only speaking being," human language exists within a wider semiotic field defined by "the mark in general, of the trace, of iterability, of difference. These possibilities or necessities, without which there would be no language, are themselves not only human" (284–85).

In his 1997 lectures at Cerisy-la-Salle, which have proved so influential in the scholarly turn to the animal, Derrida describes a historical transformation, beginning in the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century, in our "being-with" other animals (*The Animal*, 24). Subjugation may be "as old as man," but over the past "two centuries" it has taken new intellectual and material forms in genetic manipulation, experimentation, and the industrialization of meat production (24–25). This singular "event," the "unprecedented proportions of this subjection of the animal," is matched by a "global . . . forgetting or misunderstanding of this violence," a claim that recalls Berger's assertion about the disappearance of animals in modernity (25–26). Yet this violence and its dissimulation have been countered by what Derrida calls "a new experience of . . . compassion," mobilized, he says, in the "voices" of animal advocates—"minority, weak, marginal voices"—"in order to protest," to appeal to "*animal rights*," to "awaken us to our responsibilities and our obligations vis-à-vis the living" (26–27).⁵⁹ Derrida presents the "sentiment of compassion," expressed in externality of a passionate voice that speaks in the place of the passivity of another, as modernity's most significant counterpoint to the systemic violence enacted on animals (29).

Derrida identifies these sentiments—this *sensibility*, attentive to the animal claim—as his own. The subject of the Cerisy lectures was *l'animal autobiographique*; his are "words from the heart" (*The Animal*, 1). How,

I wonder, would deconstruction explain the relation of "words" to the "heart"? "I am very sentimental," Derrida admitted to Richard Rorty, "and I believe in happiness; and I believe that this has an altogether determinant place in my work."⁶⁰ "Deconstruction," he told Richard Kearney, is "a vocation—a response to a call."⁶¹ Is deconstruction, then, a "sentimental" project, a reading practice and vocation inherited from the age of Rousseau? And if so, what is the relation between the imperative toward responsibility borne by the voice or call of another, or of the sympathetic communication of feeling, and the substitutions and supplementarity, the traces and deferrals that are, for Derrida, the conditions of meaning?⁶² At Cerisy, Derrida specifically described the workings of sympathy when we are confronted with a "realist painting" of animal suffering under industrial capitalism:

If these images are "pathetic," if they evoke sympathy, it is because they "pathetically" open the immense question of pathos and the pathological, precisely, that is, of suffering, pity, and compassion; and the place that has to be accorded to the interpretation of this compassion, to the sharing of this suffering among the living, to the law, ethics, and politics that must be brought to bear upon this experience of compassion. [26]

I can only begin to make sense of this account—which seems to take up the same problem as moral sense philosophy, the conditions and mechanics of sympathy—by suggesting that Derrida is straining after something that is unusually difficult for him to conceptualize. I find it only so satisfying to acknowledge his point that sympathy transpires in a confrontation with indeterminacy, that, in his formulation, it is not sympathy that leads to a question (how ought we to act, having witnessed this suffering?) but a question, "the immense question of pathos," that generates sympathy. The obscurity in this account of sympathy may be related to Derrida's invocation throughout the lecture of animal presence and animal passion in terms of a phenomenological immediacy and empirical givenness. The refusal of the symbolic begins when, quietly invoking Levinas's ambivalence about the animal face, Derrida describes the disconcerting gaze of a specific cat, his pet cat, "*truly a little cat*" (6). Derrida insists that he is not referring to a literary cat, the figure of a cat, or the "symbolic responsibility" ascribed to the cat, but rather to an "unsubstitutable singularity," an "irreplaceable living being," an "existence that refuses to be conceptualized": a real cat with a real point of view (9).

This uncharacteristic reference to the animal's phenomenological presence occurs again when Derrida discusses the status of the animal in modernity. "No one can today deny this event," the modern subjugation of the animal, because "no one can deny the suffering, fear, or panic, the terror or fright that can seize certain animals and that we humans can witness" (25, 28). Animal passion is so completely available that its meaning is unmistakable. Indeed, in Derrida's view, modern animal advocacy begins with a question that has only one possible answer. Jeremy Bentham transforms the problematic of the animal when he famously states in his *Principles of Morals and Legislation* (1780), "The question is not, Can they reason? nor, Can they talk? but, Can they suffer?"⁶³ Derrida's point is that Bentham frames responsibility not in terms of positive capacities (language, will, reason) but in relation to "a passion, a not-being-able," a form of "non-power" (27, my emphasis). Bentham's foundational "question" has an answer that "leaves no room for doubt": "yes, they suffer, like us who suffer for them and with them" (28). Is this the sort of question that precipitates sympathy? Here Derrida follows such thinkers as More, Mandeville, and Hume, who responded to Descartes by identifying in creaturely passion a surer foundation for both epistemology and ethics than the self-consciousness of the *cogito*. He does so, however, with an impoverished account of sympathy as unmediated (specular rather than semiotic), eliding the question of how suffering is discerned so unequivocally. Derrida follows the Enlightenment naturalists, discussed in the coming chapter, in suggesting that our capacity to share feeling with other creatures, a capacity to know creaturely passion that "precedes the indubitable," is "where thinking begins" (28). But, like Bentham, he does so by obscuring the creaturely voice, the mediational form animal claims take. Derrida, in other words, is called by the animal, experiences what he refers to as "my passion of the animal," and yet finds it difficult to account for this call and this passion—to account, we might say, for his own sensibility, his responsiveness to the animal (12).

51. Paul Fussell, *The Rhetorical World of Augustan Humanism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965), 9. "Nature," Fussell claims, "can 'teach' man little that is morally useful, if it ever does speak to man, it speaks not to his moral centre" [8, my emphasis]. More compellingly, Clifford Siskin argues that the Augustan "myth" of a stable and uniform "human nature" is a compensatory response to "an inherently unbalanced social order." "Personification and Community: Literary Change in the Mid and Late Eighteenth Century," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 15, no. 4 (Summer 1982): 371-401 [374]. Richard Nash, in *Wild Enlightenment: The Borders of Human Identity in the Eighteenth Century* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2003), tracks the instability in definitions of normative humanness, such as the "Citizen of Enlightenment," across the eighteenth century.

52. Nietzsche, for example, condemns those who exalt "the good, pitying, benevolent impulses, of that instinctive morality which has no head." *Human, All Too Human* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 322.

53. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Émile, or On Education*, trans. Allan Bloom (New York: Basic Books, 1979), 222.

54. Eric Santner, *On Creaturely Life: Rilke, Benjamin, Sebald* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 26 and 72, emphasis in original. Further references are given in the text. See also Santner's *The Royal Remains: The People's Two Bodies and the Endgames of Sovereignty* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), where he defines creaturely life as "a mode of exposure that distinguishes human beings from other kinds of life: not exposure simply to the elements or to the fragility and precariousness of our mortal, finite lives, but rather to the ultimate lack of foundation for the historical forms of life that distinguish human community" (5, emphasis in original), and "Miracles Happen," in *The Neighbor: Three Inquiries in Political Theology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006): 77-133, where he writes, "We are most out-of-joint with respect to any merely animal nature" where "our drive destiny, which emerges on the basis of our seduction by enigmatic signifiers . . . disorients" (98, emphasis in original). While Santner's work has significantly influenced this study, the element of his project to which sensibility provides a kind of rejoinder is the implication of reciprocity that underlies this creaturely responsiveness, as if I would need to recognize in my neighbor's creaturely voice the same capacity for recognition—and thus for an experience of psychic disorientation in the gap between this recognition and the symbolic law—that I discover in my human self.

55. In *An Archaeology of Sympathy: The Sentimental Mode in Literature and Cinema* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013), James Chandler emphasizes the significance of "reflection" in sentimental culture, understood in both cognitive and formal aesthetic terms.

56. Christopher Smart, *Jubilate Agno*, in *The Poetical Works of Christopher Smart*, vol. 1, ed. Karina Williamson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980), B 404, emphasis in original.

57. Mark Payne, in *The Animal Part: Human and Other Animals in the Poetic Imagination* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010), examines the movement "from *historia*, first person exploration of other beings, to *poiesis*, the reflective elaboration that follows upon it" (23). Mutlu Konuk Blasing, in *Lyric Poetry: The Pain and Pleasure of Words* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), emphasizes the

nonmimetic, emotive dimensions of poetry, especially its distinctive capacity to stage "the trauma that produces the human": the always incomplete acquisition of symbolic language (10).

CHAPTER I

1. *Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce*, vol. 1 (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1974), 2.28.

2. On the recognition, in the semiotics of Augustine and Roger Bacon, of the problem of natural signs that signify by the intention of their sender, that are not instituted by convention and yet are produced "in order to be acknowledged," see "Natural Signs: Conventional and Voluntary," in *Dictionary of Untranslatables: A Philosophical Lexicon*, ed. Barbara Cassin (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014), 981.

3. James Thomson, *The Seasons* (1730-46), ed. James Sambrook (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), W1 84-85.

4. Rashi, *The Metsudah Chumash*, vol. 1 (Hoboken, NJ: Ktav, 1991), 12.

5. Claus Westermann, in *Genesis 1-11: A Commentary* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1984), notes that there is debate among exegetes about whether the blessing in 1:26 applies to the land animals; if not, they remain unblessed until Genesis 8:17 (142). According to Westermann, many of the interpretative difficulties, especially those having to do with the meaning of "image," may be clarified if the account of the creation of human beings in Genesis 1:26-30 is understood to derive from an independent third cosmogony (156-57).

6. Of animals, Augustine states, "By the most just ordinance of their Creator, both their life and death are subject to our needs." *The City of God against the Pagans*, ed. and trans. R. W. Dyson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 33.

7. See Jeremy Cohen, "Be Fertile and Increase, Fill the Earth and Master It": *The Ancient and Medieval Career of a Biblical Text* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992); and Robin Attfield, *The Ethics of Environmental Concern* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1983). Psalms 8:6 quite precisely invokes the meaning of *radah*: "Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet."

8. "Names are given first to living beings because they are closest to humans," Westermann concludes (229). Adam's failure to find companionship among the animals suggests "that people do not find the true meaning of human life in the mere fact of existence; if this were the case, then community with the animals would be enough. But people find the meaning of life only in human community; it is only this that makes true humanity" (226).

9. *Concerning Body [De Corpore]*, in *The English Works of Thomas Hobbes*, vol. 1, ed. William Molesworth (London: John Bohn, 1839), 1.6.11.

10. "Yardley Oak," in *The Task and Selected Other Poems*, ed. James Sambrook (London: Longman, 1994): 306-13, lines 170-76, my emphasis.

11. John Bramhall, *Castigations of Mr. Hobbes* (1657), in *The Works*, vol. 4 (Oxford, 1844), 340.

12. Quoted in Giorgio Agamben, *Language and Death: The Place of Negativity* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991), 43. Francis Bacon defined natural

philosophy as "a restitution and reinvesting, in great part, of man to the sovereignty and power, for whomsoever he shall be able to call the creatures by their true names, he shall again command them, which he had in his first state of creation." *Valerius Terminus, or the Interpretation of Nature*, 1603, in *The Works*, vol. 1 (London: Henry Bohn, 1854), 220. Joanna Picciotto, in *Labors of Innocence in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010), tracks this Baconian imperative to reclaim the "objectivity" of Adam's naming in early modern experimental science and the emergent public sphere. For a consideration of ethical relations and animal naming in the eighteenth century, see Richard Nash, "Animal Nomenclature: Facing Other Animals," in *Humans and Other Animals in Eighteenth-Century British Culture: Representation, Hybridity, Ethics*, ed. Frank Palmeri (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006): 101–18. In an early rumination on the philosophy of language, which I take up in chapter 4, Walter Benjamin reads Adam's naming as an act of translation: "Only the word from which things are created permits man to name them, by communicating itself in the manifold languages of animals, even if mutely, in the image: God gives each beast in turn a sign, whereupon they step before man to be named. In an almost sublime way, the linguistic community of mute creation with God is thus conveyed in the image of the sign." "On Language as Such and on the Language of Man," *Selected Writings*, vol. 1 (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1996): 62–74 (70).

13. Aristotle, *The Politics*, ed. Stephen Everson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 3. Further references are given in the text.

14. In his lectures on Aristotle, Heidegger clarified that *logos* refers not to abstract reason or propositional statements but to discursive exchange and communication: "We should be wary of the concept of a 'being endowed with reason' insofar as it does not capture the decisive meaning of *zoon logon echon*. In the paragon academic philosophy of the Greeks (Aristotle), *logos* never means reason, but rather discourse, conversation—thus man is a being which has its world in the mode of something addressed." *Ontology: The Hermeneutic of Facticity*, trans. John van Buren (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999), 21–22. Quoted in Stuart Elden, "Reading Logos as Speech: Heidegger, Aristotle and Rhetorical Politics," *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 38, no. 4 (2005): 281–301 (285).

15. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, in *The Basic Works of Aristotle*, ed. Richard McKeon (New York: Modern Library, 2001), 1161b, my emphasis. See Richard Sorabji, *Animal Minds and Human Morals: The Origin of the Western Debate* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), a study of the vexed status of animals in classical philosophy. Peter Harrison establishes the Aristotelian inheritance in seventeenth-century Britain in "Animal Souls, Metempsychosis, and Theodicy in Seventeenth-Century English Thought," *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 31, no. 4 (October 1993): 519–44.

16. On the mental continuum, see *Historia Animalium*, 588a16–26. "The division between the articulate and the inarticulate is . . . not entirely clear-cut. Several animals approach man in a number of respects: some birds and mammals manage a fair degree of articulation," writes C. W. A. Whitaker, in Aristotle's "De Interpretatione" (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 50. Larry Arnhart similarly concludes that "the special character of human politics cannot rest on any sharp separation of human learning from

animal instinct." "The Darwinian Biology of Aristotle's Political Animals," *American Journal of Political Science* 38, no. 2 (May 1994): 464–85 (469).

17. Gregory Nagy reflects on the relation between *sēma* and its cognate, the Indic *dhyāna* (thought), in chapter 8, "Sēma and Nōēsis: The Hero's Tomb and the 'Reading' of Symbols in Homer and Hesiod," in *Greek Mythology and Poetics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990): 202–22. As Nagy writes, "A given *sēma* will not, of and by itself, explicitly declare or command. To make sense of the message, one must have *recognition* . . . of how the *sēma* works within its code" (208).

18. *De Anima*, 420b, 28–37. Catherine Osborne, in *Dumb Beasts and Dead Philosophers: Humanity and the Humane in Ancient Literature and Philosophy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2007), sees in Aristotle's discussion of *phantasia* an "attempt to trace continuity . . . across the human-animal spectrum" (63). She notes that "imagination" is an imprecise translation, since *phantasia* encompasses forms of perception exceeding vision. *Phantasia* is a capacity to "pick out significant forms in our environment, and to use such forms when contemplating the objects to which they belong, whether present or absent" (80). Aristotle, she claims, sees our human capacity for abstract reasoning as an extension of *phantasia*, "the same basic perceptual faculty" animals use to find meaning in the world. By contrast, Umberto Eco and colleagues argue that for Aristotle animal expression, such as a dog's bark, is merely evidentiary, whereas for the scholastics "there was no difficulty in taking the sounds of animals as *vores significativae*, even if they were different from *nomina*." "On Animal Language in the Medieval Classification of Signs," in *On the Medieval Theory of Signs*, ed. Umberto Eco and Costantino Marmo (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1989), 3–41 (7).

19. *De Interpretatione*, in Aristotle's "Categories" and "De Interpretatione," trans. J. L. Ackrill (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963), 16b. Further references are given in the text.

20. On the difficulties of translating this passage, see "Sign/Symbol/Image," in Cassin, *Dictionary of Untranslatables*, 976.

21. For an extensive discussion of Aristotle's conception of the linguistic sign—his advances beyond the debate in Plato's *Cratylus*, which presents linguistic meaning as rife with irresolvable aporias, and his anticipation of twentieth-century linguistic theory—see Ludovic De Cuyper and Klaas Willems, "Meaning and Reference in Aristotle's Concept of the Linguistic Sign," *Foundations of Science* 13, no. 3–4 (2008): 307–24.

22. Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 7. Further references are given in the text. According to Agamben, "Lévi-Strauss's theory of the constitutive excess of the signifier over the signified" and "Benveniste's doctrine of the irreducible opposition between the semiotic and the semantic" return to the scene of this initial founding of the "structure of exception" (25).

23. Jacques Rancière, *Disagreement: Politics and Philosophy* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), 6. He continues, "The wrong by which politics occurs . . . is the introduction of an incommensurable at the heart of the distribution of *speaking bodies*" (19, my emphasis). Further references are given in the text. John Durham Peters makes a similar observation: "Determining the range of creatures we will communicate with is a political question, perhaps the political question." *Speaking*

into the Air: A History of the Idea of Communication (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 230.

24. *Discourse and Essays*, in *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes*, vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 140–41.

25. Elisabeth de Fontenay, *Without Offending Animals: A Critique of Animal Rights*, trans. Will Bishop (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2012), 39.

26. Descartes assumes that ideas preexist words, making the sign epiphenomenal to rather than constitutive of meaning. Derrida writes, “Descartes had driven out the sign . . . from the cogito and from clear and distinct evidence; the latter being the very presence of the idea to the soul, the sign was an accessory abandoned in the region of the senses and of the imagination.” *Of Grammatology*, trans. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976), 98. Further references are given in the text. By contrast, Hassan Melehy, in “Silencing the Animals: Montaigne, Descartes, and the Hyperbole of Reason,” *symplekē* 13, no. 1–2 (2005): 263–82, argues that Descartes models the *cogito* on the sign function, internalizing the logic by which we recognize the minds of others by their signs. In any case, we may assume that Descartes elides the problem of communication because the sign, like animal consciousness, troubles mind-body dualism, the attempt to accommodate a metaphysical conception of the soul to a mechanistic conception of nature.

27. Leonora Cohen, “Descartes and Henry More on the Beast Machine: A Translation of their Correspondence Pertaining to Animal Automatism,” *Annals of Science* 1, no. 1 (1936): 48–61 (50). Further references are given in the text.

28. Descartes to Henry More, 5 February 1649, in *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes*, vol. 3, *The Correspondence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 360–67 (365). Further references are given in the text. See Daisie and Michael Radner, *Animal Consciousness* (Amherst: Prometheus, 1996), 41–49.

29. Descartes to Marin Mersenne, 11 July 1640, in *The Philosophical Writings*, 3:148.

30. In *The Claim of Reason* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), Stanley Cavell argues that skepticism regarding other minds may be understood as a symptomatic response to the intimacies and intersubjective imperatives we experience, what Cora Diamond calls a “deflection,” a shift from an experience of disturbance or experiential difficulty into the language of philosophical argument, in “The Difficulty of Reality and the Difficulty of Philosophy,” in *Philosophy and Animal Life* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 43–89. Discussing Cavell and Diamond, Wolfe identifies a proximity between “the exposure of our concepts to the confrontation with skepticism and the physical exposure to vulnerability and mortality that we suffer because we, like animals, are embodied beings.” *What Is Posthumanism?* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009), 72.

31. *The Differend: Phrases in Dispute*, trans. Georges Van Den Abbeele (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988), 5–9. Further references are given in the text. Stanley Cavell asks, “What if there is a cry of justice that expresses a sense not of having lost out in an unequal yet fair struggle, but of having from the start been left out?” *Conditions Handsome and Unhandsome* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), xxxviii.

32. “The Affect-Phrase (from a Supplement to *The Differend*),” in *The Lyotard Reader and Guide*, ed. Keith Crome and James Williams (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), 104–11 (105, 108). Further references are given in the text.

33. Michel de Montaigne, *An Apology for Raymond Sebond*, trans. M. A. Screech (London: Penguin, 1987), 17. Further references are given in the text.

34. Plutarch and Porphyry quoted in Rod Preece, *Awe for the Tiger, Love for the Lamb: A Chronicle of Sensibility to Animals* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 50, 114.

35. Lia Formigari, “Language and Passions, Or: ‘I’m Lost for Words,’” *Topoi* 6 (1987): 99–104.

36. G. S. Rousseau, “Discourses of the Nerve,” in *Literature and Science as Modes of Expression*, ed. Frederick Amrine (Boston: Kluwer, 1989), 29–60 (39, my emphasis). Rousseau traces the discourse of sensibility to Thomas Willis’s pioneering anatomical research on the brain and nervous system, published in works such as *Two Discourses Concerning the Souls of Brutes, Which is That of the Vital and Sensitive Soul of Man* (1672; English trans., 1683); see “Discourses of the Nerve” and “Nerves, Spirits, and Fibres: Towards Defining the Origins of Sensibility,” in *Studies in the Eighteenth Century III: Papers Presented at the Third David Nichol Smith Memorial Seminar*, ed. R. Brissenden and J. Eade (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1976): 137–58. On sensibility’s scientific context, see also Roy Porter, *The Creation of the Modern World: The Untold Story of the British Enlightenment* (New York: Norton, 2003), chapter 12, and *Flesh in the Age of Reason: The Modern Foundations of Body and Soul* (New York: Norton, 2003), as well as Nima Bassiri, “The Brain and the Unconscious Soul in Eighteenth-Century Nervous Physiology: Robert Whytt’s Sensorium Commune,” *JHI* 74, no. 3 (July 2013): 425–48. Sensibility’s less secular roots include the stress on human goodness that defines the Church of England’s latitudinarian movement, Cambridge Platonism, and the freethinking tradition. See Isabel Rivers, *Reason, Grace, and Sentiment: A Study of the Language of Religion and Ethics in England, 1660–1780* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), and R. S. Crane, “Suggestions toward a Genealogy of the ‘Man of Feeling,’” *ELH* 1, no. 3 (December 1934): 205–30.

37. Paul Goring, *The Rhetoric of Sensibility in Eighteenth-Century Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 6. On bodily expression and literary sensibility, see also John Mullan, *Sentiment and Sociability: The Language of Feeling in the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988); and Ann Jessie Van Sant, *Eighteenth-Century Sensibility and the Novel: The Senses in Social Context* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

38. *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, ed. Roger Woolhouse (New York: Penguin, 1997), 635. Locke understands words as arbitrarily connected with “internal conceptions,” which derive not from innate knowledge but experience (361). Words “come to be made use of by men, as the signs of their ideas; not by any natural connexion, that there is between particular articulate sounds and certain ideas, for then there would be but one language amongst all men; but by a voluntary imposition, whereby such a word is made arbitrarily the mark of such an idea. . . . Words in their primary or immediate signification, stand for nothing, but the ideas in the mind of him who uses them” (*Essay*, 363–34, emphasis in original). On the individualism that unifies Locke’s political and linguistic philosophy, see Peters, *Speaking into the Air*,

80-89. "Locke's accounts of property and communication, then, are twins," Peters writes. "For property he must explain how to get from the common to the private (in matter); for communication he must explain how to get from the private back to the common (in mind)" (87).

39. Thomas Reid, *An Inquiry into the Human Mind* (London, 1783), 92. Further references are given in the text.

40. John Ray, *The Wisdom of God Manifested in the Works of Creation* (London, 1717), 55-56. Further references are given in the text.

41. Bernard Mandeville, *The Fable of the Bees*, vol. 1. (1714) (Indianapolis: Liberty Press, 1988), 180-81. Further references are given in the text.

42. Ray and Mandeville reject not only the Cartesian *cogito*, for which cogitation constitutes proof of being, but also the empiricism of the New Science, which grounds the knowledge of nature in the objectivity of the mute fact rather than in the information encoded in the sign. Foucault sees the Enlightenment as establishing an absolute division between a natural world of objects and a human world of signs. Rather than understanding nature as a book, such that human language must seek within itself "the primitive text of a discourse sustained, and retained, forever," for Enlightenment thinkers "it is the man-made sign that draws the dividing-line between man and animal; that transforms imagination into voluntary memory, spontaneous attention into reflection, and instinct into rational knowledge. . . . Natural signs are merely rudimentary sketches for these conventional signs, the vague and distant design that can be realized only by the establishment of arbitrariness." Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (New York: Vintage, 1993), 62.

43. Matthew Lauzon, *Signs of Light: French and British Theories of Linguistic Communication* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2010), 37.

44. Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1968), 84. Burke also defines the sharing of creaturely felicity: "when other animals give us a sense of joy and pleasure in beholding them (and there are many that do so), they inspire us with sentiments and tenderness toward their persons; we like to have them near us, and we enter into a kind of relation with them, unless we have strong reasons for the contrary" (43).

45. In his own analysis Mandeville inverts this double logic, disclosing what is always already disclosed and then distancing himself from this disclosure: "I shall urge nothing of what Pythagoras and many other Wise Men have said concerning this Barbarity of eating Flesh; I have gone too much out of my way already" (175). Speaking of the animal, Mandeville speaks of what he will not, and what follows this embarrassed reticence is an extended animal fable, which has as its moral precisely the Pythagorean imperative, and then the scene of the suffering bullock. Such reticence is a symptomatic feature of texts that address animal signs, almost as if the animal sign at once demands a linguistic rejoinder and renders the human speechless.

46. *Otherwise than Being, or, Beyond Essence*, trans. Alphonso Lingis (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 2009), 6. Further references are given in the text.

47. See Melvyn New, Robert Bernasconi, and Richard Cohen, eds., *In Proximity: Emmanuel Levinas and the Eighteenth Century* (Lubbock: Texas Tech University

Press, 2001). As Terry Eagleton notes, the Levinasian ethical relation, "like the *ethics of sentimentalism*, occurs in some pre-reflexive, pre-historical depths of the self, prior to knowledge, intention, commitment, consciousness." *Trouble with Strangers: A Study of Ethics* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), 227, my emphasis.

48. Levinas, "The Transcendence of Words," in *The Levinas Reader*, ed. Seán Hand (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001), 149.

49. Levinas, "Substitution," in *ibid.*, 111.

50. "The Paradox of Morality," in *The Provocation of Levinas: Rethinking the Other*, ed. Robert Bernasconi and David Wood (New York: Routledge, 1988), 168-80. Further references are given in the text. Adriana Cavarero observes, "The further Levinas gets from the Said, the more that animality gets closer." *For More than One Voice: Toward a Philosophy of Vocal Expression*, trans. Paul Kottman (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005), 32.

51. Emmanuel Levinas, "The Name of a Dog, or Natural Rights," in *Animal Philosophy: Ethics and Identity*, ed. Peter Atterton and Matthew Calarco (London: Continuum, 2004), 47-49 (49). In "On Being 'the Last Kantian in Nazi Germany': Dwelling with Animals after Levinas," in *Postmodernism and the Ethical Subject*, ed. Barbara Gabriel and Suzan Ilcan (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2004), 41-74, David Clark asks whether Levinas's discussion of Bobby is "merely a sentimentalizing anthropomorphism, improperly attributing human quality to an animal" (43), a kind of "pathos" or "mawkishness." He observes that, on one hand, "even when Levinas disrupts the boundaries constituting the human . . . he reinscribes the boundaries defining the animal" (55), and, on the other, in his account of Bobby, the dog who recognized the human in him, there is evidence of an "enigmatic communication, always before us and beyond us" (67). "Language," writes Clark, "is the implacable human standard against which the animal is measured and always found wanting, but what if the 'animal' were to become the site of an excess against which one might measure the prescriptive, exclusionary force of the *logos*, the ways in which the truth of the rational word muffles, strangles, and finally silences the animal?"

52. Jacques Derrida "Différance," reprinted in *Margins of Philosophy*, trans. Alan Bass (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 1-27 (9). John Llewelyn identifies the "middle voice" with the position, properly ethical, between models of the absolute vocation of the speaking subject and the absolute passivity of the addressee, in *The Middle Voice of Ecological Conscience: A Chiasmic Reading of Responsibility in the Neighborhood of Levinas, Heidegger and Others* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991).

53. "Semiology and Grammatology," interview with Julia Kristeva, *Positions*, trans. Alan Bass (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972), 15-35 (22). Further references are given in the text.

54. By focusing on the division between speech and writing, Cavarero argues, Derrida misses Aristotle's more absolute division between voice and speech [*For More than One Voice*, 213-41]. Reclaiming "the antimetaphysical potential of the voice," she places Derrida in a tradition defined by the "devocalization of *logos*" (215).

55. Derrida, *Speech and Phenomena: Introduction to the Problem of the Sign in Husserl's Phenomenology* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2010), 75.

56. "Eating Well,' Or the Calculation of the Subject," interview with Jean-Luc

Nancy, trans. Peter Connor and Avital Ronell, in *Points . . . Interviews, 1974–1994*, ed. Elisabeth Weber (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995), 255–87 (268, 285). Further references are given in the text.

57. In the long history of philosophical anthropocentrism, each thinker, from Plato to Lacan, returns to the same axiom, speaking, as it were, with “a single voice”: “The animal is deprived of language. Or, more precisely, of response, of a response that could be precisely and rigorously distinguished from a reaction” (*The Animal*, 32). Extending Derrida’s analysis, Cary Wolfe describes a form of second-order human exceptionalism. In cases where animals are granted communicative or signifying faculties, the human emerges in the “difference between communication and metacommunication, signifying and signifying about signifying” (*What Is Posthumanism?* 42).

58. See Thomas Keenan, *Fables of Responsibility: Aberrations and Predicaments in Ethics and Politics* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997).

59. Here Derrida may be reconsidering his earlier claim that “animal rights” are a “marginal and rare phenomena.” “Force of Law: The ‘Mystical Foundation of Authority,’” in *Deconstruction and the Possibility of Justice*, ed. Drucilla Cornell, Michel Rosenfeld, and David Gray Carlson (New York: Routledge, 1992), 3–67 (18).

60. Derrida, “Remarks on Deconstruction and Pragmatism,” in *Deconstruction and Pragmatism*, ed. Chantal Mouffe (London: Routledge, 1996), 77–88 (77). See Rei Terada, “Imaginary Seductions: Derrida and Emotion Theory,” *Comparative Literature* 51, no. 3 (Summer 1999): 193–216. “For Derrida, emotion, for the very reason that it is idealizable, depends on difference rather than reference, mediation rather than transparency, we feel not in spite of the impossibility of direct self-knowledge, but because of it” (195).

61. “Dialogue with Jacques Derrida,” in *Dialogues with Contemporary Continental Thinkers*, ed. Richard Kearney (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984), 118.

62. Cary Wolfe claims that “the ethical question of our obligations to nonhuman beings is generated by a theoretical articulation of the force of the trace,” implying that Derrida’s turn to the animal may be attributed to his deconstructive commitments (*What Is Posthumanism?* 25), but I am suggesting that there is a dimension of impassioned communication that Derrida is unable to fully identify.

63. Bentham’s status as the founder of modern animal-welfare discourse is widely accepted. In *The Animal Question: Why Nonhuman Animals Deserve Human Rights*, trans. Catherine Woolard (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), Paola Cavalieri argues that Bentham is the first moral philosopher to transcend the “agent-patient parity principle,” the notion, shared by Aristotle, Kant, and Rawls, that only autonomous moral agents are due moral consideration—which is to say, that moral consideration is premised on reciprocity (59). Cavalieri acknowledges that utilitarianism is less than adequate in its conception of motivation, the imperatives placed on moral agents.

CHAPTER 2

1. On Hobbes’s materialist commitments, see Samantha Frost, *Lessons from a Materialist Thinker: Hobbesian Reflections on Ethics and Politics* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008); Susan James, *Passion and Action: The Emotions in Seventeenth-Century Philosophy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), chapter 6; and Samuel Mintz, *The*

Hunting of Leviathan: Seventeenth-Century Reactions to the Materialism and Moral Philosophy of Thomas Hobbes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1962).

2. Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ed. Richard Tuck (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 463. Further references are given in the text.

3. Henry More, *An Antidote Against Atheism: Or, An Appeal to the Natural Faculties of the Mind of Man, Whether there be not a God*, in *A Collection of Several Philosophical Writings of Henry More* (London, 1662), 7.

4. David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 4. Further references are given in the text.

5. As Gilles Deleuze observes of Hume’s epistemological naturalism, “Nature and society form an indissoluble complex,” yet “we cannot reduce society to nature.” *Empiricism and Subjectivity: An Essay on Hume’s Theory of Human Nature*, trans. Constantin Boundas (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), 26. Further references are given in the text.

6. Thomas Hobbes, *On the Citizen* [first published 1651], ed. and trans. Richard Tuck and Michael Silverthorne (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 22–25. Further references are given in the text.

7. David Hume, *Selected Essays* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 49. Further references are given in the text.

8. Philip Petit, *Made with Words: Hobbes on Language, Mind, and Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), 2. Further references are given in the text.

9. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Essay on the Origin of Languages*, in *The Discourses and Other Early Political Writings*, ed. Victor Gourevitch (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 247–99 (248). Further references are given in the text.

10. Aaron Garrett, in “Francis Hutcheson and the Origin of Animal Rights,” *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 45, no. 2 (2007): 243–65, argues that Hutcheson anticipates Bentham’s utilitarianism when he derives a conception of political right from a sentimental account of moral obligation that links our apprehension of another’s pleasure and pain with our recognition of the general social good.

11. John Aubrey, *Brief Lives* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1898), 340. Ross Harrison extends the analogy further: “Charles enjoyed watching Hobbes being baited at court. They went for the beast. Hobbes was hunted; Leviathan was hunted.” *Hobbes, Locke, and Confusion’s Masterpiece: An Examination of Seventeenth-Century Political Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 52. On the rhetorical bestialization of Hobbes, see Mintz, *The Hunting of Leviathan*, 55–57.

12. On Hobbes’s rejection of and reliance on metaphorical language, see David Johnston, *The Rhetoric of Leviathan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), and Robert Stillman, “Hobbes’s Leviathan: Monsters, Metaphors, and Magic,” *ELH* 62, no. 4 (1995): 791–819.

13. *Political Theology: Four Chapters on the Concept of Sovereignty*, 1922, trans. George Schwab (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1988), 5. On Schmitt’s reading of Hobbes, see Victoria Kahn, *The Future of Illusion: Political Theology and Early Modern Texts* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014), chapter 1; and Horst Bredekamp, “From Walter Benjamin to Carl Schmitt, via Thomas Hobbes,” *Critical Inquiry* 25, no. 2 (Winter 1999): 247–66.