

Some words from the "perpetrators" concerning the case in Evia that was released in the media entitled "Ecologists attacked a hunter"

Several things were reported online for the incident on 26/12/2018 in Evia, where "a couple of ecologists attacked a hunter and took his gun". Opinions varied from positive, condemning hunting in general, to macho and sexist like "had to shoot the man and rape the woman". Although we do not intend, of course, to respond to any small or large comment which was in social media, this incident instigated a public debate which we believe that escapes our cause and for this reason we believe that it is worthwhile to talk about it too.

However, let us mention that the accusations we face are co-operative robbery and theft. In particular, we are accused of hitting the hunter on the head and removing the shotgun and that one of us stole his mobile phone. First of all, we deny that we have practiced physical violence. Violence, however, is practiced by hunters who systematically kill creatures who have done nothing at all. We know, of course, that shooting and taking lives, especially for entertainment, is not something that troubles them. . Concerning the robbery, the charge attributed to us by the judicial authorities is fraudulent as we have never attempted to appropriate the shotgun. Besides, we neither have the same hobbies, nor are we gangsters, nor are we involved in arms trade! We suppose, actually, that those who belong to such circuits use less imaginative ways to secure their merchandise! Equally fraudulent is the charge for theft. Besides, the reason why the confrontation happened in the first place is obvious to him - as he states himself- and us. Moreover, the details of the incident as it actually happened have already been reported by us to the interrogator through our apology.

In the present text, however, our purpose is not to analyze the incident, in order to build our defense for the courts in which we will be brought. Our goal is to place ourselves publicly regarding **the point of the issue that for us has to do only with what is called the sovereignty of man over the other animals and is called speciesism**. Because, ultimately, **in the face of the treaty that wants non-human animals to be objects for human use rather than sentient beings of intrinsic value in life**, the way in which a confrontation with a hunter ends in the removal of the killing weapon is of little concern.

For starters, we consider it crucial to mention that **historically, the depreciation of the value of the condition of life has not only targeted the remaining animals but has been applied to humans too. The prevalence of the rhetoric that wants some to be superior to others using racial, gendered, sexual orientation, social class, cultural and biological criteria has been a temporal basis for countless cruelties. As our minds are trained to treat the lives of non-human animals as of lower value and consumable, so it has**

happened and still happens today and with groups/populations of people.

Indicatively, the "superiority" of Europeans justify the extermination of indigenous people of America and taking away their land, which is also happening today, the "superiority" of white justified kidnapping people from Africa, the slave market and owning other people, creating "ethnic attractions" where the exhibits were shackled indigenous people from various parts of the world. The "inferiority" of those labeled as "crazy" and as people of a lower category, justifies hellish type prisons like psychiatric hospital of Leros, the "inferiority" of women justifies their trafficking, for the purpose of sexually satisfying men, daily femicide from men next door, as well as the countless rapes that are daily subject to the patriarchal condition of social life. The most striking example, perhaps, for the level of violence on non-human creatures that concerns people, is the theory of "aryans" and "sub-humans" adopted and enforced as a treatment model of "inferior" people by the Nazis. This theory formed the basis for the extermination of Jews, Gypsies and people with special needs, the experiments on their bodies for the benefit of the "aryan" race, the forced labour for the German army inside concentration camps, as well as the extermination of people with special needs as "defective", who not only did not deserve their lives but, on the contrary, "threatened" the health of the German nation. Today, we see something similar going on with migrants. Their stigmatization by the nations and the media as cultural "inferior" and "irrational/fanatics" makes the violence they receive indifferent to many "first world" consciences. . So, the bombing on their countries from the Western States, the army patrols on the borders and the drownings from the manhunt carried out there, as well as their imprisonment in detention centers, without having committed some kind of - not even with legal terms- "crime", becomes easier.

Finally, the conclusion is that in human history there have been recorded and still being recorded myriad periods, where arbitrary criteria were imposed by those with power, on the ones without and ended up condemning millions of lives on planet earth in a more or less short life full of pain. Today, however, the majority of human society condemns most of the above. Despite that, i.e., the complicity/tolerance of the society in earlier times – but also nowadays – contributed to the intolerable life various people were forced to experience, now, so many years later, most of us have come to the point of understanding the obvious. We got to the point, i.e., of understanding that there is no moral justification to apply such atrocities on sentient people who have just a different phenotype or different culture.

What is it, then, that prevents us from seeing the obvious absence of moral dilemma in our choices, when the time comes to put in the place of people with different color, origin and "intelligence", those who speak a different language, bleating, roaring, hissing or making ultrasounds instead of speaking Greek, English and Arabic, that are swimming, jumping around or flying instead of walking, or walking on four legs instead of

two, which have developed fins and tail? **In the end, what is it that makes the capture, incarceration, rape, torture and murder of these sentient beings moral? The answer once again is in the social legitimization of an ideology, which in this case, is about the theory of "human superiority", spiecism. This denudes the non-human animals from their individual characteristics and makes them consumable objects to every kind of exploitation by humans, thus depriving them of every right to life and freedom.**

We therefore advocate that killing, imprisoning, trading and exploiting animals in any other way, are neither moral nor obvious. On the contrary, we think that it should be obvious, that every sentient being, like humans, has the right to exist, taste freedom, play, joy, communication. Furthermore (we hope), everyone recognizes the right to a human, a cat or a dog, to live a good life until their old age and enjoy their freedom. For us, the same applies for all other animals whether they are cows, oxes, goats, lambs, hens, hares, rabbits, or birds, fish or insects. **The selective sensitivity of people who love their "pets" or "companion animals" and feel horrified by the abuse, of a puppy for instance, while, at the same time, consider the existence of hunters of other animals and fishermen to be moral, is shockingly enlightening. Similarly enlightening, is the ease with which a large part of Western society consumes meat and other products derived from killing and exploitation of other animals, while it seems unthinkable that in other societies they eat murdered dogs and cats. Unfortunately, the list is endless. Undoubtedly, in this selective sensitivity we believe that an important role has been played from the life in modern cities and the alienation of human from other animals and nature. Above all, however, we believe that this selective sensitivity is the result of the societies in which we are born, grow and live. We are taught from childhood to perceive the rest of the animals not as people with self-worth, but as commodities on super markets shelves and shops, as objects whose sole reason of existence is the satisfaction of human desires.**

However, we consider it extreme that in a society where it is largely known that people can fully meet their nutritional needs in non-animal derived products, millions of animal killings are committed daily. We consider it extreme that the right to freedom and joy is not recognized in an animal and millions of sentient creatures are kidnapped and captured in smaller or larger cages and fences for human exploitation instead. We consider it extreme that mothers are raped to "produce" as much babies as possible to become meat for humans, that sentient creatures are detached from their mothers as soon as they are born and are transformed from individuals into milk-producing machines and / or goods for sale. We consider it extreme that they are flayed to become bags and clothes. We consider it extreme that they are subjected to torture and experimentation to create "safe" products for humans. We consider it extreme that they are deprived of their freedom and being tortured to be exhibited as a sight in zoos and circuses. We consider it extreme that they are hunted and murdered for food let alone for hobby and entertainment.

After all, what else can speciesism be other than an ideology that allows humans to treat other animals as objects in the most horrific ways? For us, murder remains murder, whether the victim are human or non-human animals. Moreover, the arguments in favor of "human superiority" stumble upon their own contradiction. And this, because if "intelligence" and the verbal language code are criteria of life or death, torture or freedom, the same abhorrent behavior should also be applicable to a human baby or a person with a diagnosis of "mental retardation". Or is a calf able to defend itself more effectively? Or has it hurt anyone more than a human infant? We imagine that no one will need to second guess about whether they should prevent a murderer from killing a baby or not. Nobody would ever get in the process of thinking whether or not we should eat human babies or people diagnosed with "mental retardation" and we certainly would not conclude that the problem lies in whether we need to grind or slice them alive instead of killing them painlessly. None of us - except the Nazis - would be wondering if it would be right to kill people who have been diagnosed with a "mental retardation" as a hobby, to put them in cages and expose them for entertainment or experiment on them to produce cosmetics, house cleaners and colognes. When has someone agonized to decide over whether it is moral or not to immobilize human babies in electrical machinery in order to pour acidic substances in their eyes or to test the resilience of their system in swallowing bleach? When was someone torned on whether or not it belonged to the moral code of medical science to experiment on human babies with risk of irreversible damage and/or of their own lives, in order to produce medicines? Which woman thinks that she oughts to get into position to defend her right of getting the baby in her arms after giving birth instead of it being taken from her hands to be slaughtered? Who would wonder how morale is for thousands of human babies to be buried alive as trashy merchandise and/or because they became ill from the experiments on their bodies and the miserable conditions of their incarceration? We can keep on writing nonstop about such "absurd" moral dilemmas, but we will not do so. We think that what has already been said is enough.

Before closing, we would like to answer both to hate-filled arguments and sincere concerns expressed particularly with regard to nutrition- like "Yes, but the plants have feelings too". Here we must, in principle, say that this has not been proven. That does not mean, of course, that we accept the omnipotence of science and the authority that precedes it, nor that we always trust its motives. Nevertheless, although such researches have been made, the absence of scientific evidence is a fact. However, anyone who thinks it likely -that plants feel joy, pain, etc.- , which neither we exclude with certainty, and wants to avoid the slightest possibility of unwillingly causing pain or death in another organism may, regarding the diet part, follow alternative ways such as a nut/ fruit diet. Otherwise, the above arguments are an excuse. It is worth mentioning, moreover, that by eating meat the harm that is done is double and greater, as the land used for the breeding of livestock leads to the death of many more plants than would have died if we were feeding people directly with them. That is, besides the killing of the animals corresponding to them, each person that

consumes meat, is consuming through this far greater quantity than the plants that a person who doesn't eat meat consumes. In any case, to rely on such arguments to justify the atrocities at the expense of non-human animals is like supporting that since the Jews and women feel pain, to make no distinction, we will behave brutally to both. We believe that we have become understood.

Finally, we cannot not comment on the issue of the exploitation of non-human animals on the legal side, especially since our views and our respective attitude at the specific incident has resulted in us facing criminal charges. In our opinion, something being legal does not mean that it is moral, nor do we believe the laws generally and vaguely are just and right. For this reason, **we believe that the point of the issue is not judged on court but within society. In a society, then, where hunting and killing for pleasure and entertainment, even if you point to a fantastic "need", is socially acceptable the problem is not law but primarily the consciences. However, we believe that consciences can change. They can change not by themselves, but if we begin to think about and review everyday terms such as "self-evident", "natural" and "normal". They change if we really want a world with less pain and oppression. And if this is indeed what we want, then we have to rethink our moral code and include those creatures that, ultimately, are the most oppressed of all. Those with whom we share this planet. We believe the time has come to "get uncomfortable". Besides, nobody ever said that acting morally is easy.**

D. and T.

Athens,

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