



## Review Article

## Ethics and Animals: Approaches and Theories

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## ABSTRACT

**Background and Aim:** Moral status of animals has been attended by philosophers such as Pythagoras, Aquinas, Kant and etc. But in the contemporary period, considering this issue both in terms of volume and in quality is not comparable with the previous period. So that the pursuit of philosophical works written in this regard, can also be done with difficulty. This article seeks to introduce the main philosophical mainstream in this area and analyze the philosophical method and introduce the most effective and appropriate for Iran society.

**Materials and Methods:** In this review article, to introduce major approaches and theories in this article is used some of the most important available philosophical and religious texts. This critical review method in this article can be contained following the analytical method (analytic philosophy).

**Ethical Considerations:** In this review article, honesty and integrity have been considered and it has been tried to provide reasonable criteria as the moral duty of the researcher, as far as possible.

**Findings:** The behavior that humans have with animals is the subject of a branch of applied ethics, which is called animal ethics. There are various approaches in animal ethics: an analytical approach, continental approach, pragmatic attitude and theological approach. On the other hand, the ethics philosophers have used classical theories of ethics in this field and announced their position about animals. In a general classification, these views are in two categories: (1) direct theories (2) indirect theories. The indirect theories include theories of Kant and social contract and direct theories are divided into two categories: ideas and theories believing in the equality of human beings and animals and theories attached to the lack of equality.

**Conclusion:** Although the approaches and theories mentioned above, all can be effective as efficient theoretical tools in support of animal rights and decreasing their suffering, but since Iran is less philosophical and more religious community, the theological approach can be more efficient in the field of animal rights.

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## Introduction

Every year millions of animals in laboratories are experiencing suffering and losing their lives. The United States in 1995, has used about 14 million animals in scientific research. These figures in 1991, was about 12 million for Japan, 3.5 million for France in the same year and 2.8 million for England in 1994.<sup>1</sup> Although there are no accurate statistics of the number of animals used in scientific research, but some estimates suggest that, every year over 100 million animals are used in scientific research. If other areas where animals are used, such as fur industry, entertainment and ... are added to the discussion circle, importance and necessity of discussion will be more evident.<sup>2</sup>

Do we treat human beings with animals ethically? Do we morally have the right to exploit animals in any way we wish? Today, in the applied ethics, a branch called Animal Ethics which is interpreted sometimes as Animal Rights, focuses on the behavior and interaction of human beings with animals seriously. There are various ethical approaches and theories in this field. This article will introduce these approaches and theories and finally among the approaches proposed, an approach which is more appropriate to our cultural and social conditions and so on can be more effective suggests that, although this does not mean the absolute negation of approaches and ideas of others. Because they can be useful for the classes of our society and be their guide to action.

## Ethical Considerations

Honesty and integrity were taken into consideration in searching, analyzing, and reporting the texts.

## Materials and Methods

Since the present article's approach is philosophical, some of the most important philosophical sources about ethics / rights of animal was references in the report of the views. In the development of theological section of the paper, original religion texts were referred. In reviewing the views and approaches, the paper's method is analytical (analytic philosophy).

## Findings

### 1. Various approaches of ethics in animal

Approaches adopted by the ethics researchers in the discussion of animals and our ethical responsibility towards them, in a general classification can be considered as analytic approach, post-modern approach, pragmatic approach and theological approach. Analytic approach is made up of two powerful currents: the defense of animal rights based on utilitarianism and defending the rights of animals based on deontological ethics. Some of the philosophers of the analytic tradition include: Peter Singer, Tom Reagan, Bernard Rollin, James Rachels, and Steve Sapontzis. Among them Singer is the prominent representatives of utilitarianism and Tom Reagan is the great representative of Deontological Ethics. Singer writing the book "Animal Liberation", from the standpoint of utilitarian –inspired by R.M.Hare- and with analytical approach had a deep impact on this area of ethics and Reagan writing several books, including «The Case For Animal Rights» and «Empty Cages: Facing The Challenge of Animal rights» from deontological position, which is called rights theory had great steps in this area. Analytical approach is influenced by American and British analytical philosophy and in his arguments seeks for neutrality, universality and objectivity, and reason and logic have an important role in it.

The postmodern continent is influenced by the continental philosophy that knows the impartiality and universality impossible in the philosophical discussions and believes that, all human beings have taken place in epistemology and their views and see everything from that perspective, so neither is impartial nor judge equally in its judgments. Therefore values are not general and each community has its own values. Among postmodern philosophers discussed about ethics and animal rights Cary Wolfe, Jacques Derrida and Carol Adams can be mentioned. Adams using ecofeministic approach and combining it with postmodern approach has had a strong influence on the movement to protect the animals. Ecofeminism (feminist environmentalism) is philosophical or social movement which believes that, there is a firm

connection between the injustice that has applied to women and the injustice applied on the nature and since animals are a part of nature, this is true and these both injustice must be dismantled.

Adams believes that in contemporary discourse, human beings consider animals without mentality and life. In the discourse for the animals we use the words indicating their flesh and bodies. Animals are absent among us and this absence has been due to their "objectification" and the result is that their intrinsic value is overlooked and neglected. Our task is to enter them in contemporary discourse and in this way use not only of reasoning, logic and abstract thinking but, the emotions, storytelling even local and personal anecdotes.<sup>11</sup>

The third approach is pragmatic approach, this approach discusses about a specific issues such as animal experiments and has less philosophical background and those who belong to this trend are more non-philosophers such as biologists and vegetarians. Theoretical discussions of this mainstream is frail and principles which are used in their subjects are different with the two previous mainstreams - with philosophical flavor. For example, both the analytical and post-modern do not allow meat production, while pragmatism admits meat production and only seek to monitor the production of meat and slaughter animals into the desired and reasonable form and, as far as possible provide the highest level welfare for animals. In view of the proponents of this approach, as fans of both analytic and postmodern approaches continue complete negation of livestock, will apply this loss to the animal protection movement that, the livestock industry will continue its way without regard to their words, and disadvantage will be for the animals. However, if the supporters of these two streams were the more realist, they could improve animal welfare situation. In other words, the analytical and post-modern streams are very radical and request for rejecting the exploitation of animals in absolute and do not consider the status quo and the real world. While the pragmatist is seeking the welfare of animals, most of them thinks their current situation.<sup>11</sup>

Another approach is theological approach. Main representative of this approach in the West is Andrew Linzey. Linzey wants the thinkers to read scriptures and sacred texts and provide theoretical foundations support for the animals using sacred texts. This is what the founders of liberal theology have done in the fight against poverty and social injustice, Martin Luther King in the fight against racism and women's rights advocates have done in the vindication of women's rights. According to Linzey this approach can be more effective than previous approaches because most people are affected by religious ethics.

One of the charges against Christianity today - and in general against Abrahamic religions -is that these religions introduce man as the nature ruling creature

and let him to have whatever he wants from the nature: "God, blessed them [Adam and Eve], and said unto them, be fruitful, and be multiplied, fill the earth and dominate it. Rule the fish of the sea, the birds of heaven and all living animals on Earth".<sup>26</sup>

In 1967, Lynn White, a professor of history at the University of California in an article claimed that, environmental crisis of our time is the effect of conventional look of Christianity to nature. He knew Christianity as the most human-oriented religion ever seen and recommended that, Christians have transformed their look to nature, and St. Francis of Assisi has been their pattern who preached to the birds and had relationships with foxes and this behavior was due to the fact that he believed "mental interested-criminalization" of all creatures.<sup>5</sup>

Linzey said that, this kind of view toward the nature is the result is a kind of interpretation that people have of Christianity is not the requirement of Christianity thus, with another interpretation of holy texts a basis can be provided for the protection of animals.<sup>17</sup> Charges mentioned in Islamic tradition has been discussed as more limited only on the animals. Judge Abdul-Jabbar Mo'tazeli (d. 415 H.m) in the massive "Al'ma'ny fi al bab al-Tawhid va Al-adl" called a book named "weeping on animals" that the author objected the permission and permissibility of slaughtering an animal in Islam. Judge Abdul-Jabbar by using the "Compensation" rule is answering. This rule has been discussed among Mu'tazilism seriously and Mu'tazila elders have discussed in detail. Abu Alhzil ALLAF (d. 203 H.m), Abu Ali Jabayi (d. 330 H.m), Abu Hashim Jabayi (d. 321 H.m) and many other Mutazilis have argued and have discussed the conditions of compensation and its quality. Compensation issue was first discussed by Ebad-Ben-Soleyman one of the Mu'tazila elders. The question is whether God desires to suffer the people without any compensation? This question arises especially in the case that, people do not deserve suffering, for example, he does not do a sin which deserved to be suffering. The answer of most Mutazilis -for justice of GOD- was that God shall give a compensation to the servants for such suffering.<sup>4</sup> Judge Abdul-Jabbar in response to the author of "weeping on animals" using the compensation rule says: God gives such a great compensation instead of suffering due to slaughtering that, if that compensation was known for the animal and he is wise, he wants to be slaughtered many times.<sup>8</sup>

Judge Abdul-Jabbar, then talk about things such as the use of animals for riding and carrying load and different views on this issue are discussed and considers that there is compensation here for animals.<sup>8</sup>

What is considered by Lineyz is that, the possibility and potential in Islamic texts is much more in Jewish-Christ literature. According to some researchers, the animals in Islamic tradition: 1. have esteem. 2 are mustered. 3. glorify their Lord. 4. Have societies like

human societies.<sup>24</sup> These claims are confirmed by some Quranic verses, including

" و ما من دابة في الارض و لا طائر يطير بجناحيه الا امم امثالكم، ما فرطنا في الكتاب من شيء ثم الى ربهم يحشرون " <sup>27</sup>.

"And there is no beast in the earth and no birds flying with its wings unless they are [also] groups such as you are. We have nothing in the Book of Decrees, then [all] will be gathered to their Lord" .

Some commentators, with many arguments refers to the above verse as the resurrection of the dead. Allameh Tabatabai in Al-Mizan asked questions about this verse and responded:

1. Is the resurrection for animals like humans or not?
2. Is the resurrection of animals like human beings and they are raised and they have been rewarded and punished accordingly?
3. Do animals have a kind of prophet?

Allameh Tabatabaei's answers to questions 1, 2 is YES and he has not provide any answer to Question 3.

The innovative point in inferences provided by Allameh Tabatabaei from the above verse is that, animals have volitional consciousness and considers them like humans with personal and social opinions and on this basis they understand good and evil.<sup>6</sup>

In Islamic traditions animals have legal rights that, if not met, there will be consequences. Some of the rights provided in the Islamic texts for animals are as follows:

- Rider should feed the animal, when riding ended and came down.
- When he passes through the water, the water should be offered to the animals.
- Do not shot the face of animals because the animals glorify his Lord.
- Do not stop on the animal's back except in the way of Allah.
- Do not impose load more than animals' ability.
- Do not ride the animal more than animals' power.<sup>10</sup>
- Scholars have considered some of these orders in certain conditions due to the necessity and under different conditions due to hate and recommendation.<sup>10</sup>
- Three bodies should not ride that, one of them is cursed.<sup>9</sup>
- Put the load on the animal in the balance. The load should not be inclined on one direction.<sup>10</sup>
- Do not put hot stamp on animal face.<sup>10</sup>
- Do not commit singing on a ride while the animal glorify God.<sup>10</sup>
- Do not curse the animals that, God curses the curser of animals.<sup>10</sup>
- When the animal passes out of the land green and pleasant, do it with such tolerance.<sup>10</sup>
- Avoid burning animals.<sup>10</sup>
- When the Messenger of Allah saw the people who closed a hen and threw him shot, he said, God would curse them.<sup>10</sup>

- Prophet saw a woman who closed a cat had to die of hunger in the fire.<sup>10</sup>
- The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said: "Whoever killed a sparrow unnecessarily, in Passer Day the sparrow around the throne will shout out; "God ask him why he killed me with no benefit".<sup>10</sup>
- Allah curses who mutilates the animals.<sup>10</sup>
- Do not take chicks until they have not had the ability to fly flight.<sup>7</sup>
- Forcing animals to fight is evil.<sup>3</sup>
- Clean the fold and mutton's nose (or body soil), because they are animals of heaven.<sup>3</sup>
- Fat cattle is a sign of sportsmanship of the owner.<sup>9</sup>
- Do not sit on the animal with slip or while riding do not put one leg for the rest of the saddle.<sup>3</sup>
- Do not give the lark for the game to children.<sup>7</sup>
- To move the animal, do not push animal's ear, but push his neck.<sup>9</sup>
- The alms officers, should consider camels and their babies equally in getting alms.<sup>9</sup>
- Do not milk the animals so much to damage the baby animals.<sup>7</sup>
- Shorten the nails not to damage animal's breast while milking.<sup>7</sup>
- Do not take feathers when the animal is alive.<sup>7</sup>
- As long as the bird is at nest is safe and should not be hunted.<sup>7</sup>
- The alms collection officer should ride the charity animals to distribute alms, and should not ride only one animal.<sup>7</sup>
- Ride the animal only when the animal is healthy.<sup>7</sup>
- A person who alights the animal on the Ghat road is like a person who has freed someone in the way of God.<sup>7</sup>
- Provide a place, food and water for an animal that has lost.<sup>7</sup>
- Do not starve animals.<sup>7</sup>
- Put load in the back behind the animal to apply the pressure on his legs not hands.<sup>7</sup>
- Put remaining food in the desert for insects.<sup>7</sup>
- Do not sleep on the back of the animal because the animal's back ulcers.<sup>7</sup>
- When the animal slides and falls or escapes, do not hit.<sup>7</sup>
- When you eat food and animal is watching, give some to animal.<sup>7</sup>

Although Islam permits slaughtering animals but it is highly recommended as much as possible to minimize the suffering of animals:

- Hide the knife from the animals.<sup>7</sup>
- While preparing the knife to slaughter the animal, the animal should not see it.<sup>7</sup>
- Do not quickly slaughter the animal.<sup>7</sup>
- Before departing soul do not slaughter animal skins.<sup>7</sup>
- Do not sacrifice sheep in front of sheep and camels in front of camel, while watching.<sup>7</sup>

- Use sharp knives.<sup>7</sup>

The above points are some of the recommendations about animals provided in Islamic texts and show that, Islamic tradition - the Quran, Hadith and life style- has the ability to provide efficient and powerful model for animal ethics through exact reading and providing new ideas come from the same texts. How is the ethical status and rights of a creature with the ability to think and acquire opinions and individual and social beliefs and understand moral good and bad, and will be resurrected - as the great interpreters like Allameh Tabatabaei? Can we behave with such a creature as inanimate objects and consider no moral status -as Rene Descartes believed-? If we want to observe the principle of impartiality in ethics observe, the ethical rights close to human rights should be considered for them. It seems that Islam's approach to animal rights is one of the most appropriate approach in Muslim countries. Because the people of these countries -and even countries with strong religious background- are less influenced by analytic, continental and pragmatic approaches, and since, ethics is a branch of applied theory, if it will be as a theory, it stays away from the objectives.

## 2. Various theories of ethics in animal

The ethics theories of animal ethics, which some of them can be replaced in previous approaches are briefly examined.

### 2.1. *Animals have no ethical status*

This view is assigned to René Descartes (1596-1650) French philosopher. Since he believes that, animals do not have spirit and do not perceive pain and pleasure they are machines<sup>5</sup> and as grinding wheels and gears does not cause any pain for the machine and will only create tragic noise, separating a part of the living animal body is the same. According to him, principle of parsimony should be used to explain world events. The provisions of this principle is taken from Occam's Razor. This principle suggests the men to use the smallest and simplest possible explanations assumptions in order explain events of the world. Since explaining animal behavior is possible by mechanical methods, assuming the spirit and the feeling of pain and pleasure are waste assumptions and it does not need to use them to explain animal behavior. If Descartes' discussion is adopted, can this approach be used to explain human behavior? Descartes anticipated this question himself and the answer is: Firstly, human has the talent of complicated and exquisite behaviors and these behaviors can not be reduced to simple responses to stimuli. Secondly, the human has the ability to speak and express his thoughts, this is what is missing in animals and speaking of animals such as parrot is only for food and merely mechanical.<sup>25</sup>

Oponents of this view, according to several evidence showed that animals feel pain and pleasure and follow purposes and intentions in their behavior. Dogs and cats

show consciousness. Gorillas and chimpanzees have abstract and reasoning ability and can communicate with each other through language. The difference between man and animals is in rank rather than the difference of some kind.<sup>5</sup> Descartes' opponents through the argument from analogy have shown that animals and humans in three areas of behavior, physical structure and evolutionary scale have serious similarities. Animals manifest responses like human against painful stimuli and have neurology and neurons similar to humans and on the evolutionary scale, there is close relationship between humans and animals. These similarities increase the possibility that animals also have consciousness.<sup>25</sup> Roger Scruton distinguishes between consciousness and self-consciousness; Animals - like dogs - are aware of their environment and the proof is that sometimes do not have this consciousness, for example, when the guard dog is sleeping does not respond to some stimuli, but when he is awake responds to stimuli. But animals do not have self-consciousness, man recognizes himself as the first person and call himself with the word "I", but such animals do not have such consciousness. If you ask, how do we know animals do not have self-consciousness, he responds: Here the principle of parsimony of Descartes is used, because to explain animal behavior, there is no need to assume self-consciousness. But animal behavior in response to environmental stimuli can not be explained without assuming consciousness.<sup>22</sup> In fact, Scruton argues that Descartes' principle of parsimony is true, but the application is not consciousness but self-consciousness of the animal.

## 2.2. Indirect responsibility towards animals

The provisions of this group of theories is that, although animals do not have moral status, but we have an ethical duty towards them indirectly. These theories can be seen in two ways:

(A) possible extension of violence with animals to humans. Kant and Aquinas believed that violence against animals forms a character in human, which may lead to violence against humans. Thus we have an obligation to act with kindness toward animals, but that kindness to animals is not for its own sake, but for that if we do not do, rough treatment of animals may lead to violent behavior toward humans.<sup>5</sup>

(B) Social contract. Social contractualists consider ethics as a set of ethical rules which are selected by wise people in certain circumstances to govern the behavior of society, but since animals are not sentient and intelligent, they can not participate in this contract, therefore, do not have directly ethical status but because bad behavior with animals makes the human hurt or offended, they somehow need to be treated ethically. How man are harmed or offended by unethical behavior with animals can be imagined in some ways, including :

(A) The animal has an owner that, in the case of bad behavior with animals, he gets hurt or offended.

(B) Ill-treatment of animals applies spiritual damage to their lovers and supporters.<sup>25</sup>

Robert Nozick (1938 - 2002) has not accepted Kant and Aquinas' argument and said: Why the behavior we do if itself is true spreads to humans. The reason presented for doing this to animals puts a certain dividing line on the ethics to lay the distinction between humans and animals, does not extend this mode of operation (violence) to animals<sup>25</sup> is said by Nozick that, if you do not have a reason for violence toward animals, ethical factor using that reason will use it with a kind of consciousness and awareness only for animals, which does not extend to humans.

It should be noted that Kant and Aquinas argument is in fact, a kind of slippery slope argument. The provisions of this argument is that although a number of actions are morally true but may lead to unexpected bad results. Thus these acts must not be allowed to be done, because are like the first step placed on a slippery slope (Benin and Cote d'Ivoire, 2004.). Although Nozick has not explicitly criticizes the slippery slope argument but his argument can be considered as an implicit criticism on this argument.<sup>12</sup>

Problems that can be considered for conventionalist theory about animals is that, if an animal has an owner and animal rights supporters have not been aware, persecution of animals should be fine, however our moral intuitions consider hurting them in secret and hidden false. The intuition in philosophy and ethics is not mystical intuitions, but is a direct and immediate rational perception, that is, one could understand some facts of this world without mediation and other concepts.<sup>16</sup> This perception can be the perception of a proposition, like that, the killing of innocents is wrong or perception of a concept.<sup>15</sup> For example, George Edward Moore considers the concept of good as an intuitive concept and believes that, concepts such as happiness should not be used to define it, it means that, in the definition of good things it should not be said that: good things are issues that increase the happiness and therefore good means happiness.<sup>14</sup> Thus the concept of good should be considered basic and evident concept in ethics.

According to many ethics philosophers, ethical intuitions are valid and other ethical beliefs should not be in conflict with them. If ethical beliefs are in conflict with one of ethical intuitions, this indicates that this belief is a problem and it should be modified or abandoned. A group of philosophers do not know intuitions valid, thus the above problem discussed against conventionalists and considers intuitions as its basis, it will not be accepted according to this group philosophers.

Conventionalist perspective has been criticized by a criticism known as marginal cases argument. If the principle of impartiality is observed, it is necessary to

behave equally for all organisms in the same conditions. As a result, it is necessary to walk the same with all the creatures without reason. In this case, the severe mental retarded, babies and the elderly in poor health and all those who for any reason have lost their mind are completely out of the social contract and they should be treated as animals are treated. Now that our moral intuitions do not accept it.<sup>18</sup>

### **2.3. Theories of direct responsibility to animals**

This group of theories can be divided into two major categories: A) Theories which consider direct ethical honor and status for animals, but do not know the dignity and status of animals and humans equally. B) Theories which consider the status of animals and human beings equal in addition to direct responsibility.

#### *2.3.1. Theories of direct and unequal responsibility*

A group of philosophers and theorists since found the arguments of those who believe in indirect responsibility false, believed the rival theories i.e. the theory of direct responsibility; but because they have seen fundamental differences between human and animals, they have not believed equal ethical dignity for humans and animals. Their provided an argument in support of their claim as follows<sup>25</sup>:

1. If the creatures have feelings (pleasure, pain, etc.), then it will have a direct moral status.
2. Most animals have feelings.
3. Most animals have straight and direct ethical status.

The most reason which is provided by this group to confirm the inequality between animals and humans is the emphasis on human intelligence, something that animals do not have. Opponents of this approach have considered the intellect and its lack in this debate irrelevant. As some of the things like skin color, race and gender in ethical issues are irrelevant, the intellect is the same. In addition, marginal cases argument challenges the claim of inequality believers.

#### *2.3.2. Theories of direct and equal responsibility*

This group of theories have two prominent representatives: A) Peter Singer that defends the rights of animals from the position of utilitarian deontologism. B) Tom Reagan's position is deontologism.

#### **A. Peter Singer**

Singer's is preference utilitarian. He believes that in measuring and evaluating ethical action it is necessary to consider the interests and preferences of all individuals and the purpose of people is animals and in the calculation, every single is not more than one. Note that the condition "equally" in animals and humans has meaning only where the interests of animals and humans are similar, for example, human beings have the right to vote, but such a right can not be considered for the animals, because animals and humans have no similarity with each other in this aspect. Singer

emphasizes on two common interests between man and animals to determine the application of "equal benefits" clearly: A) avoid the pain, suffering and seeking pleasure. B) escape death. In these two cases no difference should be established between humans and animals, because what is involved and related in ethical decision making is suffer not suffering of a particular person, whether that person is human or animal. If it is established, between the cases which human applies less severe pain to human or more severe pain for the animal, in this case, the first case should be selected, otherwise he is speciesist. The term speciesism was first used by Richard Ryder and Singer also used it following him on his arguments in defense of animals. Singer considered speciesism equal to racism and sexism and as much as racism and sexism are unacceptable and appalling, speciesism is the same, because while the situation is the same, interests and preferences of humanity –only because of the humanity- have priority on interests and preferences of a variety of animals.

Singer's critics have not accepted "equality of men and animals" and believe that animals and humans are not equal, because the human has the power of thought and perception, the creation of beauty, sense of rhythm, language use and production of technology and, above all, the man can make ethical decisions, while animals do not have any of these abilities. Thus human interests is preferable over the interests of animals. Therefore, if someone in the conflict of interests between man and animal prefers the man, would not speciesist but also prefer the creature with real advantage, and it is entirely ethical.

Singer has used "marginal cases argument" in response. As mentioned in Section 2.2, among men there are people who do not have above characteristics, like infants who are born without a brain or Alzheimer's patients. If you want to observe the principle of impartiality, any ethical judgment and behavior which is allowed for animals should be allowed for these kinds of people. For example, if animal experiments is allowed, this sentence should be allowed for these kinds of people, whereas we are not committed to this conclusion.

The other problem on Singer's view is that because he considers each person as one person not more and person includes humans and other animals, if the lives of two hens and a human are in danger and only we can save the lives of these two hens or that human, we have ethically have duty to save the lives of two hens, and it is incompatible with our moral intuitions.

Singer can say in response, here is the difference. This our moral intuitions are unreasonable intuitions and are based on a firm discrimination that is located in our minds. We humans are complicated animals and other animals are less complex, this is the difference and this difference does not cause any more right to us .

If Singer's view is accepted, animal experiments would be morally permissible only if these tests are necessary and create serious and profound changes in people's lives - animal or human.<sup>23</sup>

### B. Tom Reagan

Tom Reagan's considers three goals in animal rights support (who is the leader of this movement) three<sup>20</sup>:

1. The complete dismantling of livestock trade
2. The complete dismantling of leather industry
3. The complete dismantling of the use of animals in scientific research

Reagan believes that humans and animals have equal rights and to prove his theory uses a concept which is established by himself: Subjects-of-a-life. In his view any creature which is subject of a life has intrinsic value and any creature with intrinsic value are entitled to respect and it cannot be treated as a tool, but also such a creature is the goal.<sup>20</sup> But which creatures are subjects of life? And what is the purpose of this term? He answered that every living creature cannot be considered as the proof of this concept, but the creature with beliefs, desires, imagination, memory, perception of the concept of future, emotional life together with feelings of pleasure and pain, preferential interest and welfare, the ability to act in order to achieve the goals and aspirations, psychological unity over time. .. is an example of this concept.<sup>21</sup> He said that children and mental retarded are subjects of life, but he is not frankly speaking about fetus and infants, but is cautious and believes that until there is not a reason for leaving the scope of this concept, they are also subjects of life.<sup>20</sup>

Are the animals the subjects of life? Reagan responses that, among animals, at least mammals, birds and fish have the above-mentioned characteristics.

About the Reagan's thought two points should be noted: First, Reagan took a great interest of Immanuel Kant in his discussion and also stipulates this fact. He uses the concept of intrinsic value following Kant and believes that, the creatures that have intrinsic value, should not be treated as a tool in which case they are disrespected and fundamentally this disrespect is the cause of immoral behavior, not suffering or the bad consequences of that act. But its distinction with Kant is that, Kant considers intrinsic value depended to reason and believes that the wise creature has intrinsic value, but Reagan knows the intrinsic value depended on the subject of the life and knows his theory as the theory of rights. Second, the Albert Schweitzer formulated the concept named "Reverence For Life". The concept of Reverence For Life includes all forms of life and is the more general than the concept proposed by Reagan as "subjects of life". Reagan rejects Schweitzer's view and says how to be justified in this belief where we have direct duties to Leaves of Grass, potato or cancer cells.<sup>13</sup>

### Conclusions

Although some of the opinions discussed in this article, can provide an effective basis for supplying the welfare of animals, but for two reasons religious approach and in particular Islamic approach can be useful for our community: The first is that our society is a society with religious fervor and these doctrines are more effective and on the other hand ethics is practical knowledge of ethics and the purpose of theorizing in ethics is finally the application of the theory. Thus if religious teachings are promoting about the treatment of animals, in total this provides provide more welfare for them.

Second, the use of Islamic texts, powerful theory on animal ethics can be provided that, in defense of their rights - and in comparison with competing theories – has a very high potential. As we have seen, a part of the Holy Quran's verses are in such a way that, using them animals can be considered as a "person" and this issue can provides very powerful basis to defend their rights.

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### Conflict of interest statement

The author declares that they have no conflicts of interest.

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