5 Traces of animal ethics in early Christian literature

In the first 250 years of its existence, Christianity was practised by a vanishingly small minority in the Roman Empire. In the face of an environment that did not believe at all or believed differently, it had more than enough to do to clarify its central core messages internally, to make them plausible and to defend them internally and externally. These include belief in the Resurrection and eternal life, in Jesus Christ as Saviour of the world, in a God who can be experienced in three ways, and the design of the central liturgical celebrations. Against this background, a separate form of animal ethics is not to be expected. Nevertheless, early Christian theology cannot develop in a way that is completely free of animal ethical positions. In their everyday lives, people deal with animals on a daily basis, and they are also mentioned in abundance in biblical and philosophical texts. Inevitably, the early Christian theologians had to adopt a position on this. In doing so, they set a decisive course for the long term, without realising it. The basic paradigms they adopted to describe the relationship between God, humans and animals are, once chosen, very difficult to correct. In fact, they continue to have an effect to this day.

So we are going on the trail of animal ethics in early Christian literature. In terms of time, we are concerned with the phase up to the beginning of the migration of peoples and the end of the Western Roman Empire. Augustine, who died in 430, will therefore be the last author examined here. This study is thus limited to the first two of three phases of Christianity in Late Antiquity as formulated by Peter Gemeinhardt (2022, 7), namely the two phases of the formation (until the middle of the 3rd century) and stabilisation (until the middle of the 5th century) of Christianity, while the phase of pluralisation (until the end of the 7th century) plays no role for our specific question. Spatially, Christianity of this epoch is an "urban religion" (Peter Gemeinhardt 2022, 16). It is formed predominantly from the urban population and in the cities and can thus tie in well with the high education in the cities.

Of course, from a historical point of view, it would be interesting to arrange the authors according to their linguistic and theological locations (Latin literature with its dualism between Rome and North Africa, Greek-Antiochene, Greek-Alexandrian, Syrian-Aramaic literature, etc.) in different

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strands of tradition, so that, on the one hand, influences within Latin as well as Greek or Syrian literature would become more apparent and, on the other hand, adoptions from Greek into Latin or Syrian literature would become more clearly recognisable. I, however, am not a historian and feel that such an in-depth reconstruction of individual strands of tradition would be too much for me. However, a somewhat simpler and less in-depth reconstruction of early Christian animal ethics can suffice in good conscience for the systematic interest in knowledge represented here, namely to create perspectives for overcoming Christian anthropocentrism by identifying its roots.

The traces of the Church Fathers' animal ethics can be found in a wide variety of literary genres and thematic contexts. They embody important indications of the direction in which the specifically Christian perception of non-human creatures were to move in the centuries or millennia that followed. For with the entry of the Christian message into Hellenistic culture, a transformation of this message took place, such as probably only happened to the same extent again in the age of secularisation.

Two guiding questions will be decisive for our investigation: 1) Which paradigms of Greco-Roman philosophy that are relevant to animal and creation ethics do the early Christian theologians adopt and reinforce, relativise and weaken, conceal and ignore or criticise and correct? 2) How do they receive and interpret the passages of the Bible relevant to animal and creation ethics? Which passages are quoted, which are not? And how strongly are these incorporated into the philosophical paradigms or how independently are they interpreted? It should be noted that practically all the Church Fathers read only the Greek, and in some cases even only the Latin, translation of the Bible—one-sidedness and errors in the translations must therefore be taken into account, and we will encounter them very regularly in some biblical passages.

Ultimately, the question is how Christianity transposes the biblical message of divine creation and the human treatment of animals and non-human creation into Greco-Roman culture. In this regard, the patristic specialist debate of recent times is characterised by a series of "partly extreme research positions on the relationship of early church theology and [sic!] to ancient philosophy. They range from the assertion of a philosophical overforming of Christianity to the statement that Christianity only took a few, peripheral and formal means of expression from contemporary philosophy, but never received its substance" (Charlotte Köckert 2009, 6).

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It should first be noted that the biblical message and Greco-Roman culture do not stand side by side on an equal footing and are fused together from an impartial third position. Nor is it a matter of integrating Greco-Roman ideas into Hebrew-Jewish culture, as is the case in some late Old Testament books (cf. chapter 4.1). Rather, the challenge of the Church Fathers was to inculturate the biblical message into Greco-Roman culture. The ideological coordinate system, the philosophical matrix, is provided by this Greco-Roman culture. The early Church had to fit its message into this culture.

With regard to animals and non-human creation, this endeavour has a serious difficulty to overcome: Animals hardly play a role in Greco-Roman philosophical discourse and certainly have no value. Rather, the Platonic creation myth of Timaeus is dominant here, in which the animate living beings are created by sub-gods (Plato, Timaeus 41 a–d) and at the very end are just worthy of the remark that they do not need to be dealt with separately: "And now, then, the task set us of tracing the universe from its beginnings to the emergence of human beings seems to have pretty much reached its goal. For as to how the other animals came into being, we have only to state very briefly, since a lengthy discussion is unnecessary." (Plato, Timaeus 91 e-92 c).

In addition, in the short comment immediately following from Plato's Timaeus, the birds are created from simple-minded men, the land animals from those people who follow their instincts more than reason, the reptiles from the most unreasonable and the water animals from the most unreasonable and uneducated people. They are therefore not created directly but are "recycling products" from (and I apologise) human waste.

Against this background, it becomes understandable why many of the Church Fathers presented in the following and their audience are moved by the question of why, according to the biblical Creation narrative, man is only created after the animals and why there is such extensive mention of animals at all. The broad and largely positive thematisation of animals, their significance for God and human beings, and their value are alone in need of justification in Greco-Roman culture. The Church Fathers faced this challenge, and this should not be overlooked.

Now, it was clear to the Church Fathers in the 3rd and 4th centuries at the latest: "A Christian cosmology is gained in the interpretation of the biblical account of creation." (Charlotte Köckert 2009, 542). It can be "read and interpreted as a natural philosophical text, because in the natural philosophy of that time, and especially in Platonism, cosmology was

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decisively pursued in the interpretation of authoritative texts" (Charlotte Köckert 2009, 543). However, most of the Church Fathers read only Gen 1–2 as a Creation narrative. They do not perceive the significant role that the continuation of the narrative with the Flood and Noah's covenant (Gen 6–9) plays in biblical cosmology. Only Irenaeus of Lyons (chapter 5.3), Ephraim the Syrian (chapter 5.9) and Ambrose of Milan (chapter 5.13) devote themselves to the animals in the ark in the sense of real animals and the covenant. All the other Church Fathers mention the ark at most ecclesiologically as an image for the Church uniting a diverse "zoo" of people, or soteriologically and sacramentally as an image for redemption through the wood of the cross (ark) and the water of baptism (Flood) (cf. Hugo Rahner 1964, 504–547). But Ephraim and Ambrose, unlike Irenaeus, also do not notice that the Noah covenant is a covenant with all living beings. Even here, therefore, there is a remarkable reduction of the natural philosophical, animal ethical and creation ethical potential of the Bible.

Charlotte Köckert takes the reduction one step further. In her analysis of early Christian cosmology in Origen, Basil and Gregory of Nyssa, she limits herself to their interpretation of the first verses of Genesis, especially Gen 1:1–2, i.e. the introduction, and marginally Gen 1:3–19, i.e. the first four days of Creation. She omits the patristic interpretation of the second half of the Creation narrative without giving any reasons, and thus the question of the creation of animals and man. It seems as if for her the cosmos is only the living house of the earth, without its inhabitants. But this is precisely where it gets exciting. The Christian creation myth is more comprehensive than the Platonic one, and that says something about the Christian understanding of creation. A house without inhabitants is meaningless. The Church Fathers certainly recognised and addressed this in their interpretation of Gen 1–2, even, as we will see, in an anthropocentristic framework and not biocentristically as in the biblical text itself.

After these content-related remarks, some formal preliminary remarks are necessary. In this chapter, we are dealing with a new phenomenon in the sociology of religion, which is determined by three components. Firstly, collectively we are dealing with a new religion that had broken away from the mother ground of the Jewish religion and had yet to find its own way. "Christianity" in the singular did not yet exist. The early Christian movement was divided into innumerable groups, some of which fought fiercely against each other. Even the rapid formation of a hierarchical leadership structure could not put a stop to this. It was not until the councils of the 4th and 5th centuries that a certain "homogenisation" (or, if one wants to

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be precise, "oligogenisation") began, at least in relation to the fundamental dogmatic questions.

Secondly, in the first three Christian centuries, almost all theologians underwent individual "conversions"—mostly not from Judaism, but from the pagan god cults to Christianity. The overwhelming majority of Christians were already former "pagans" in the 2nd century and at least until the beginning of the 4th century. In order to understand the theology of the early Christian authors, one must therefore always consider whether and why they converted from pagan religion to Christianity and how far they really broke away from their former religion. It will also be important to consider what they understood as belonging to the pagan religion and what they understood as belonging to Greco-Roman culture. The former had to be discarded, the latter could be retained. In this way, their biography decisively shapes their theology. From the 4th century onwards, we then increasingly encounter theologians who grew up in Christian families and confidently looked back on one or two generations of Christian ancestors. Their theology sometimes had noticeably different accents and characteristics. Christianity became the majority religion, following different dynamics than the small minority of the early period. Its embedding in the Greco-Roman culture was, of course, the same—nothing changed for the time being.

Thirdly, it must be taken into account that Christianity positioned itself positively in relation to the Hellenistic culture of Greco-Roman society from the very beginning. It made every effort to integrate itself as best it could into this culture and to keep up intellectually and communicatively with its opinion-makers. What was a break with the past on the religious level—the abandonment of pagan cults and the turning to the God of Jesus Christ in a "conversion"—therefore remained intentionally without inflicting drastic changes on the level of daily life and culture. The Hellenistic way of life was to be maintained. Of course, there were a few significant deviations, e.g. the Christian rejection of abortion, child abandonment and killing, or the opposition to gladiator fights. But they were very carefully dosed and did not establish an ecclesiastical "contrast society". Rabbinic Judaism went a significantly different way, at least from the 2nd century onwards—its Hellenistic wing dissolved completely.

There were undoubtedly movements within Hellenism that were critical of society. One thinks, for example, of Neo-Pythagoreanism or Neo-Platonism. These are movements that developed their positions out of the tradition of Greek philosophy, although they did not agree with the social-cul-

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tural mainstream on important issues, for example, on the question of the relationship between humans and animals, which visibly manifests itself in the dispute over meat consumption or abstinence from meat. Moreover, in the Roman Empire of late antiquity, there were increasingly religious and cultural movements that did not originate in the Greco-Roman cultural sphere but, like Judaism, seeped in from other (Far Eastern) cultural spheres. One only has to think of Manichaeism or the cult of Mithras. However, these immigrant cults, just like Christianity and Judaism, are faced with the necessity of justifying themselves before Greco-Roman culture with their paradigms.

One could, of course, ask the hypothetical question of whether early Christianity could not have positioned itself against the social mainstream on the animal issue in the same way as some of the aforementioned groups. However, it should not be ignored that Christianity, unlike the aforementioned movements, did not see itself as elitist, but wanted to go to all people and convert and baptise them in accordance with the Gospel's Great Commission (Mt 28:16–20). In view of this objective, more compromises with society inevitably had to be made than when one wants to be a small elite, as it declared.

In the following, we will therefore examine more closely how the Church Fathers place the animal ethical and animal theological impulses in the Bible in the matrix of Greco-Roman mainstream philosophy. Particular attention will be paid to those core aspects that span the web of ideas of Stoic anthropocentrism (cf. chapter 3.5.6): divine providence and care, man's endowment with reason and language as his exclusive proprium, dealing with feelings as the "animals in us", and dealing with real animals. At the centre, however, is the question of the teleology of anthropocentrism. For reasons of presentation, these five points of view are not always discussed in the same order, but they appear in each author's work, provided they have written something about them.

5.1 Tatian

The first author relevant to our topic belongs to the minority of those people who are critical of or even hostile to Hellenism, both before and after his conversion to Christianity. Tatian, who was born around 120 and who died around 180 AD, comes from the "land of the Assyrians" (Tatian, Oratio ad Graecos 42, 1), that is, the "Aramaic-speaking heartland on the

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middle Tigris" (Jörg Trelenberg 2012, 1). In Rome he became a disciple of Justin, who converted him to Christianity (Tatian, Oratio ad Graecos 18, 6; Eusebius, Church History 4, 29). Due to Tatian's radical convictions and his rejection of any Hellenistic influence on Christianity, however, he fell out with Justin (Irenaeus of Lyons, Adversus haereses 1, 28, 1). Tatian therefore returned to his Syrian homeland and founded an Encratite community there. The Encratites (from ἐγκράτεια, abstinence) were a strict ascetic movement of the early church from the end of the 2nd to the end of the 3rd century. They abstained completely from the consumption of meat and wine and lived sexually abstinent lives. As a movement demanding this lifestyle from all Christians, they dissolved around 300 AD. However, their ideas lived on in a moderate form in early monasticism, which practised this lifestyle as a voluntary option without demanding it from all Christians.

Tatian's most famous work is the Diatesseron, a gospel harmony which was still used in worship in Syria in the 4th century, but was deliberately destroyed afterwards, so that we only possess fragments of it. A book περὶ ζῴων which Tatian claims to have written about animals (Tatian, Oratio ad Graecos 15) has also been lost. A work by Tatian which completely survived, on the other hand—albeit on a relatively narrow and poor source base (Miroslav Marcovich 1995a, VII)—is Ἐπιστολὴ πρὸς Ἕλληνας/ Oratio ad Graecos, a polemic against the arrogance of Greek culture and for a non-Hellenistic understanding of Christianity written between 165 and 172 AD (Miroslav Marcovich 1995a, 2), which begins with the following sentence: "Do not be so hostile to the 'barbarians', you confessors of Greekism, and do not judge their teachings so begrudgingly! For which of your institutions does not owe its origin to barbarians?" (Tatian, Oratio ad Graecos 1). The fact that this work has survived proves that, unlike Tatian's other writings, it has always been considered helpful for Christian doctrine.

First of all, it is striking that Tatian places the killing of animals and the killing of humans in a close relationship. He opposes the *eating of meat* just as he opposes *gladiatorial fights*: just as the meat eaters feed themselves physically from animal flesh, the spectators of gladiatorial fights feed their souls with "human food". Both are reprehensible. However, for Tatian, killing gladiators for sheer spectatorial pleasure is even worse than killing animals for meat, because in gladiatorial fights, killing becomes an end in itself: "You slaughter animals (ζῶα) for the sake of eating flesh (κρεωφαγία), and you buy men to offer man-eating (ἀνθρωποσφαγία) to the soul and to nourish it with most impious bloodshed. The robber, at any

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rate, murders in order to rob, but the rich man buys gladiators in order to murder." (Tatian, Oratio ad Graecos 23, 5). Tatian thus rejects killing altogether, of humans as well as animals, but condemns it more harshly when it is done for the sake of killing, for pure pleasure. The purpose of food does not justify killing, just as robbery does not justify murder. But the act weighs more heavily when it is carried out for an end in itself. It is noteworthy that for Tatian the killing of gladiators does not weigh more heavily because they are human beings, but only because their death has no purpose outside itself. A gradation of the animals is therefore not connected with his evaluation.

Tatian does not shake the Stoic terminology of *animals as "reasonless"*. The wording of his criticism of the natural and "wild" life of the Cynics could thus also have come from the Stoics: "Man, you who emulate the dog: you do not know God and have gone over to imitating the reasonless (ἀλόγων μίμησις)." (Tatian, Oratio ad Graecos 25, 2). Here Tatian adopts Greek aloga terminology, which one would not necessarily expect him to use, especially considering its origin.

In terms of content, however, Tatian distances himself from the aloga thesis. He explicitly opposes the conviction of the "raven-croakers"—as he contemptuously calls the sophists—according to which humans differ from animals by reason, understanding and knowledge. In demarcation from both Stoic anthropology (Janet E. Spittler 2010, 357–358) and the Hellenistic ontologisation of the Septuagint and Philon, he interprets the image of God from Gen 1:26–27 as an endowment with the Spirit of God. While this interpretation also does not correspond to the intention of the Hebrew text, it is much closer to it as a relational interpretation. Tatian writes: "Man is not, as the raven-croakers (κορακόφωνοι) teach, 'a being endowed with reason, susceptible to understanding and knowledge' (ζῶον λογικὸν νοῦ καὶ ἐπιστήμης δεκτικόν), for if one follows them, it will be seen that even the reasonless beings are susceptible to understanding and knowledge (καὶ τὰ ἄλογα νοῦ καὶ ἐπιστήμης δεκτικά). But man alone is God's image and likeness (εἰκὼν καὶ ὁμοίωσις τοῦ θεοῦ); but I do not mean a man who behaves like the animals (ὅμοια τοῖς ζώοις πράττοντα), but one who has gone far beyond his humanity to God Himself. [...] Now suppose that this organism [of man] thus formed resembles a temple, God wills to dwell in him by the Spirit (πνεῦμα), his emissary; but if he be no such sanctuary, man is superior to the animals only by his articulate voice (προῦχει τῶν θηρίων ὁ ἄνθρωπος κατὰ τὴν ἔναρθρον φωνὴν μόνον) and, since his other

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expressions of life are quite like the animal ones, not a 'likeness of God' either" (Tatian, Oratio ad Graecos 15, 3–5).

This interpretation of Gen 1:26–27 is unique in early Christian theology. It proves that there is definitely a minority in Christianity that resists the Hellenistic ontologisation of biblical key texts and adheres to a relational interpretation. At the same time, the identification of Godlikeness with religiosity rather than humanity, with faith rather than morality, is highly problematic and itself unbiblical. Tatian sees only Christians as true human beings—all non-believers or those who believe otherwise have ultimately forfeited their humanity (Janet E. Spittler 2010, 358), not to mention animals, which cannot be spiritual at all.

Although tending to be strongly anti-Stoic and rather animal-friendly, Tatian explicitly excludes the resurrection of animals. Only humans will be resurrected to be judged: "And therefore we cherish the belief that after the consummation of all things, bodies will also be resurrected [...] only once, after the consummation of the present time, and for the sole purpose of gathering men together for the sake of judgement." (Tatian, Oratio ad Graecos 6, 1).

It is recognisable that Tatian does not yet manage to position himself clearly and consistently with regard to animals. For all his reserve vis-à-vis the Stoa and Hellenism, some of his core theses are in fact Greek. On the other hand, his distance from the aloga thesis and his linking of animal killing and human killing suggest tones that are rare in early Christianity.

5.2 Theophilos of Antioch

The next texts relevant to our question have come down to us from Theophilos, who was Bishop of Antioch from about 169 AD until the year of his death around 183 AD. Theophilos had a classical education and came to Christianity through the study of the Bible. As a Christian, he wrote numerous writings, of which only the three-volume apology Ad Autolycum (written around 180) has survived, along with a few fragments. In it, the bishop tries to convince the pagan Autolykos of the Christian religion. It is a kind of "crash course" in the Christian faith, presenting the religion's most important contents briefly and concisely. Literarily and philosophically, it is not of a particularly high standard and does not present an overly sophisticated argument. Nevertheless, it is the oldest post-biblical testimony

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to those shifts in the view of the human–animal relationship that took place in the Christian mainstream within less than one century.

With Theophilos we turn to Antioch on the Orontes for the first time. In Roman times, Antioch was, along with Alexandria, the largest and most important city in the eastern Mediterranean and the centre of one of the most venerable and largest Jewish diaspora communities. The very early foundation of the Christian community in Antioch "goes back to Hellenists expelled from Jerusalem, especially men from Cyprus and Cyrenaica, who also missionised Gentiles in Antioch [...] the consolidation of the community in Antioch is connected with the sending of Barnabas from Jerusalem to the Syrian capital, where he becomes the leading man" (Rudolf Pesch 1986, 350).

The Christian community of Antioch, which became the missionary base of Peter, Paul and Barnabas, was composed of three (!) groups from the beginning: Hebrew-Aramaic Jews, Hellenistic Jews and Hellenistic Gentiles. On the one hand, this shows the breadth and openness of the community, but it also provides an idea of the conflicts that could arise, for in Antioch there were uncircumcised Christians for the first time (Acts 15), which demanded a position to be taken on the following question: Do all men who convert to Christianity have to be circumcised, or do they not? The Apostles' Council in Jerusalem in 48 AD (see chapter 4.3.4) goes back to this dispute in Antioch. If the Jesus community continued to see itself as a Jewish group, its members had to keep the commandments of the Torah, i.e. also the commandment of circumcision. If the Jesus Community became (more) independent of Judaism, circumcision could be dispensed with. The Apostolic Council decided in favour of the second option and thus opened the door for the Gentile mission. In Antioch, the members of the Jesus Community were called "Christians" (χριστιανόι, Acts 11:26) for the first time.

In Ad Autolycum, Theophilos is first concerned with the image of God. The one and incomprehensible God can be recognised in many ways—among others in his works of creation: "Consider, o man, his works: The timely change of seasons, the changes of weather, the orderly course of the heavenly bodies, the regular course of days and nights, months and years, the colourful beauty of seeds, plants and fruits, the various kinds of quadrupeds, birds, swimming and crawling animals, river and water animals; or the understanding (σύνεσις) put into the animals themselves for the reproduction and nourishment of their young, not for their own benefit, but for the use of man (οὐκ εἰσ ἰδίαν χρῆσιν, ἀλλὰ εἰσ τὸ ἔχειν τὸν

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ἄνθρωπον); then the care (πρόνοια) which God bears in providing food for all flesh (πὰση σαρκί), or the subordination (ὑποταγὴ) in which, according to his arrangement, all beings are under man." (Theophilos of Antioch, Ad Autolycum 1, 6)

The signals of this passage are very contradictory: On the one hand, Theophilos seems to think in a relatively animal-friendly manner, for the fact that animals possess insight (σύνεσις) had until then only been asserted by Plutarch (chapter 3.6.2) and Tatian (chapter 5.1). In mainstream Greek philosophy, this qualification is reserved for humans. And God's "care" for "all flesh", i.e. all creatures, is also entirely in line with the biblical message, but cannot be done with the Stoa. On the other hand, Theophilos claims that the reproduction of animals is not for their own benefit, but for the benefit of humans. And he speaks of the "subordination" of all living beings to man. One does not quite know how he intends to bring these contradictory statements together.

Theophilos begins his interpretation of the Creation narrative with the following reflections: "Nothing existed apart from God, but he himself was his space, was perfect enough for himself and was there before all times. But he wanted to create man in order to be known by him; for him, therefore, he prepared the world. For the created are in need of many things, but the Eternal is without need. So God, with his wisdom, begat his Word, which he had determined in his own interior (Λόγον ἐνδιάθετον), making it come forth from himself before all things. This word therefore he used as the means of all his creations, and created all things by the same (Jn 1:3)." (Theophilos of Antioch, Ad Autolycum 2, 10). As early as in these first sentences, Theophilos clarifies for what purpose God created the world: He wants to be known by a counterpart. And this counterpart is man, at whom the creation of the world is consequently aimed. However, man is needy, he needs the supportive and sheltering house of life on earth, which is therefore created for his sake (cf. Andrew Louth 2009, 43). Finally, Theophilos emphasises from the beginning that creation has to do with the divine Logos, Christ: Through the Word all things were created, and through the Word man can know God. The *anthropocentrism* that is visible here is thus a form of logocentrism and Christocentrism, as we will encounter in many authors.

In Ad Autolycum 2, 16–18, Theophilos interprets the fifth and sixth of the seven days of creation from Gen 1. Ad Autolycum 2, 16 explains the fifth day of creation and sees the aquatic animals as images of baptism, the carnivorous birds as images of greed and iniquity, and the carnivores in

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general as images of robbery and murder. For the first time, the animals are interpreted exclusively allegorically—a form of interpretation that is considered typical of Alexandria for the following centuries, but which apparently also existed in Antioch in the early days of the Church. This hermeneutic is also continued in Ad Autolycum 2, 17, where the wild land animals serve as an image for godless people. However, allegories only work if the factual half is correctly represented. Therefore, Theophilos feels compelled to say something about the sinfulness of the animals. The animals were by no means created evil by God but were only corrupted by man's sin: "Because he is the master (κύριος), the subordinates (τὰ δοῦλα) also sinned with him. Now when man shall rise again to an existence suitable to his nature, and shall do no more evil, they also shall return to their original gentle nature." (Theophilos of Antioch, Ad Autolycum 2, 17). Quite incidentally, the human–animal relationship is interpreted here as a relationship between master and servant—an absolute hierarchy clearly beyond the Bible. The attribute κύριος normally only belongs to God himself.

Theophilos also maintains this steep hierarchy between humans and animals in his explanations of the creation of man. Ad Autolycum 2, 18, like 2, 11, quotes the verses Gen 1:26–27 verbatim from the Septuagint and thus adopts its essential ontological interpretation of the image of God. God creates man *in* his image, not *as* his image, as the Hebrew Bible says. Theophilos concludes by underpinning the subordination of the "secondary" animals to the only "worthy" human beings with the following sentences: "For after God had created everything by his word, he considered everything secondary works (πάρεργα, more accurately translated: irrelevant works), but only the creation of man as a work worthy of his hands (ἄξιον ἔργον). [...] Having therefore created and blessed him, that he might grow and fill the earth, he subordinated all beings to him as submissive and servile (ὑπέταξεν αὐτῷ ὑποχείρια καὶ ὑπόδουλα τὰ πάντα)." (Theophilos of Antioch, Ad Autolycum 2, 18).

Even if we do not yet find in Theophilos a thoroughly composed and coherent body of thought of a Christian doctrine of creation, the shifts from biblical to Hellenistic paradigms are clearly recognisable. Within just less than a century, mainstream Christianity, which in the meantime consisted almost exclusively of Christians of non-Jewish origin, had distanced itself far from its biblical roots and assimilated to its Hellenistic environment. The hierarchy between God, man and animal had become very steep.

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5.3 Irenaeus of Lyons

Irenaeus (c. 135 Smyrna–c. 200 Lyons) probably comes from Smyrna (today's Izmir) in Asia Minor and is therefore still called "Irenaios of Smyrna" in the Eastern Church. According to his own account, he was a disciple of the bishop of his hometown, Polycarp of Smyrna (Irenaeus of Lyons, Adversus haereses 3, 3). Via Rome he reached Lugdunum (Lyon), where he was elected second bishop of the city in 177 AD.

Of his writings, apart from the Epideixis discussed at the end of the chapter, only the five-volume treatise against heresies, Adversus haereses, written around 180 to 185 AD (Norbert Brox 1993b, 101) has survived, and only in a relatively free Latin translation. Only a few scattered fragments of the original Greek text still exist, but not for most sections discussed here, so we have to make do with the Latin terms. In this work, Irenaeus deals with the heresies of the Gnostics, a very diverse and completely non-uniform current of thought, who take ideas from the most diverse religions and put them together in a patchwork fashion (Norbert Brox 1993, 8). Thus, the canon of topics in Adversus haereses is also determined by gnosis and in that respect is not representative of a complete exposition of Christian doctrine (Norbert Brox 1993, 13).

Irenaeus presupposes the Greek *aloga thesis* as a matter of course. Thus, he calls the animals "dumb animals (muta animalia)" (Irenaeus of Lyons, Adversus haereses 4, 33, 5; 4, 38, 4) and "reasonless animals (animalia irrationalia)" (Irenaeus of Lyons, Adversus haereses 4, 4, 3; 5, 8, 2). This denies the animals the two Stoic characteristics of reason: thinking and speaking. The casualness of the formulations shows that Irenaeus does not even think of doubting Stoic ontology. For him, its correctness is obvious.

Irenaeus is more reserved where he alludes to the Stoic *scala naturae*. While he adopts their classifications unchanged, he nowhere emphasises the hierarchy implied by the Stoics. Rather, he is concerned with God's wise and benevolent provision, which assigns to each creature the quality suitable for it as well as the optimal place in the house of life of creation: "In himself according to that which is inexplicable and inscrutable to us, he predestinatedly made everything as he willed (omnia praedestinans fecit quemadmodum voluit), and gave to each its place and order and the beginning of its creation (consonantiam et ordinem suum et initium creationis donans), to the spiritual beings the spiritual and invisible, to the celestials the celestial, to the angels the angelic, to the animals the animal (animalibus animalem), to the water-dwellers the water, to the earth-dwellers the earth,

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and thus he gave to all the suitable constitution (omnibus aptam qualitatis substantiam). But all things that were made he made by his ineffable word (infatigabili verbo)." (Irenaeus of Lyons, Adversus haereses 2, 2, 4). Compared to Philon (chapter 4.2), Irenaeus here stays much closer to the meaning of the biblical text: The Creator assigns a place to everything, no creature goes empty-handed, and the characteristics of every living being are appropriate to its habitat. One can feel the breath of the paradisiacal state of peace that Gen 1 wants to convey. At the same time, in the last sentence of the quotation, Irenaeus already hints at the Logos of God, Christ, through whom creation takes place. From the beginning, Christianity reads Gen 1 against the background of Jn 1—the Old Testament in the light of the New—and thus foreshadows the Christocentrist underpinning of Stoic anthropocentrism.

The interpretation of the *image of God* from Gen 1:26–27, on the other hand, moves in the ontologising thinking of Hellenism, for Irenaeus sees it embodied in free will and in the capacity for moral action: "Since, however, man has free will from the beginning (liberae sententiae ab initio est homo), just as God has free will, in whose image he was created, so he [the Apostle] always gives him advice to hold fast that which is good, which is accomplished in obedience to God." (Irenaeus of Lyons, Adversus haereses 4, 37, 4). What is unspoken but implied is the Stoic conviction that animals have no free will. The image of God in human beings thus consists, at least in part, in resembling God in the ability to make free decisions of will.

When interpreting Isaiah's vision of the *peace of all beasts* (Is 11:1–9)[18], on the other hand, Irenaeus, quite in keeping with his Asia Minor origins, distances himself from an allegorical interpretation and insists on a literal interpretation: "Now I know well that some try to apply this to those uncultured people who have become believers from different peoples and circumstances and now agree with the righteous. But although this now applies to some people who come to the one conviction of faith from different peoples, yet at the resurrection of the righteous this also applies to those animals, for, as I said, rich in everything is God. And when creation is

18 In the interpretations of the peace of creation by the Church Fathers, different conclusions sometimes become apparent, depending on whether we are dealing with the protological animal peace in paradise or the eschatological one at the end of days. These differences, however, concern exclusively dogmatic points of view. They have no bearing on animal ethics, which is why no stronger distinction is made in the following.

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restored, then all animals must obey and submit (obedire et subiecta esse) to man and return to the first food given them by God, to the fruit of the earth, just as they were in obedience (in obedientia subiecta) to Adam. By the way, even now no one can show a lion feeding on straw. But this points to the size and fatness of the fruit. For if the lion feeds on straw, what must be the wheat itself, the straw of which serves as food for the lions!" (Irenaeus of Lyons, Adversus haereses 5, 33, 4).

The abundance of God's kingdom after resurrection will be so immeasurable that even the great carnivores like lions will be satisfied with plant food. Thus, in eternity, all living beings can live together without violence, without eating each other. And although the hierarchy between humans and animals is not abolished there either, but the animals must continue to subordinate themselves to and obey humans, they are nevertheless included in the resurrection. One can see that Irenaeus rejects the Stoic "dogmas" (only) where they do not seem to him to be compatible with the Bible. How he imagines the presence of the animals In the paradisiacal peace remains in the dark. But in any case, they play a considerable role there: "Irenaeus should not be understood to propose the personal resurrection of individual creatures. [...] Nevertheless, Irenaeus' emphasis on the presence of animals in the eschatological future is a significant departure from other patristic thinking." (Janet E. Spittler 2010, 360–361).

Irenaeus compares, quite in the line of Greek philosophy, those people who do not control and steer their feelings by reason and do not use their free will to make a rational decision with the animals who cannot do this by nature, also doing so once with the idea of the chaff separated from the wheat from John the Baptist's sermon on repentance (Mt 3:12): "But wheat and chaff, which are without life and understanding (inanimalia et irrationalia exsistentia), became so by nature (naturaliter); but the rational man (homo rationabilis), by this the image of God, that he can freely choose and determine himself (liber in arbitrio factus et suae potestatis), bears in himself the cause, if he once becomes wheat, the other time chaff. Therefore he will also be justly condemned if, in spite of his understanding, he has lost his true understanding, and living irrationally (irrationabiliter vivens), has challenged the justice of God by yielding to all the spirit of the earth and serving all lusts, according to the words of the prophet who says: 'When man was in honour, he did not understand; he became like

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the unintelligent (insipientibus) beasts and became like them'. (Ps 48:13 LXX)[19]" (Irenaeus of Lyon, Adversus haereses 4, 4, 3).

Irenaeus presents his interpretation of the narrative of the Fall in Gen 3 in the following sentences: "Irrational (irrationabiles), then, in every respect, are those who do not wait for the time of growth and attribute the weakness of their nature to God. These insatiable and ungrateful ones know neither God nor themselves, if they do not want to be what they have become first: human beings capable of suffering (homines passionum capaces); and transgressing the law of the human race, they want, even before they have become human beings, to be like the Creator God and to admit no difference between the uncreated God and the now created human being. More irrational are they than the dumb animals (plus irrationales sunt quam muta animalia). For these do not reproach God for not having made them men, but each of them gives thanks with what it is for being." (Irenaeus of Lyons, Adversus haereses 4, 38, 4).

According to Irenaeus, the original human sin consists in not accepting the weakness and capacity for suffering of one's own nature and corporeality, thus denying one's own creatureliness and wanting to be uncreated, incorporeal and incapable of suffering, just like God Himself. Later, in patristic literature, the opposing concepts of pride (superbia) and humility (humilitas) will be used for this, which do not yet appear in Irenaeus. However, while animals willingly accept their nature and thank God for it, many humans do not and are thus "more unreasonable" (plus irrationales) than animals—a comparative that is strictly logically impossible: you cannot be more unreasonable than unreasonable. This attribution hits those it refers to all the harder.

19 This psalm verse is often quoted in the patristic texts. The problem is that it already undergoes a considerable shift in meaning when it is translated into Greek. In the Hebrew Ps 49:13, it is said of rich and poor, wise and foolish alike: "But man does not abide in his splendour; he is like cattle that fall silent." In death, the thought goes, all are equal: rich and poor, man and cattle. In the Septuagint, the second half-sentence of Ps 48:13 reads thus, "... παρασυνεβλήθη τοῖς κτήνεσιν τοῖς ἀνοήτοις καὶ ὡμοιώθη αὐτοῖς." – "... he resembles the unintelligent cattle and becomes like them." In the place of being dumb in death is incomprehensibility in life—a totally different statement. One can see how the Septuagint Hellenises the Hebrew text: According to the Stoic conviction, man and animals are precisely not equal to each other in death, since the soul of man is immortal—a conviction that is unthinkable in Israel at the time of the Psalms. And it is equally unthinkable for the Psalms to describe animals as "incomprehensible".

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A third time, Irenaeus compares people who live irresponsibly and give in to their desires to reasonless animals: "But those who reject the counsel of the Spirit, serve the lusts of the flesh, live irrationally, and throw themselves unrestrainedly into their desires (carnis autem voluptatibus serviunt et irrationabiliter vivunt et ineffrenati deiiciuntur in sua desideria), since they have no breath of the divine Spirit, but live after the manner of swine and dogs; the apostle rightly calls them carnal, since they know nothing but carnal things. And the prophets, for the same reason, compare those who walk so unreasonably to reasonless animals (irrationabilibus animalibus assimilant eos). […] For through his own fault 'he has become like cattle (assimilatus est iumentis)' (Ps 48:13 LXX), because he has given himself up to an unreasonable life. And accordingly, we also say of such people that they have become reasonless cattle and animal-like! [...] Rightly, then, the apostle called all these, who, because of their unbelief and opulence, do not obtain the divine Spirit, and by various characters cast out the Spirit that makes them alive, and walk unreasonably in their lusts, carnal and beastly; the prophets called them cattle and wild beasts; custom interprets them as beasts and reasonless (irrational); the law proclaims them unclean." (Irenaeus of Lyons, Adversus haereses 5, 8, 2–3). As in Greek philosophy, the aloga thesis is interpreted by Irenaeus as an admonition to people to use their own reason and to live life responsibly. One's own guilt is more than clearly emphasized, and the entire Bible (Torah, prophets and writings, as well as Paul—but not Jesus!) must be used to support the reprehensibility of "animal behaviour" by humans.

In summary, it can be stated that Irenaeus is the first of the authors presented here to advocate the aloga thesis without qualification, albeit predominantly with a moral pedagogical impetus. The Latin translation, however, is very free at this point. The fact that the Greek ἄλογα is rendered with the Latin "irrationalia" and not (imitating the alpha privativum) with "arationalia" is correct, since the prefix "in-" corresponds to the "a-" privativum and the term "arationalis" does not exist in Latin. However, in "adversus haereses" "irrationabilia" is used more often, literally "those who are not capable of reason", which corresponds to the Stoic intention, but is an interpretation and not an exact translation. The writings of the Latin Stoa used in chapter 3.5 do not include this terminology. In terms of content, the classification as "irrationabilis" means for Irenaeus, in line with Paul and the Stoa, above all to abandon oneself to one's own desires and feelings. Whereas animals, in his view, cannot do otherwise, in humans it is a free, albeit irresponsible, decision.

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Although Irenaeus consistently and clearly advocates the aloga thesis, he is more reserved with regard to the hierarchy between humans and animals. In any case, he receives the Stoic scala naturae without its steep gradient of values. The Bishop of Lyons, referring to Is 11, furthermore can only imagine eternity with the inclusion of all creatures. He resolutely rejects an allegorical interpretation of the text. Above all, however, there is no trace of Stoic anthropocentrism in him. One senses that Irenaeus wants to hold on to the animal-friendliness of the Bible within the framework of Greek ontology.

The *Epideixis,* the *exposition of the apostolic proclamation* mentioned by Eusebius of Caesarea (Historia ecclesiastica 5, 26), has also only survived in a single Armenian manuscript discovered in Yerevan in 1904 (Norbert Brox 1993a, 23–24). In terms of diction and content, however, it is so typical of Irenaeus that it can be regarded as authentic. It is a summary of Adversus haereses, which was written after these five books (Norbert Brox 1993a, 24) and a kind of "catechism of early Christianity" (Norbert Brox 1993a, 27). Therefore, it will be briefly examined for its passages relevant to our topic.

First of all, it is striking that in the Epideixis, unlike in Adversus haereses, Irenaeus interprets the vision of the peace of creation in Is 11 allegorically. The prophet thus indicates "in a symbolic way that people of very different descent gather together in unity and peace through the name of Christ. This is the assembly of the righteous, who are likened to oxen and lambs and kids, because they do no harm to anyone, whereas in former times they were like wild beasts by their extortions, both men and women, so that some of them became like wolves and lions, since they robbed the weak and made war with their own kind; but the women like panthers and vipers, who by deadly poisons or by their lusts (?) were even able to kill their loved ones. Gathered together in the one name, they adopt right customs by the grace of God, changing their wild and crude nature. Which is what has happened now." (Irenaeus of Lyons, Epideixis 61). Here, Irenaeus apparently adapts to the mainstream, which he had previously explicitly opposed.

Otherwise, however, he sticks to his animal-friendly positions, for in the Epideixis he also advocates formal anthropocentrics without material anthropocentrism: "As the image of God, created man was placed on earth. [...] Now he was free and independent, having been created by God to rule over all those who are on earth." (Irenaeus of Lyons, Epideixis 11). This is a very restrained interpretation of the image of God from Gen 1:26–27.

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The animal theological highlight of the Epideixis, however, is the interpretation of the Flood narrative. For Irenaeus, the starting point is the irrevocable community of fate between humans and animals: "And since destruction overtook all, both humans and animals that were on earth, only what was protected in the ark remained alive." (Irenaeus of Lyons, Epideixis 19). This leads him to a statement that must be unique for the entire time of the Fathers. Indeed, Irenaeus explicitly emphasises that the Noahide covenant applies to all living creatures: "But after the Flood, God decreed a covenant with the whole world, especially with all living creatures and human beings, so that all the growth of the earth would no longer be spoiled by a flood." (Irenaeus of Lyons, Epideixis 22). I have not found a comparable statement anywhere else in the texts examined here.

5.4 Clement of Alexandria

Titus Flavius Clemens, or Clement of Alexandria for short (c. 150–c. 215 AD), provides more extensive, though not yet consistent, systematisation of Christian thought. Biographically, we know relatively little about him. Born into a Greek milieu, he received a good Middle Platonic education, but later converted to Christianity. In Alexandria, where he stayed for the longest time of his life, he also became acquainted with the Stoa. The important Jewish community of Alexandria, on the other hand, had already largely perished during the revolt in the years 115 to 117 AD, and Clement did not get to know them. He taught at a Christian school in Alexandria until around 202, before leaving the metropolis for unknown reasons.

With his writings, Clement made a decisive contribution to the Christian reception of Greek philosophy and to the adoption of Platonic and Stoic elements in the Christian doctrinal edifice that was forming at this time. Despite his different religious affiliation, he was strongly oriented towards the earlier Alexandrian Philon. His three main works, which will be analysed below, are: the Protrepticus, an exhortation to interested pagans about Christianity as the true philosophy, the Paedagogus, which directly follows the Protrepticus, in which Christ is presented to the already baptised as the true teacher for a good life (including a very conscious diet), and the Stromateis, a mixed collection of philosophical aphorisms, the deeper truths of which, according to Clement, only Christians can recognise.

First of all, the *interpretation of the animal ethical norms of the Torah,* which is surprisingly strongly oriented towards Philon's treatise De vir-

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tutibus, is striking. The five commandments referred to there are discussed in exactly the same order, which does not correspond to the Bible. Clement fully adopts Philon's logic that mercy towards animals also teaches mercy towards humans and consequently allows the analogy and the argument a minori ad maius. However, he expands and deepens the argumentation. Pythagoras, as Clement introduces, took his explanations on mercy with animals from the Torah, which establishes the following commandments:

– "When an ox, a sheep or a goat is born, the young one shall stay with its mother for seven days." (Lev 22:27; cf. Philon, De virtutibus 25, 126–133). On this point Clement elaborates, "In any case, the law commanded to abstain from immediate use, even for the purpose of sacrifice, in the case of the animals newly born in the flocks of sheep, goats, and cattle, both for the sake of the young and their mothers (ἐκ γονέων τε ἕνεκα καὶ μητέρων). In this way, beginning from below with the reasonless animals, it wished gradually to educate towards mildness [...] For if nothing happens without a definite purpose, and milk flows to the mothers after birth for the nourishment of the young, nature disregards (ἀτιμάζει τὴν φύσιν) whoever deprives the newborn of the care offered to it by milk. So the Greeks, and all who otherwise find fault with the law, ought to be ashamed, since, while the latter shows clemency even in the case of reasonless animals, they even abandon human offspring, although the law, by the precept just stated, since ancient times prophetically wanted to restrain them from cruelty. For if it forbids the young of reasonless animals (ἄλογα ζῶα) to be separated from their mothers before they have been suckled, much more, where men are concerned, does it seek to influence in advance the brutal and unruly nature of the senses, so that they may listen, if not to nature, at least to instruction." (Clement, Stromateis 2, 18, 92). First of all, Clement holds that the purpose of the Torah is to spare animals—the offspring as well as the mother. It has intrinsic moral value. Secondly—and here Clement turns a Stoic argument against the Stoa—anyone who separates mother and offspring before weaning disregards the nature of animals. While the Stoa applies the maxim of living according to nature to human nature alone, Clement broadens its scope and also considers the nature of animals to be normative. Finally, taking this animal ethical commandment of the Torah as a starting point, he criticises the generally accepted Greek practice of child abandonment by analogy and the argument a minori ad maius. If they do not listen to the voice of nature, they should at least respect the Torah's instruction!

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- "You shall not slaughter an ox or a sheep or a goat on the same day as its young." (Lev 22:28; cf. Philon, De virtutibus 26, 134–140). Here, Clement refers to exactly the same analogy as Philon, namely the sparing of a pregnant woman condemned to death until the birth of the child. And he concludes, "Thus the law extended its clemency (ἐπιεικής) even to the reasonless animals, so that we might exercise clemency on those who are not of the same nature (ἀνομογενές) as us, and then to a far higher degree exercise philanthropy (φιλανθρωπία) against those like ourselves (ὁμογενές)." (Clement, Stromateis 2, 18, 93). From the Greek terms, it can be seen that Clement confines philanthropy to human beings as an enhancement of clemency, as is also in keeping with the etymology of the term. Philon had used the two terms equally for humans and animals.
- "You shall not boil a kid in its mother's milk." (Dt 14:21b; cf. Philon, De virtutibus 26, 142–144). Going beyond Philon, Clement cites an example from Plutarch of a practice that contradicts the biblical commandment. And he justifies the Torah's commandment with the natural purpose of milk: "For food intended for the living shall not, it is said, become the seasoning of the slaughtered animal, and that which is intended for the preservation of life shall not be used in the eating of the dead body." (Clement, Stromateis 2, 18, 94). Respect for the mother animal, which is the original aim of the Torah commandment, is not addressed by Clement.
- "You shall not muzzle the ox for threshing." (Dt 25:4; cf. Philon, De virtutibus 27, 145). This commandment is also relatively briefly justified, this time by reversing the analogy by invoking justice: "for the labourer too shall receive his deserved wages (Lk 10:7; Mt 10:10)" (Clement, Stromateis 2, 18, 94).
- "You shall not harness an ox and an ass together to the plough." (Dt 22:10; cf. Philon, De virtutibus 27, 146–147). Here, Clement takes his cue entirely from Philon. The weak animal is to be protected, just like the weak man, namely the unclean, the goy (Clement, Stromateis 2, 18, 94). Again, it is a question of justice.

In comparison with Philon, Clement expands the argumentation considerably. The animal-friendliness of the Torah is just as unquestionable for him as the analogy to human-friendliness. This is also shown in his interpretation of Mt 6:26, where Jesus emphasises *God's care for the animals.* Clement writes: "No one, however, is poor in necessities, and never is a man completely forgotten. For it is one, God, who feeds all that flies and

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all that swims, and in a word the reasonless living creatures (ἄλογα ζῶα); neither do they lack the least thing, though they do not provide for their food. But we are worth more (ἀμείνους) than they, because we are their masters (κύριοι), and are nearer to God, because we are more understanding (σωφρονέστεροι)." (Clement, Paedagogus 2, 1, 14). As with Jesus, and by analogy with the interpretation of the animal ethical commandments of the Torah, the argument a minori ad maius also appears here. However, the designation of humans as "masters" over animals, which is supplemented by the comparative "more understanding", is surprising. In order to justify the higher value of human beings, there would be no need to refer to the relationship of dominion. Jesus, in any case, does not do this.

Like Neo-Platonism and Neo-Pythagoreanism, Clement is very critical of *meat-eating*, but without, like Tatian, elevating abstinence from meat to a general duty: "'It is good not to eat meat or drink wine' (Rom 14:21), therefore he [Paul] himself says, and likewise Pythagoras with his followers. For this is more fitting for animals; and since the exhalation thereof is more impure, it darkens the soul. However, one does not sin if he also eats such food, only he should do it with moderation and not consider it indispensable or become dependent on it, and must not be greedy for the flesh; for otherwise a voice will sound to him saying, 'Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of a food!' (Rom 14:20)." (Clement, Paedagogus 2, 1, 11). Clement here abbreviates the original meaning in Paul, who, as seen above (chapter 4.3.2), only rpoblematizes the consumption of non-kosher meat, demands consideration for the "weak" and has not the slightest interest in the animals that are killed. Clement, on the other hand, reflects on the consumption of meat itself and, citing Pythagoras, pleads for great restraint, for he considers it not in accordance with human nature: "Nor [...] must we take too much meat for ourselves; for man is by nature (φύσει) not a glutton (ὀψοφάγος), but an eater of bread (σιτοφάγος) (cf. Xenophon, Memorabilia III 14, 2–3)." (Clement, Paedagogus 2, 7, 55).

Like Philon, Clement resolutely opposes the *Egyptian animal cults and their theriomorphism*: "Be convinced that these words are told to you on the basis of divine inspiration: 'Do not think that stones are sacred (ἱερὰ), and trees, and birds, and serpents, but men are not!' (Plato, Minos 319 A). On the contrary, consider men truly sacred, but animals and stones for what they are! For truly pitiful and unhappy men think that God speaks through a raven or a jackdaw, but through a man is silent; and the raven they hold in honour as a messenger of God, but the man of God they persecute, though he does not cry or squawk like a raven, but, as I think, speaks

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reasonably." (Clement, Protrepticus 10, 104). Hidden in this text is again an argument a minori ad maius (this time negative): if one already considers non-human beings sacred, one should consider human beings all the more sacred. And unlike Jesus, who regards the argument as self-evident and does not substantiate it further, Clement hints at a rationale: the reasonable speech of God-like man.

With regard to the *abilities of animals,* it is striking on the one hand that Clement, citing Plato, attributes language to them. Plato "believes that even the reasonless animals have language (διάλεκτος), which animals belonging to the same species understand" (Clement, Stromateis 1, 21, 143). In detail Clement proves his thesis with scientific observations on elephants, scorpions and fish. On the other hand, he affirms that animals by their nature do not possess knowledge of God: "Now as we do not compel the horse to plough, nor the bull to hunt, but use every animal for what it is naturally suited, so we justly call man, who is created for the contemplation of heaven, and is in truth a 'heavenly plant' (φυτὸν οὐράνιον, Plato, Timaeus 90 A), to the knowledge of God (γνῶσις τοῦ θεοῦ); having recognised what is his own, what is exclusive and what is peculiar compared with all other creatures (τὸ οἰκεῖον αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐξαίρετον καὶ ἰδιωματικὸν παρὰ τὰ ἄλλα ζῶα), we advise him to acquire godliness as a provision sufficient for eternity." (Clement, Protrepticus 10, 100). The knowledge of God, then, is the most intrinsically human thing, which Clement assigns to man as exclusively as possible by means of three adjectives. One of them would have sufficed—this series of three signals the highest importance of this assignment.

After all, animals do not possess reason either—they therefore rightly bear the designation as aloga. But for Clement this is no reason for false self-assurance, for unreasonable people are much worse than reasonless animals: "Truly the animals (θηρὶα) are happier than people caught in error; like you they dwell in ignorance, but they do not hypocritically pretend to possess the truth. There are no clans of flatterers among them; the fishes are not superstitious; the birds do no idolatry; only the sky do they marvel at, because they have not been dignified with reason (λόγος) and therefore cannot know God. And so you are not ashamed that you have made yourselves more unreasonable than the reasonless animals (τῶν ἀλόγων σφᾶς αὐτοὺς ἀλογωτέρους πεποιηκότες), having worn yourselves out in godlessness through so many ages?" (Clement, Protrepticus 10, 108). The comparative ἀλογωτέρους is striking, for strictly speaking "more reasonless than reasonless" is an impossibility. Like Irenaeus with the "plus

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irrationalis", Clement deliberately accepts this paradox in order to make clear the drama of a form of behaviour in which people do not use their abilities of cognition and insight. As a collateral benefit, the irrationality of animals is thus somewhat defused—they are better off than unreasonable humans. Later we will see that Origen omits the comparative and equates the unreasonable humans with the unreasonable animals. For the animals, this clearly means a deterioration.

Clement first interprets the *image of God* in man from Gen 1:26–27 in the light of the fertility blessing that follows in Gen 1:28—without considering that animals also receive it: "And in this respect man becomes an image of God, inasmuch as a man helps to generate a man." (Clement, Paedagogus 2, 10, 83). Then, however, he joins the line of interpretation that we first found (still without Christological deepening) in Alexandrian Diaspora Judaism: "'Image of God' is his Logos; but image of the Logos is the true man, the spirit (νοῦς) in man, of whom it is therefore said that he was created 'in the image and likeness of God', who through thinking (φρόνησις) in his heart became like the divine Logos and thereby reasonable (λογικός)." (Clement, Protrepticus 10, 98). And elsewhere: "For understanding (νοερός) is the word of God, and accordingly the image of the Spirit (τοῦ νοῦ εἰκονισμός) is manifested in man alone, just as the good man according to his soul is God-like and divine (θεοειδής καὶ θεοείκελος), and on the other hand God is man-like (ἀνθρωποειδής). For the constitution (εἶδος) of each is the spirit (νοῦς), and by it we are characterised." (Clement, Stromateis 6, 9, 72). Here, Clement plays on the Greek word εἶδος, which is also contained in the two complementary terms God-like and man-like. The likeness between God and man is established by the endowment of the Spirit and mediated by the Logos, that is, Christ. Again, we encounter the close connection between anthropocentrism and Christocentrism, which is beginning to take shape in outlines.

The exclusive endowment of humans with reason and knowledge of God, however, has a drastic consequence in Clement: the exclusive attribution of *immortality* to humans. "Come to me, that you may be classed under one God and the one Logos of God, and not only have something in advance of the reasonless animals through your reason (λόγος); rather, of all mortals (θνητῶν) I grant it to you alone to enjoy the fruit of immortality (ἀθανασία). For I will, yea, I will also make you partakers of this grace, and give you the consummation of the benefit, incorruption (ἀφθαρσία); and the Logos I give you, the knowledge of God (γνῶσις τοῦ θεοῦ), perfectly I give you myself." (Clement, Protrepticus 12, 120). The self-gift of God,

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the idea goes, is only possible through reason, as an intellectual gift. And it establishes immortality, which cannot exist without knowledge of God. This Stoic thesis, that reasonable humans will see eternity, but reasonless animals will not, appears here for the first time in early Christian literature. It continues to have an intense effect right up to the present day.

Finally, methodologically it is striking that in Clement the *allegorical interpretation of animals* increases significantly, predominantly as images for negative behaviour and aspirations in man. Thus, he interprets Jesus' cohabitation with wild animals in Mk 1:13 as follows: "He [Christ] alone among all who ever lived tamed the wildest beasts (θηρία), men, both birds, which are the reckless, and creeping animals, which are the deceitful, and lions, which are the irascible, and swine, which are the lustful, and wolves, which are the rapacious. But stone and wood are the unreasonable; yea, even more unfeeling than stone is a man sunk in folly. [...] See what the new song accomplished: men it made of stones, men of beasts." (Clement, Protrepticus 1, 4).

In Paedagogus in particular, animals are portrayed as lustful and voracious. All raw desires are seen in them, and people are compared to them who cannot control their passions: "... no longer reasonable (λογικὸς) is he who has erred against reason (ὁ παρὰ λόγον ἁμαρτὰνων), rather a reasonless beast, given over to desires, ridden by all lusts (Θηρίον δὲ δὴ ἄλογον, ἠκὸοτον ἐπιθυμίαις, ῶ πάσαι ἐπικάθηνται ἡδοναι)" (Clement, Paedagogus 1, 13, 102). "Other men live in order to eat, as indeed do the reasonless animals (ἄλογα ζῶα), for whom life (βίος) is nothing but their stomach; but we, according to the admonition of the Educator, ought to eat in order to live. For our purpose in life is not food, and our purpose in life is not pleasure; rather, for the purpose of our remaining on this earth, that the Logos may educate to incorruption (ἀφθαρσία), food is admitted." (Clement, Paedagogus 2, 1, 1). A few paragraphs further on, the comparison is intensified by comparing the immoderately gluttonous with creepers, the lowest animals according to the view of the time: "People who for the delight of their stomachs give up reason (λόγος) or friendship (φιλία) or even life (ζῆ), who crawl on their bellies, animals in the likeness of men (θηρία ἀνδρείκελα), ..." (Clement, Paedagogus 2, 1, 7).

In summary, a contradictory picture emerges: on the one hand, Clement continues to emphasise the animal-friendliness of the Torah, which he, like Philon, places in analogy to human-friendliness. Also, as far as the consumption of meat is concerned, his restraint shows a certain closeness to the animal-friendly positions of the Neo-Platonists and Neo-Pythagore-

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ans. In this line, Clement finally even recognises the ability of animals to speak. On the other hand, as far as reason and knowledge of God are concerned, he deepens and intensifies the binary view of the Stoa: while animals do not possess these two gifts, they are given to humans—and in this their being an image of God is revealed. This is also the basis of their exclusive immortality, an idea that appears here for the first time but will accompany Christianity for two millennia. Even if anthropocentrism is still not explicitly advocated, the way is increasingly paved for it. Finally, the gloomy animal allegorism, which equates animals with uncontrolled desires, will also cast a long shadow. This will already become apparent with the next Alexandrian, Origen (chapter 5.6).

5.5 Tertullian

Quintus Septimius Florens Tertullianus (c. 160–220 AD) lived almost at the same time as Clement, but in Carthage and thus in the western, Latin half of the Roman Empire. He had an extensive literary, philosophical and juridical education and was married to a Christian woman. Towards the end of the 2nd century, he converted to Christianity and composed at least 31 theological writings. Since the persecution of North African Christians under Emperor Septimius Severus (193–211 AD), these had increasingly focused on apologies in defence of Christianity against external attacks. Tertullian's philosophical basis was largely Stoic—considerably more so than that of the authors presented above. As the first important writer of the Western Church, he shaped the Latin key concepts of theology for a long time.

Only a few passages in his work deal with animals. Once, Tertullian refers to the widespread conviction in ancient philosophy that animals, in case of illness, know about the herbal remedies that can help them recover, and gives some examples of this (Tertullian, De paenitentia 12). At one point, Gen 1:26–27 is also interpreted when it says in a subordinate clause: "man himself, the work and image of God, the possessor of the whole universe (ipsum hominem, opus et imaginem dei, totius universitatis possessorem)" (Tertullian, De spectaculis 2, 12). For the first time, the term "possessor" appears here, which later gains such great importance

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in René Descartes' interpretation of Gen 1:26–28[20]. But these issues are not particularly important to Tertullian, so that it remains with the short subordinate clause.

The Carthaginian deals more intensively with the doctrine of creation, especially with regard to two topics. The first is the doctrine of the *transmigration of souls*. Interestingly, for him the core problem is not the migration of the soul from a human body into an animal body, but the migration from the body of one individual into that of another individual. The soul is very specifically organised for a certain living being and cannot possibly exist in another. Each soul is unique and perfectly created for the equally unique body in which it dwells. According to the species-specific nature (natura), there could be a similarity between different individuals, but not according to individual substance (substantia) (Tertullian, De anima 32). A transmigration of souls is therefore unthinkable. Tertullian thus proves that one can effectively refute the doctrine of the transmigration of souls without disparaging animals. One does not even have to use the idea that a human rational soul migrates into an irrational animal in order to recognise the problematic nature of the doctrine of the transmigration of souls. It is quite sufficient to perceive the soul as part of creaturely individuality. With this much more fundamental categorisation, Tertullian is able to undermine the doctrine of transmigration considerably more sustainably.

The second theme, in which the doctrine of creation plays a role, is Tertullian's dispute with Markion or with the Markionites. Markion (around 85, presumably in Sinope/ Province of Pontus–around 160) was initially a successful shipowner before he went to Rome around 140 and joined the Catholic community there. In 144, he broke with this community and founded his own church. Its core elements include distancing itself from Judaism, clear, easily understandable dualism between good and evil, and rigorous asceticism, including a general commitment to celibacy and sexual abstinence (Volker Lukas 2015, 7–8). In connection with this, Markion postulates a fundamental contrast between the good, merciful God of the New Testament and the ruthless, strict God of the Old Testament. Consequently, for him the Old Testament does not belong to the Holy Scriptures of Christianity. Despite some overlaps with Gnosticism, Markion is not a Gnostic in the full sense of the word (Volker Lukas 2015,

20 Science and technology make us "comme maîtres et possesseurs de la nature"—"like masters and possessors of nature" (René Descartes 1637, Discours de la méthode VI,2).

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10–13). Nevertheless, his community was remarkably successful and spread rapidly, also to North Africa.

For this reason, Tertullian has to deal with the Markionites. Around 203 he wrote his extensive work Adversus Marcionem (Volker Lukas 2015, 19). Tertullian evaluates Markionite dualism, which goes hand in hand with a devaluation of the material and corporeal, as disrespect for the Creator and his creatures and calls on Markion to *respect animals and their Creator*: "But inasmuch as you want to have your mockery of the little animals (animalia minutiora), whom the greatest artist (maximus artifex) has purposely so abundantly endowed with skill and power, teaching that great things are revealed in the humble, much as, according to the words of the Apostle, virtue is revealed in weakness, do once imitate, if you can, the houses of bees, the tunnels of ants, the webs of spiders, the weavings of silkworms; endure and withstand, if you can, the small animals that find themselves in your bed and home, the venom of wasps, the sting of flies, the buzzing and biting of mosquitoes. How will you fare with the larger animals, since you already experience from the small ones partly advantages and partly disadvantages, so that you cannot despise the Creator even in the small (ut nec in modicis despicias Creatorem)?" (Tertullian, Adversus Marcionem 1, 14, 1–2). Here a typical train of thought becomes visible, which is found in many Church Fathers: It is precisely in the smallest creatures that the great God can be recognised and marvelled at particularly well, because despite their tininess, these animals have so many wonderful skills.

However, Tertullian defends the Old Testament not only on the basis of its Creation narratives, but also on the basis of the Torah, which he regards as outstanding evidence of *man's special position*. Here we are with the Greek philosophers, who regard man's capacity for justice and morality as proof of his superiority. At the same time, Tertullian wants to hold on to the goodness (bonitas) of the Old Testament and contradicts the thesis of the vengeful, punishing Old Testament God: "The goodness [of God] places man at the head of everything, which he should enjoy and master and even name (bonitas praefecit universis fruendis atque regnandis, etiam cognominandis) [...] Even the law [of the Torah], which you accuse so vehemently, which you so tug at in controversy, is enacted by goodness (bonitas), which counsels man to adhere to God, lest he appear as free as he is cast out. He would then resemble his own servants, the rest of the animals (aequandus famulis suis, ceteris animalibus), who are without connection with God, spurned by Him, left to themselves. But he alone, as man, should have the glory, alone be deemed worthy to receive a law

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from God, and as a rational creature, capable of knowledge and science (animal rationale intellectus et scientiae capax), should also be held in bounds by rational freedom (libertate rationali) itself, subject to him who had subjected everything to him (ei subiectus qui subiecerat illi omnia)." (Tertullian, Adversus Marcionem 2, 4, 4–6).

Here Tertullian goes far into Stoic waters. According to him, the distinction of man above all creatures is shown in his capacity for justice and morality, knowledge (also of God), science and freedom of will. He regards animals, on the other hand, as separate from God because they do not possess all these abilities. By virtue of his reason in cognition and decision-making, man stands between God and non-human living beings, subject to the one and master of the other. Tertullian defends the Stoic scala naturae here, invoking the Torah in which he believes it is evident—here he will have had in mind the dominion mandate from Gen 1:28.

Even if Tertullian's doctrine of creation remains very fragmentary and is certainly not one of the core impulses of his work, it is more strongly influenced by stoic anthropocentrism than anything we have read so far from the early theologians. And as if it were the greatest matter of course, he obviously invokes the Old Testament Creation narratives. On the basis of his gift of reason and by virtue of divine commission, everything is subject to man; he is the "owner" of the universe. With Tertullian, Christian anthropocentrism clearly comes to the fore.

5.6 Origen

Origen (185 Alexandria–253/254, probably in Tyros) came from a wealthy, Christian Alexandrian family. His mother was presumably of Egyptian descent, while his father Leonides was a Roman citizen (Alfons Fürst 2011, 47 and 51). Leonides was killed in 202 in the North African persecution of Christians under Emperor Septimius Severus (193–211). The family was left impoverished, their property confiscated by the state. Thereupon, a woman of the Alexandrian upper class financed Origen's education (Eusebius of Caesarea, Church History 6, 2).

Origen was thus, unlike most theologians of his time, ocialized as a Christian from his youth. Due to his high qualifications, he was soon appreciated as a teacher of asceticism and therefore gave up teaching grammar in order to teach Christian philosophy and theology, but was nevertheless "a theological lateral thinker of distinction who caused offence even dur-

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ing his lifetime" (Eberhard Schockenhoff 2012, 46). Some of his students were imprisoned, and Origen accompanied them pastorally to martyrdom. After the end of the persecution of Christians in 210, Bishop Demetrius of Alexandria entrusted him with public instruction in Christian philosophy, "the first and greatest lay theologian of the Church" (Eberhard Schockenhoff 2012, 47). Origen developed intensive travelling activity, among others to Rome, Athens, Caesarea and Palestine. Because of a conflict with Bishop Demetrius, he left Alexandria around 231/232 and settled permanently in Caesarea. In the meantime, ordained as a priest, he ran a house church there. He preached daily on a biblical text, wrote biblical commentaries and engaged in fruitful exchange with the rabbis of the Jewish community. Origen was one of the few early Christian theologians who understood some Hebrew and also read the original text of the Bible with the help of Greek translations. During the Cyprianic plague, he was called upon to sacrifice to Apollo, as are all citizens of the Roman Empire. Because of his refusal to do so, he was imprisoned and tortured, and after his release he presumably died as a result of the ordeal.

Most of Origen's works have not survived in the original Greek, but only in a Latin translation by the monk Rufinus of Aquileia (ca. 345–411/412). Many have been completely destroyed by his opponents. Three are relevant to our question: Περὶ ἀρχῶν/ De principiis is a kind of Christian dogmatics written by Origen "probably in the early twenties" in Alexandria (Herwig Görgemanns/ Heinrich Karpp 1985, 6). The other two works were written in Caesarea, namely his sermons on the Book of Genesis around 245 and Contra Celsum, a defence of Christianity against Kelsos, whom we have already met (chapter 3.6.4), around 248.

Philosophically, Origen represents a Middle Platonic world view. "At the time of Origen, this school of thought had already integrated Stoic thought" (Agnethe Siquans 2016, 58), including above all anthropocentrism and the perception of animals as aloga (Max Pohlenz 1959, 449; Agnethe Siquans 2016, 59). Although animals are ensouled, they are at the bottom of the hierarchical scala naturae, especially creeping and aquatic animals. Origen, on the other hand, takes the method of his biblical interpretation from Paul and Philon (Agnethe Siquans 2016, 55), i.e. from the tradition of Hellenistic Diaspora Judaism. In addition to the literal interpretation of the biblical text "secundum litteram", there is also a spiritual symbolic interpretation "secundum allegoriam", as in Clement of Alexandria (Maria Di Pasquale Barbanti 2003, 85–94). In fact, the latter gained an enormous

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preponderance, while the former disappeared almost entirely. This had serious consequences for the perception of animals.

5.6.1 About the beginnings

In his *systematic-theological treatise "De principiis",* Origen presents his view of the world order strictly hierarchically from top to bottom. First, he talks about God the Father, Son and Spirit, then about rational beings and their moral capacity. This brings him to his core concern: A virtuous life, which is impossible for reasonless beings, but commanded for rational beings and the basis for reward and punishment (Origen, De principiis 1, 5, 2). Even spiritual beings, when they sin, "can, by virtue of their depravity, be bound to the coarse body of the reasonless cattle" (Origen, De principiis 1, 5, 5). Already here, one can see that Origen counts corporeality as something animal and evaluates it negatively.

The second book of De principiis t"en d'als with the levels arranged under human beings, namely animals, habitats and plants (Origen, De principiis 2, 1, 1; cf. also 2, 9, 3). Stoic teleology is echoed here: The entire cosmos with all creatures is created only for the sake of rational beings. Furthermore, Origen interprets diversity in a good Platonic way as something that has been split. This is not wanted and must be brought back to unity through a process of return.

Origen then arrives at his main topic, the doctrine of the soul. For his thesis that all animals are animate beings, he cites the Bible, where Gen 1:20,24 tells of the creation of "animate beings" and Lev 17:14 describes the blood as the soul of all living things. On the other hand, he refers to a conceptual analysis according to which animate beings are those that have senses and drives. Philosophy and the Bible were therefore in complete agreement on this question (Origen, De principiis 2, 8, 1).

But if animals, like humans, have a soul, what distinguishes them? Origen classically interprets the soul as a certain principle of movement from within. Inanimate objects are moved only from without, animate ones also from within, for they bring forth an idea, and this is an impulse. Animals produce this idea "naturally": "Of everything that moves, some have the cause of movement in itself; others are moved only from without […] Inanimate objects move from without themselves, animate ones from within themselves. From itself, namely, the animate moves when an idea (φαντασία) arises which gives rise to a drive (ὁρμή); and again, in some

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living beings, ideas arise which give rise to a drive when the power of imagination (φύσις φανταστική) arouses the drive according to a plan." (Origen, De principiis 3, 1, 2). Origen cites the web-building of a spider and the honeycomb-building of bees as examples of this.

Unlike animals, however, humans also possess a critical filter that checks the impulse generated by imagination for reasonableness and morality: "The rational being, however, in addition to the power of imagination, has reason, which judges ideas (Το μέντοι λογικόν ζώον και λόγον έχει πρός τη φανταστική φύσει, τον κρίνοντα τάς φαντασίας) and rejects some, adopts others, so that the living being may be guided by them. Further, since reason has the faculty of discerning between good and evil, by virtue of which, from deliberation, we choose good and avoid evil, so we are to be praised if we devote ourselves to the practice of good; to be censured if we do the contrary. It is not to be overlooked that the majority of the natural force diffused through the universe is in some way, though in varying degrees, in living beings. [...] The fact that this or that reproach from outside awakens this or that idea in us is admittedly not up to us: but the judgement whether we wish to apply the given in this way or in another is, after all, solely a matter for the reason in us (ἐν ἡμῖν λόγου ἐστίν), which, on account of the causes lying in it, leads us to those impulses which prompt us towards the beautiful and appropriate (πρὸς τὰς ἐπὶ τὸ καλὸν προκαλουμένας καὶ τὸ καθῆκον ὁρμάς), or misleads us towards the opposite path." (Origen, De principiis 3, 1, 3).

The fact that a certain external stimulus awakens a certain idea in a living being is natural and is out of its control. And the fact that the natural force that awakens this idea and, through it, the corresponding drive, is differently pronounced in human and animal creatures is also not their fault. The power of judgement, on the other hand, which is based on reason, is in principle possessed by every human being and can therefore relate to inner ideas and drives. Yes, the power of judgement even develops "legal and moral drives", thus pushing man towards the good. According to Origen and the entire Greek mainstream philosophy, this is precisely what distinguishes humans from animals.

Consequently, a person who does not bring their reason to bear is similar to an animal: "But if the soul has not turned to the spirit and becomes one with it, but still clings to the body and thinks of carnal things, it is [...] similar to an animal (animali similis)." (Origen, De principiis 3, 4, 3). As usual in Platonism, Origen interprets "the soul as the middle between two conflicting laws, which can conform either to the higher principle of its

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existence, the πνεῦμα, or to the lower, the σάρξ" (Christian Hengstermann 2016, 94 citing Origen, Commentarius in epistulam ad Romanos 1, 7). Man, who is placed between God and animals in the hierarchy of being, is to follow the spiritual in order to be God's likeness, not the corporeal, which would make him an animal. "Where man does not follow the 'law of the spirit' [...] but abandons himself to the 'drives' of the soul, which he has in common with the animal [...], his movement is not that of a man, not a self-determined 'movement through himself' or 'self-movement', but the instinct-steered 'movement of himself' of the animal. In contrast, it is a matter of offering the animal in the human [...] in a 'life according to the word', as it were, as a sacrifice." (Christian Hengstermann 2016, 105 in interpretation of Homiliae in Leviticum 2,2). Origen like the Stoic tradition does not speak of "instinct-driven", but of "natural". Biology has also abandoned the instinct theory since the middle of the 20th century, because "instinct" was only a black box for processes in the brain as long as its functional mechanisms were not known. Apart from that, however, Hengstermann aptly characterises the horror image of animalisation of the soul conjured up in De principiis and "especially in the Homilies" (Christian Hengstermann 2016, 104). At the same time, he suggests that Origen also interprets the Old Testament animal sacrifices allegorically: man should sacrifice the animal within himself in order to live rationally.

The interpretation of Gen 1:26–27 is also to be placed in this context. Origen interprets the statement of the Greek Bible that God creates man in his image and likeness as follows: Man has been the image (εἶδος) of God since his creation. Likeness (ὁμοίωσις), literally becoming like, is the potential that man must realise himself through a virtuous life. His primordial image for this is the Logos, Christ Himself. Thus, the ὁμοίωσις θεῷ is "the highest good to which the rational nature as a whole aspires" (Origen, De principiis 3, 6, 1; cf. Christian Hengstermann 2016, 96). According to Origen, the Greek philosophers would have recognised this from the Bible without naming its source.

5.6.2 The Homilies on Genesis

The second group of texts of importance for our topic are the *homilies on Genesis*. They were delivered in Caesarea around 245 AD in a relatively late phase of his life. A total of sixteen homilies have survived. "They probably represent only a section of an originally much larger number of homilies."

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(Peter Habermehl 2011, 7). While the Abraham cycle (Gen 12–25) has been preserved in its entirety, only two exemplary homilies each have survived from the prehistory cycle (Gen 1–11) and the Jacob-Joseph cycle (Gen 26–50) (Peter Habermehl 2011, 8). In concrete terms, this means that the first homily is dedicated to Gen 1, the second to Gen 6–8.

The *first homily interprets* the creation of the world as an allegory for the moral life of man. Origen interprets the creation of animals as an image of the creation of thoughts in the heart (Origen, Homiliae in Genesim 1, 8–11): The good thoughts rise like birds to the sky, the bad ones remain like creepers on the ground (Origen, Homiliae in Genesim 1, 8). On the basis of this allegory, however, a problem arises for the literal sense: Why does God consider all the animals in Genesis 1:21 to be good, even the creepers? Origen explains this by saying that good only becomes recognisable as good through that which is bad and that what is bad is a valuable challenge that man can grow from by confronting it: "What beauty and splendour the light possesses would remain hidden if the darkness of the night did not confront it." (Origen, Homiliae in Genesim 1, 10). His negative interpretation of land animals lies in the same logic (Origen, Homiliae in Genesim 1, 11).

Origen makes a momentous statement about the creation of animals: "Only the heavens and the earth, the sun, the moon and the stars, and finally man were created by God; everything else, it is said in Scripture, came into being at his command." (Origen, Homiliae in Genesim 1, 12). Here, Origen refers to Scripture, which says exactly the opposite: animals are also created by God, directly and completely independently of man. "It is hardly conceivable that the famous commentator on Genesis should have inadvertently made such a blunder. Did Origen sacrifice philological textual fidelity for the theological message here?" (Peter Habermehl 2011, 13). Habermehl's question can be answered with "no" with regard to the text of the Septuagint. Origen reads in his Bible "Let the waters bring forth (producant) creeping creatures and birds" (Origen, Homiliae in Genesim 1, 8; cf. Gen 1:20 LXX: Εξαγαγέτω) and "Let the earth bring forth (producat) living creatures according to their kind" (Origen, Homiliae in Genesim 1, 11; cf. Gen 1:24 LXX: Εξαγαγέτω). So, according to the Septuagint, God gives the command to the water (unlike in the Hebrew text) and the earth (like in the Hebrew text) to bring forth the animals and thus apparently does not create them single-handedly like the heavenly bodies and man—at least if one reads over Gen 1:21 and Gen 1:25, where it also says in the Septuagint that God created the animals in question (ἐποίησεν ὁ θεὸς).

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Origen is thus not philologically unfaithful to his biblical text, but selectively faithful. He over-interprets one formulation of the Septuagint, overlooks the other and draws from it the conclusion of man being privileged, which is not intended in the Hebrew text of Gen 1.

Finally, in Gen 1:28, God gives man the "principatus bestiarum", which, according to Origen, is dominion over wild animals. Origen interprets this in such a way that the mind (mens) is to rule the senses (sensus) and not vice versa the senses the mind (Origen, Homiliae in Genesim 1, 12 and 1, 16). The image of God thus becomes the key to immortality: "It is our interior man, invisible and incorporeal, incorruptible and immortal (interior homo noster est, invisibilis et incorporalis, et incorruptus atque immortalis)." (Origen, Homiliae in Genesim 1:13). Ultimately, the Logos of God, Christ, is this image of God in man. Even the seed-bearing fruits given to man for food in Gen 1:29 are interpreted allegorically by Origen. They embody the capacity for anger and desire in us, which we can use rationally for justice (rationabiliter utimur ad iustitiam; Origen, Homiliae in Genesim 1,17).

Overall, the consistent allegorisation as collateral damage entails an extremely negative view of animals (and, by analogy, of the body!): "Although he talks about spiritual realities and spiritual struggles in the human microcosm, there is no room for a positive attitude towards the animals in the macrocosm, i.e. the physically existing animals, insofar as microcosm and macrocosm correspond to each other. Of course, animals are created by God, of course they are useful to humans, but they are—based on the idea of a graduated order of being—interpreted in the allegorical view [...] as inferior and dangerous, so that they have to be fought. This reflects the basic tenor of Origen's moral interpretation, which thus implies a hostile attitude towards animals not only in the allegorical sense but also in physical reality." (Agnethe Siquans 2016, 64).

In the *second homily* on Genesis, Origen preaches on the Flood narrative Gen 6–8. One after the other, he explains the text in the classical threefold sense: in his literal or historical interpretation, he takes up almost exclusively the technical construction of the ark—its size and its materials, its rooms and their function. In the spiritual or mystical interpretation, he takes up the Christological and ecclesiological interpretation that has been common since Justin (Dialogus cum Tryphono Judaeo 138): The human and animal inhabitants of the ark symbolise different groups of people who are united in the one ark of the Church by the "spiritual Noah" (Origen, In Genesis homilia 2, 5) through the wood of the cross and the water of baptism.

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Origen compares the coexistence of the animals in the ark with the vision of the messianic peace of creation in Is 11:1–9 and interprets both as images for the coexistence of different and sometimes even very wild people in the Church. As a third image, he draws on Peter's vision of the unclean animals in Acts 10: the unclean animals become clean, that is, the unredeemed people are redeemed because they are bound in the one cloth of faith, which has four corners, i.e. is held by four gospels. Finally, in the third, moral interpretation, Origen interprets the ark as the library of Christians, in which the Holy Scriptures have their place on the upper floors, but in the basement even pagan writings can have their place.

One can see that hardly anything remains of the actual intention of the Old Testament story when it is allegorised and condensed into a few statements. The animals as such completely lose their meaning. And this is the case even in the literal interpretation, in which Origen shows himself to be very fond of technology but has no interest whatsoever in living creatures[21]. In this respect, Origen stands in a long tradition: before him, Justin Martyr (Dialogus cum Tryphono Judaeo 138) and Tertullian (De baptismo 8) interpreted the Flood narrative purely allegorically. Cyprian of Carthage (De unitate ecclesiae 6) and Augustine (In Ioannis Evangelium Tractatus 6, 2; 6, 19; 7, 3; 9, 11; 11, 7; 120, 2) follow him. The only Church Fathers who interpret the narrative literally with regard to animals besides the aforementioned Irenaeus of Lyons (chapter 5.3) are Ephraim the Syrian (chapter 5.9) and Ambrose of Milan (chapter 5.13), both, however, by using it contrary to its intention of supporting strong anthropocentrism.

5.6.3 The treatise against Kelsos

The third of Origen's writings to be analysed here is *Contra Celsum*, a defence of Christianity against Kelsos, whom we have already met (chapter 3.6.4), written around 248 A.D. As a reminder, the Platonist (Michael Fiedrowicz 2011, 20) Kelsos lived in the 2nd half of the 2nd century. In

21 There is only one flash of fascination for the living in Origen's work, and that is in Contra Celsum 4, 41. Against Kelsos' argument that the Flood narrative is a "fairy tale for underage children", Origen first emphasises, as he did in the second homily on Genesis, that the dimensions of the ark were to be multiplied by 300 according to Egyptian mathematics, and then there would be enough room for the animals. But then he asks his opponent: "Must it not finally arouse astonishment that by divine providence pairs of animals of every kind were brought into the ark, so that the earth in turn would have seed from all living creatures...".

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his lost work "True Doctrine" (Ἀληθὴς λόγος), which he wrote in Alexandria around 180 AD, he is the first to criticise Stoic anthropocentrism in its Christian guise and, in contrast, advocates consistent Platonic cosmocentrism (precisely the "true" doctrine because it is ancient, cf. Michael Fiedrowicz 2011, 25). At the time Origen wrote his defence of Christianity, Kelsos had long since died, but his book was still on people's minds, so Origen sought to confront it.

Kelsos' work is obviously characterised by provocative comparisons between humans and animals—in modern terms we could say by biocentristic egalitarianism. In Origen's first reaction one already senses how much he feels provoked by this: "Now, in answering these diatribes against us, we address the question to those who take pleasure in them: Do you hold that all men without distinction, because of the surpassing greatness of God, are 'like a swarm of bats or ants or frogs or earthworms? [...] But no well thinking man (οὐδεὶς τῶν εὖ φρονούντων) is likely to maintain that the reasonless (τὰ ἄλογα) stand higher than the reasonable ones (τὰ λογικά) because of the size of their bodies, for reason raises the sensible high to superiority over all the reasonless (πολὺ γὰρ εἰς ὑπεροχὴν ἀνάγει ὁ λόγος τὸ λογικὸν παρὰ πάντα τὰ ἄλογα)." (Origen, Contra Celsum 4, 24). One can literally feel Origen's speechlessness. In itself, Kelsos' thesis is quite comprehensible: In view of the immeasurable greatness of God, the "size" differences between creatures disappear. But for Origen, reason has such weight that the gulf between humans and animals is for him as great as that between God and humans. With his word play of the direct opposition of ἄλογα and λογικά (ζῷα would be added to that), Origen shines rhetorically and at the same time covers up his argumentative weakness. There is no equidistance between God, humans and animals—Kelsos is right about that.

In the next section, Origen asks whether Kelsos perhaps considers humans as small as animals because they have sins, weaknesses and faults in their souls. But even if Kelsos thought so, Origen would reject this because the capacity for reason and virtue alone ennobles man. "Basically, no rational being (τὸ λογικὸν), be it what it may, may well be compared to an 'earthworm' because it possesses endowments of virtue (ἀφορμὰς ἔχον πρὸς ἀρετήν). For these do not permit persons to be compared to an 'earthworm' who are capable of virtue and can never entirely lose their seed (σπέρματα). It is thus shown that by no means are men in general only 'earthworms' towards God. For since reason owes its origin 'to the word' 'which is with God' (Jn 1:1–2), the rational being must therefore not

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be altogether denied kinship with God (ὁ γὰρ λόγος τὴν ἀρχὴν ἔχων ἀπὸ τοῦ παρὰ θεῷ λόγου οὐκ ἐᾷ τὸ λογικὸν ζῷον πάντῃ ἀλλότριον νομισθῆναι θεοῦ). [...] If the nature of reason (ἡ τοῦ λόγου φύσις) does not permit such a comparison to be adopted, we shall certainly not dishonour the human nature fitted for virtue (τὴν πρὸς ἀρετὴν κατεσκευασμένην ἀνθρωπίνην φύσιν), even if she should sin through ignorance, and not put herself on an equal footing with such living beings (ζῷα)." (Origen, Contra Celsum 4, 25).

At this point it is easy to see how central the idea of the indwelling of the divine Logos, Christ, in man is for Origen. His anthropocentrism is ultimately based on logocentrism or, more precisely, Christocentrism. In contrast to the Logos hymn of John's Gospel (cf. chapter 4.3.3), however, Origen interprets the incarnation in the Stoic spirit as becoming human and not in the biblical sense as becoming creature-like. Being steeped in Stoicism right down to the roots, it does not even occur to him that non-human creation can also participate in the divine Logos and be redeemed by it.

The central passages for our topic are found in Contra Celsum 4, 75–93. There, Origen works through the three most important themes in a very structured way: the question of cosmic teleology with the answer of anthropocentrism (Origen, Contra Celsum 4, 75–80), the question of animal reason with the answer of the aloga thesis (Origen, Contra Celsum 4, 81–87) and the question of the relationship of special animals to God with the answer of their possession by demons (Origen, Contra Celsum 4, 88–93). With this last part, a new level of devaluation of animals is reached.

On the *question of the first theme of cosmic teleology,* Origen already writes in an earlier passage: "And as for the plants, so many and various, which are governed by an invisible, natural power working within them, and are created for no small benefit to all mankind (πρὸς χρείαν γεγονότων οὐκ εὐκαταφρόνητον ἐν τῷ παντὶ ἀνθρώπων), and as for the animals that are there for the service of men (τῶν ἀνθρώποις διακονουμένων ζῴων), ..." (Origen, Contra Celsum 4, 54). One senses the matter-of-factness with which Origen states anthropocentrism in the subordinate clauses. It is not problematised in the least. However, this is done in great detail in the passages from 4, 75 onwards.

Origen begins by praising the Creator and a quotation from Scripture: "But we Christians, who worship only one God as the Creator of these things, we also thank Him for creating them and preparing for us such a glorious dwelling place, and for our sake also the animals that serve us (δι'

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ἡμᾶς τοῖς δουλεύουσιν ἡμῖν ζῴοις). 'He causeth grass to grow for cattle, and plants for the service of men, to bring forth corn out of the ground, and that wine may gladden the heart of man, and that the countenance may be gladdened with oil, and that bread may strengthen the heart of man' (Ps 104:14–15). But if God has also prepared food for 'the wildest beasts', there is nothing striking in this. For these living creatures (ταῦτα γὰρ τὰ ζῷα), as other philosophers have also said, were created for the sake of exercise for the rational living creature (γυμνασίου ἕνεκα γεγονέναι τῷ λογικῷ ζῴῳ)." (Origen, Contra Celsum 4, 75).

Psalm 104 sings of the Creator, who gives food to all living creatures, non-human and human alike. The Psalm makes only a gradual distinction between them, listing more food for humans than for animals: bread, wine and oil, the triad of the most prestigious (and, nota bene, vegan!) foods of the Mediterranean region of antiquity (cf. Michael Rosenberger 2014, 353 and 400–401). Nevertheless, the Psalm breathes great "biocentrist egalitarianism". Before God, all living beings are equal: equally needy, equally mortal, equally loved, equally cared for. There is no trace of a hierarchy of purposes. That Origen nevertheless reads it in this sense shows how strongly he is influenced by Stoic teleology. He thinks he discovers it everywhere, even where the Bible describes the exact opposite.

In the Stoa, the fact that animals are physically much better adapted to their way of life than humans is interpreted as proof of their lack of reason, for if they possessed reason, a less well-suited body would suffice for them, as it does for humans. They could make tools, use animals as helpers and thus compensate for their physical shortcomings. Origen receives this thesis in the following sentences: "Therefore one might well admire Providence (πρόνοια) precisely because, in comparison with the reasonless beings (τὰ ἄλογα ζῷα), it has created the rational (τὸ λογικόν) as relatively needy for its own benefit. For the reasonless creatures their food is ready, because they have no means of using arts; nature also gives them clothing, for they are provided with hair or feathers or scales or housing." (Origen, Contra Celsum 4, 76). That a correct biological insight is described here is beyond question. However, the binary opposition of lack of reason and endowment with reason remains without justification—modern biology assumes a continuum of intelligence, as some animal-friendly authors already assumed in antiquity.

An important touchstone of teleology is the question of the direction of the food chain and the dynamics of domestication. Origen writes on this: "Kelsos counters himself [...] that [...] the reasonless creatures were created

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for their sake, and says: 'If anyone should wish to call us the rulers of the reasonless (ἄρχοντας τῶν ἀλόγων), since we hunt and eat the reasonless creatures, we shall ask: Why are not rather we created for their sake, since they hunt and eat us? But we also need nets and weapons and many men and dogs to help us against the animals we hunt, whereas they were immediately and intrinsically provided by nature with the weapons with which we are easily conquered by them. But just there we can see how powerful an aid we have been given in the mind, which affords more protection than any weapon the animals seem to possess. Although, therefore, in bodily strength we are far inferior to the living creatures (τῶν ζῴων), and in bodily size we are even greatly surpassed by some, yet by our intellect we rule over the wild beasts (κρατοῦμεν διὰ τὴν σύνεσιν τῶν θηρίων). We drive away the mighty elephants; those animals which can be tamed we compel by mild treatment; against those which cannot be tamed, or from the taming of which we cannot expect any benefit, we behave cautiously, and protect ourselves from them by keeping such animals confined when we please; but when we need their flesh for our food, we kill them as easily as we kill domestic animals. All things, then, the Creator has made subservient to the rational living creature and its natural mind (Δοῦλα οὖν πάντα τοῦ λογικοῦ ζῴου καὶ τῆς φυσικῆς αὐτοῦ συνέσεως κατεσκεύασεν ὁ δημιουργός). And for one purpose we need the dogs, for example, to guard our flocks of sheep or herds of cattle or herds of goats or houses; for other purposes we need the oxen, for example, to cultivate the fields; the draught and pack animals we use again for other things. And so it may also be said that the lions, bears, panthers, wild boars, and similar wild beasts are given to us, that we may train the disposition that is in us to manly strength." (Origen, Contra Celsum 4, 78).

Kelsos challenges the all-encompassing, monolinear teleology of Stoic-Christian anthropocentrism by turning it on its head: Just as humans use animals, animals use humans—even as food. Kelsos does not want to resolve the contradictory nature of nature at all, but to leave it at that in great serenity. The only thing he wants to prove is that anthropocentrism is under-complex. Origen does not understand this point and wants to decide according to the majority of examples. He cannot bear the complexity of Kelsos' argumentation because it contradicts his Stoic understanding of divine providence. So he talks past Kelsos and comes back to his "ceterum censeo": "In contrast, note that although 'men catch wild beasts (θηρία)' and 'wild beasts rob men', yet there is a great difference between men who gain the upper hand by their intellect (συνέσει) and beasts, to whom their

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wild and brute nature gives the upper hand over those men who do not use their intellect to protect themselves against the attacks of beasts." (Origen, Contra Celsum 4, 79).

Finally, Origen invokes Gen 2:18–20, where the creation of animals is underpinned by God's intention to give man assistance. The Bible and philosophy therefore agreed in relation to anthropocentrism: "'God has not subjected men to animals'; on the contrary, he has caused men to be able to bring animals under their control by means of their intellect and the artificial aids they are capable of inventing. For without divine assistance men would not have found the means to protect themselves against the animals and to become masters of them." (Origen, Contra Celsum 4, 80).

One has to admit that Origen's arguments for anthropocentrism have clear flaws: In terms of natural science, there is at most sufficient evidence that humans are more intelligent than animals—but not that animals are reasonless. Cosmologically, the problem of the monolinearity of divine providence, which Kelsos impressively addresses, is not understood. And biblically, the testimonies for anthropocentrism that are cited are thin, in the case of Psalm 104 even simply wrong.

Origen apparently opens the *question of the second theme of animal reason* with a surprise, for he admits that animals have a certain analogy to rational beings: "But the Deity must be admired because he has given even to the reasonless animals the faculty of being, as it were, an image of rational beings (τὸ οἱονεὶ πρὸς τὰ λογικὰ μίμημα), perhaps with the intention of putting the rational beings to shame, so that they may become more industrious and economical in the use of their goods with regard to the ants, and so that, looking after the bees, they may render obedience to the authorities and take their share in the necessary affairs of state for the salvation of the cities." (Origen, Contra Celsum 4, 81).

First of all, the two key terms from Gen 1:26–27 of the Septuagint, namely image (εἰκών) and parable (ὁμοίωσις), do not appear. Given Origen's linguistic sensitivity, this is probably no coincidence. Nevertheless, for an anthropocentrist, the thesis that animals are an image (μίμημα) of rational beings seems very daring. If the analogy is to be even rudimentarily justified, there must, for all the dissimilarity, be a resemblance with regard to the thing depicted, that is, the λογικὸν. The classical Stoic thesis that animals participate in the λογικὸν through their nature and not through their intellect, which Origen will use in Contra Celsum 4, 87, is not really convincing, for it destroys the analogy. The animals are then precisely not an image of rational beings.

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Only a little later, however, Origen returns to the pure aloga thesis: "But why do I say 'irrational animals', since according to the opinion of Kelsos the animals are not irrational beings at all, as they are commonly called? So he is of the opinion that even the ants are not without reason, he who has presumed to want to speak 'about the whole of nature' and boastfully promises the truth in the title of his book. For he says of 'the ants', whom he makes 'converse with one another', as follows: 'And when they meet, they also converse (διαλέγονται) with one another; therefore they do not fail to find their way'. Have they not, therefore, perfectly formed reason, common conceptions of certain general [facts] and a language and events and terms (οὐκοῦν καὶ λόγου συμπλήρωσίς ἐστι παρ' αὐτοῖς καὶ κοιναὶ ἔννοιαι καθολικῶν τινων καὶ φωνὴ τυγχάνοντα καὶ σημαινόμενα)?' For when one converses with another, it is in a language that 'makes some concept clear', but often also gives information about things that are called accidental. But to attribute this to ants is the most ridiculous thing in the world." (Origen, Contra Celsum 4, 84).

Kelsos presents an exact observation: ants communicate with each other. They therefore have a common language and use it to exchange common ideas that they can express and through which they learn from each other. Now, it can be argued whether and to what extent this observation by Kelsos is correct. Origen, however, refrains from doing so because he considers it ridiculous and not worthy of discussion.

"He [Kelsos] does not hesitate, in order to show the ugliness of his teachings to posterity, to add the following words: 'Now then, if someone were to look down on the earth from heaven, what difference would he find between what we do and what ants and bees do? [...] But it would be foolish to suppose that he who looks down from heaven on earthly things would observe from so far away only the bodies of men and ants, and not rather look at the nature of the forces that move them, and the source of the movements, whether they be rational or irrational. But once he sees the source of all movements, it is clear that he will also perceive the difference and the precedence of man not only over ants but also over elephants. For he who looks down from heaven will be able to discover in the reasonless (ἐν μὲν τοῖς ἀλόγοις), however large their bodies, no other principle than, if I may say so, reasonlessness (ἀλογία); but among rational beings (ἐν δὲ τοῖς λογικοῖς) he will find reason (λόγος), which men have in common with divine and heavenly beings, nay, perhaps even with God who rules over all. Hence, it is also said of them that they were created 'in the image

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of God' (Gen 1:26–27); for 'image' (εἰκών) of God who rules over all is his Word (λόγος)." (Origen, Contra Celsum 4, 85).

With an appealing thought experiment, Kelsos tries to draw Christians out of their shells: Imagine looking down at the earth from heaven! This experiment, which imagines the perspective of God, has been used in many contexts in the course of the history of philosophy and theology and has proved very fruitful if used correctly. Origen does not engage in this experiment, for he only sees what he has always seen and refuses to step out of his own edifice of thought at least once for a moment. A constructive dialogue is not possible in this way. It is a petitio principii, a classic circular argument.

We had already seen in the analysis of the Stoa (in chapter 3.5) that they considered the diversity of behaviour of individuals of the same species as an indication of the use of reason, and the stereotyped behaviour of all individuals of a species as an indication against it. Origen agrees with this reasoning: "And supposing that other 'remedies' are known to animals, how is it to be proved that it is not nature but reason that invents these remedies in animals? For if reason were the inventor, [...] there would be as many remedies in animals as in men. But since every animal has received means of healing corresponding to its nature, it is clear that they possess neither wisdom nor reason, but only natural (φυσικὴ) wisdom, a disposition (κατασκευή) bestowed by reason (ὑπὸ τοῦ λόγου γεγενημένη) to such things as are conducive to the well-being of every living thing (πρὸς τὰ τοιάδε σωτηρίας ἕνεκεν τῶν ζῴων)." (Origen, Contra Celsum 4, 87).

Urs Dierauer sees in this passage "probably the best and most complete description in ancient literature" of what has been called "instinct" since the Middle Ages (Urs Dierauer 1977, 217): a natural, "innate" disposition that enables certain performances and serves "to maintain the life" of living beings. The Stoic and Christian philosophies classified this ability as irrational, but, like Origen, attributed it to divine reason. Despite all the excellent interpretation that Dierauer provides and from which I have profited extraordinarily, considerable objections remain at this point: Firstly, the term "innate" does not occur, but only the term "natural". Secondly, there is no mention of "life preservation", but of the "salvation" or "well-being" of living beings, which is much more comprehensive. Thirdly, the instinct theory was already outdated long before Dierauer's dissertation, because the first insights into the former "black box" brain have been gained and animal behaviour can thus be described in a much more nuanced way. And fourthly, modern behavioural research has been able to gain fruitful in-

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sights using the heuristic instrument of differentiating between behavioural variance and behavioural stereotypy as used by the Stoics. In the process, an enormous variance has also been revealed in animal behaviour, which the Stoics had not reckoned with. The Stoic method of proving the aloga thesis has become an instrument of its refutation. Origen could not yet have known this with such clarity, but there were already observations in this direction in antiquity, as we have seen on various occasions.

Most touching and depressing at the same time, of course, is the passage that reveals Origen's deeper motivation for his anthropocentrism: "In the case of ants, since they are irrational animals, there is no reason to fear that they will become proud and haughty if their actions are compared with those of humans, but humans, who by virtue of their rational disposition can perceive how lowly their participation is valued for others, could perhaps suffer harm, insofar as it depends on Kelsos and his words." (Origen, Contra Celsum 4, 83). Here Origen reveals his deepest concerns and fears: Humans might lose their sense of self-worth, feel set back, humiliated and offended if they are put on a par with the rest of the animals. This passage is strongly reminiscent of Sigmund Freud's second, "biological mortification", which he sees as caused by Darwin's theory of evolution[22]. Freud relatively precisely describes the causes of the alienation between humans and animals that precede this mortification: anthropocentrism and the aloga thesis. Avoiding mortification by denying reality, according to Freud, is not a solution. Origen pursues the good intention of giving people self-confidence by bad means. At some point, the mortification becomes effective.

There remains *the question of the third theme, the relationship of animals to God*. Are animals possibly particularly "divine" and capable of recognising things that remain hidden from humans? Especially in Alexandria with its Egyptian animal cults, this question was hotly disputed. Origen could

22 "In the course of his cultural development, man threw himself up as master over his fellow animal creatures. But not satisfied with this supremacy, he began to put a gulf between their nature and his own. He denied them reason and ascribed to himself an immortal soul, invoking a high divine descent that allowed him to break the bond of communion with the animal world. It is strange that this exaltation is still remote from the little child, as it is from primitive and primeval man. It is the result of a later sophisticated development. [...] We all know that the research of Ch. Darwin, his co-workers and predecessors, put an end to this exaltation of man a little more than half a century ago. [...] But this is the second, the biological mortification of human narcissism." (Sigmund Freud 1917, 4).

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not avoid it any more than Kelsos. Since it is no longer relevant today to the same extent as the first two questions, we can deal with it relatively briefly.

As an argument against the special power of animals to prophesy, Origen cites a simple but indisputable fact: "If a divine power were really inherent in them, which makes future things known to them beforehand, [...] none of these animals could be caught by men at all." (Origen, Contra Celsum 4, 90). Origen does not leave it at that, however, to state the inability of animals to prophesy. He goes beyond this and sees some animals—as terrible as this may sound to modern ears—as the dwelling place of demons: "According to our view, certain evil and, as it were, titanic or gigantic demons have transgressed against the truly divine and against the angels in heaven, and have therefore fallen down from heaven (Lk 10:18) and are now doing their business on earth in the fatter and impure bodies. At the same time, they have a certain keen eye for what is to come, since they themselves are not clothed with earthly bodies. Since all their striving and activity after their descent is directed towards persuading the human race to fall away from the true God, they take up residence in the bodies of the most ferocious, wild and vicious animals and direct them wherever they want and whenever it pleases them [...], so that men allow themselves to be blinded by this prophesying power present in the reasonless animals and do not seek the God who encompasses the universe, nor do they fathom the true worship of God, but turn their thinking to earthly things..." (Origen, Contra Celsum 4, 92).

The fact that animals become an image for vices is something we have already encountered in several authors, especially in the animal allegory of the older Alexandrian Clement. Origen's allegorical interpretation of the creation of animals in the first homily to Genesis stands in this tradition. But to regard some animals as dwellings of demons goes a considerable step further. With all due understanding for people's fear of tigers, lions or crocodiles, the Bible writes in Genesis that God considered animals to be good. Origen must completely ignore the literal sense of the biblical text in order to maintain his thesis.

But that is not all. Origen also thinks that he can find confirmation for his thesis in the purity commandments of the Torah and in the prophets: "In any case, in classifying the animals, he [Moses] determined that all those should be unclean which were considered prophesying by the Egyptians and the other peoples, while the others could generally be considered pure. [...] And it will be found in general, that not only in the law, but also in the prophets, these animals are always used as emblems of what is worst [...]

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There seems now to exist for each genus of demons a kind of communion with each genus of animals" (Origen, Contra Celsum 4, 93). The unclean animals in the sense of the biblical purity regulations are thus supposedly the very ones that are worshipped as sacred in the Egyptian animal cults. And it is precisely those that the prophets would use as images for morally reprehensible attitudes. Again, Origen violently contorts the meaning of the biblical texts. The question of pure or impure does not imply any moral judgement in the Bible but orders the world. The "unclean" animals are just as "good" as the "clean" ones, for all are created by God. It is only that some may be eaten and sacrificed and others not.

5.6.4 Summary

A generation after Tertullian and Clement of Alexandria, an enormous amount had been clarified and developed. Thus, Origen reached a completely new level of systematisation of Christian anthropology and the doctrine of creation. In doing so, he concentrates (well Neo-Platonic) materially very strongly on the relationship between God or Christ and the human rational soul. Formally, his almost exclusive interpretation of biblical texts in an allegorical sense (exacerbating the Alexandrian tendency) is striking. What Philon (for Dt 22:10) and Paul (for Dt 25:4) had begun quite tentatively and selectively, now becomes the only method of interpretation, at least for the passages of the Bible referring to animals: the animals are nothing but images for inner-psychic processes.

One quickly realises that the material object and the formal object correspond perfectly—and therein undoubtedly lies Origen's genius. In itself, his world of thought is extremely consistent. The result, which is nevertheless fatal for animals, follows compellingly from the two premises. Origen represents consistent anthropocentrism, which under the surface is a form of concealed Christocentrism or logocentrism, and a harsh interpretation of the aloga thesis. For him, animals have no value in themselves. More than that, in his engagement with the animal cults of his Egyptian homeland, he gets caught up in the whirlpool of demonising some animals. I have not noticed a single place in his work where he shows empathy or even appreciation for animals. This is clearly different with most of the authors presented here.

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5.7 Lactance

The next leap in time in our treatise is not just one, but two generations. Lucius Caecilius Firmianus Lactantius (c. 250–c. 320), known as Lactance for short, came from western North Africa (from the area of present-day Tunisia). Emperor Diocletian appointed him as an official rhetor in his residential city of Nicomedia in Asia Minor (at the eastern end of the Sea of Marmara), where he met the Neo-Platonist Porphyrios, a sharp critic of Christianity who advocated a very animal-friendly philosophy (cf. chapter 3.6.5 above). During the Diocletianic persecution of Christians in 303, Lactance converted to Christianity and resigned from his state office. Still in Nicomedia, he witnessed Galerius' edict of tolerance in 311. In 314/315, Emperor Constantine entrusted him with the education of his son Crispus, which is why Lactance moved to "Gaul", presumably to Constantine's residence in Augusta Treverorum (Trier). Whether he died there or elsewhere is not known.

Lactance was a brilliant artist in his use of the Latin language. It is a pleasure to read his writings. Two of his numerous works play a role in the following: De opificio Dei on the creative work of God and De ira Dei on the wrath of God.

The theme of *De opificio Dei,* which was probably written during the Diocletianic persecution of 303/304, is corporeality in animals and humans (including the bodily correlations for the soul and spirit). By means of a strongly scientific approach, Lactance wants to provide proof of the Creator's benevolent providence and great wisdom. He does so without any reference to the Bible, which is very helpful in the debate with non-Christian philosophers.

Lactance begins with a programmatic prelude that actually says it all: "God the Father, our great Creator, gave us sense and reason (sensum atque rationem) so that we could recognise that we were created by him, because he himself is insight (intelligentia), he himself is sense and reason (sensus ac ratio). For the other living creatures, since he has not given them that power of mind (rationale), he has nevertheless provided (providit) their lives with great security." (Lactance, De opificio Dei 2, 1–2). Thus, Stoic anthropocentrism is out of the question for Lactance from the very first sentence. But unlike the Stoics, he sees no reason at all to doubt the divine care and provision for non-human creatures.

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As evidence that God also cares for animals, Lactance describes with much love and empathy that they have fur to protect them from the cold, as well as "weapons" for defence, the ability to flee quickly or places to hide from predators. Thus, he can conclude, "Every animal (animans) possesses its means of protection." (Lactance, De opificio Dei 2, 4). Where these were insufficient and a greater number of individuals fell prey to predators, greater fecundity could compensate for the losses (Lactance, De opificio Dei 2, 5). This is a most remarkable and biologically very accurate observation for the time[23].

Lactance contrasts the physical advantages of animals with the mental superiority of man—which is also scientifically very correct. Man does not receive such physical advantages, but he does not need them either: "But to man, to whom he gave the gift of reason and the ability to think and speak (ratione concessa, et virtute sentiendi atque eloquendi data), he granted none of these qualities given to the animals, because reason could provide him with what nature had denied him. He put him into the world naked and bare, because he could arm himself by his spirit and clothe himself with the help of his reason." (Lactance, De opificio Dei 2, 6). Here, the thesis of the "deficient human being", which was already several centuries old at the time of Lactance and is still outdated today, is summed up magnificently and elegantly in language.

Of course, Lactance is not concerned with establishing the thesis of the deficient human being, but with its interpretation and evaluation. His opponents are above all the Epicureans, who claim that there is no providence because there is no God, but rather that everything came into being by natural chance (Lactance, De opificio Dei 2, 10–4, 24). "They complain that man, compared to the animals, comes into the world all too weak and fragile (nimis imbecillus et fragilis), [...] naked and defenceless (nudus et inermis), as if thrust into this misery (miseria) after a shipwreck [...].According to this, nature is not the mother, but the stepmother of mankind, who [...] has shown herself to be so kind to the animals." (Lactance, De opificio Dei 3, 1–2).

Lactance refutes the Epicurean thesis in two steps: On the one hand, nature is by no means always only kind and maternal, even towards animals. He refers to the birds, which can neither walk nor fly when they hatch and need a lot of parental care. In a sense, they too were born naked and

23 Today, we speak of the so-called r-strategists, i.e. animal and plant species that compensate for their higher mortality with a higher reproductive rate r.

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defenceless. The parental care of birds therefore reveals that they "possess something of human intelligence (aliquid humanae intelligentiae)". On the other hand, humans do not need many natural advantages because they have reason: "But if such a creature is endowed with reason, why does it still need physical protection, since reason can replace nature? Reason serves to adorn and distinguish man to such a degree that nothing greater, nothing better could have been given to him by God." (Lactance, De opificio Dei 3, 14).

Lactance sees people faced with the (fictitious) alternative of choosing either reason without the physical advantages or the physical advantages without reason. The Epicureans, however, are so foolish as to want both (Lactance, De opificio Dei 3, 12–13). In this, reason was such a great advantage that it far outweighed all the physical advantages of animals: "So it is the case that reason grants more to men than nature does to dumb animals, because in the case of the latter neither their mighty bodily strength nor their strong build could prevent them either from being oppressed by us or from being subject to our power (aut opprimantur a nobis, aut nostrae subiecta sint potestati)." (Lactance, De opificio Dei 3, 17).

In the context of his reflections on physique (Lactance, De opificio Dei 5–15), Lactance also comes to speak of the special characteristic of man's ability to walk upright, which already belonged to good tradition in Greek philosophy, but appears for the first time in the Christian context: "Since it was God's intention, of all living creatures, to make man alone heavenly, but all the rest earthly (ex omnibus animalibus solum hominem facere coelestem, caetera universa terrena), he created man upright for the contemplation of heaven (ad coeli contemplationem), and set him on two feet, that he might look whence he came; but the animals he created looking towards the earth, so that, since they have no immortality to expect (nulla immortalitatis xpectation est), they would have only the belly and the lining (ventri pabuloque) to follow. Thus, the right reason and upright posture (recta ratio et sublimis status) of man alone, as well as his face, which is entirely similar and close to God the Father (vultus Deo patri communis ac proximus), indicate his origin and creator. His almost divine mind (divina mens), since he has been given dominion (dominatus) not only over the animals of the earth but also over his own body, has its seat at the very top of the head, and like from a high castle he sees and perceives everything." (Lactance, De opificio Dei 8, 2–3).

For Lactance, the upright gait thus proves not only man's endowment with reason and the raised gaze not only his being made in the image of

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God (a new interpretation of Gen 1:26–27!), but also his dominion over his own body and animals as well as his sole vocation to immortality, which animals, looking towards the earth, cannot expect. Stoic-Christian anthropocentrism has grown here into a highly stringent edifice of thought that hardly seems surmountable once one has adopted even one of its premises.

Johannes N. Vorster (2015, 262–265), following Michel Foucault, shows how Lactance uses the representation of a bodily difference at this point to normatively demand a spatial difference and thus a social order: Man's upright gait (bodily characteristic) underpins his calling to heavenly heights (characteristic of social order), the animals' gaze to earth (bodily characteristic) justifies their exclusion from eternity (characteristic of social order). Here, Lactance adopts a common argumentation model from Greek philosophy, which he, however, brings to the point rhetorically in a particularly impressive way.

In the second work relevant here, *De ira Dei,* Lactance wants to refute the thesis from Greek philosophy advanced against Judaism and Christianity that God is never angry. In order to defend religion as such in this context, he presents it as the decisive difference between man and animals. First of all, Lactance states that no one questions the fundamental difference between man and animals: "But no philosopher has ever claimed that there is no difference between man and animals. And in general, no one who wanted to give himself even some semblance of wisdom has ever put the rational animal on an equal footing with the dumb and irrational (rationale animal cum mutis et irrationabilibus coaequavit). This is done only by some inexperienced individuals (imperiti), who themselves belong to the ranks of animals (pecudes)." (Lactance, De ira Dei 7, 1–2).

Despite the recognition of this difference, however, some would now claim that man and animals have the same destiny, namely death, and that is the end of everything. It is easy to recognise the Epicurean doctrine. In contrast, Lactance sees "something divine in man" and, on the basis of the spirit, "a manifest kinship (cognatio) with God" (Lactance, De ira Dei 7, 4). An animal walks on all fours and is turned towards the ground, a human being walks upright and looks upwards. He "exchanges glances with God, and reason cognizes reason (confert cum Deo vultum, et rationem ratio cognoscit). Therefore, as Cicero says, there is no creature on earth except man that has even the slightest knowledge of God (notitia Dei). He alone is endowed with wisdom to know religion as the only one, and this is between

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man and beast the outstanding or even the only difference (vel praecipua, vel sola distantia)." (Lactance, De ira Dei 7, 5–6).

In comparison with the stoic mainstream, Lactance thus limits the special gift of man to a single ability, religion. Animals also have language, even laughter and forward planning for the future. Based on his unbiased and empathetic observation of animals, he leaves no doubt about this. Religion then emerges all the more clearly as the proprium humanum—and that obliges: "If, then, of all the qualities usually ascribed to man, some resemblance is also found in animals, it is clear that it is religion alone of which no trace and not the slightest inkling can be found in animals. One peculiarity of religion is justice (religionis est propria iustitia), which no other animal attains. For man alone commands (imperat); animals know only care for themselves. To justice is added the service of God (Dei cultus); he who does not submit to this service lives, alienated from the nature of man, the life of animals under human form (a natura hominis alienus, vitam pecudum sub humana specie vivet). [...] Thus, it is obvious that religion cannot be abolished in any way." (Lactance, De ira Dei 7, 12–13).

From the perspective of modern natural science, one might find fault with the fact that Lactance ties justice so closely to religion that he must also deny it to animals. He obviously did not perceive the complex structures of social organisation in many animals. However, if one leaves this small flaw aside, his reflections testify to a high degree of differentiation and a clear effort not to assert more than he can prove. Lactance does not consider it expedient to unduly inflate the special position of humans and to base it on empirically refutable assertions. The anthropological point becomes all the more credible the more respect it also shows to animals.

The same intention guides Lactance when he once again addresses anthropocentrism. Unlike most Stoics, he accepts the objection that some animals are of no use to humans: "The Stoics have rejected this objection quite clumsily out of ignorance of the truth. For they say: 'There are many among plants and among the number of animals whose use is at present still hidden; but in the course of time, it will be found, just as many things that were unknown in earlier centuries have already found necessity and use. What benefit then can be found in all the world in mice, in moths, and in serpents, all of which are troublesome and pernicious to man?" (Lactance, De ira Dei 13, 11–12). The attempt to construct the benefit of mice and moths for man is thus considered by Lactance to be quite abstruse

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and nonsensical. He does not see the teleology of the cosmos running so linearly towards man.

It is not because nature itself has shaped everything for the benefit of man that man is called to rule over creation, but because his wisdom, given by God, enables him to make use of the world in spite of all lasting adversities: "The Stoics could have answered more briefly and more truly in the following way: When God created man, as it were in the image of God and as the culmination of the divine work of creation (divini opificii summum), he breathed into him wisdom alone, so that he might subject everything to his rule and command and make use of all the amenities of the world (ut omnia imperio ac ditioni suae subiugaret omnibusque mundi commodis uteretur)." (Lactance, De ira Dei 13, 13).

Lactance proves that anthropocentrism does not have to be anti-animal and exploitative per se. The basis of his argumentations is an unbiased, precisely observed natural science, which he noticeably enjoys. Philosophical and theological argumentation must be measured against this empirical evidence. Connected with this is a great love for animals and a high regard for them. Lactance likes animals and concludes from this that God loves them. Although he explicitly rejects the resurrection of animals with Stoic arguments, he nevertheless sees them, in contrast to the Stoa, as gifted with many great abilities and very largely included in the care of the Creator (although Christ does not play a role here, since Lactance deals with non-Christians, cf. John N. Vorster 2015, 261). Compared to Origen, Lactance at any rate ensures that other tones of the relationship between humans and animals are heard in Christianity.

5.8 Aphrahat

"Most people imagine early Christian literature to be exclusively the products of authors writing either in Greek or Latin: tertium non datur. The reality, however, is quite different: Besides the Greek East and the Latin West, there is a third component that could be called the 'syriac Orient'" (Sebastian Brock 2004, 7). The next two authors examined here come from this "Syrian Orient". The first of them is Aphrahat, who is later repeatedly dubbed the "Persian Sage".

Biographically, we do not know much about him. If we compile statistics on loan words in his writings, we find that he is hardly influenced by Greek or Persian vocabulary, "so that only the west of the Sassanid Empire comes

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into question as his place of residence" (Peter Bruns 1991, 43). By his own admission, Aphrahat lived a celibate life and belonged to the ascetic "sons of the covenant", a community similar to monasticism within the Syrian Church of the 4th century, which combined ascetic life with active social and church political activity. Asceticism and celibacy were prerequisites for admission to this group, which determined the ecclesiastical life of the region. Whether Aphrahat was also a cleric remains uncertain.

Literarily, what we know of Aphrahat primarily are his 23 *expositions*, which according to his own dating were written between 337 and 345 (Peter Bruns 1991, 36). They are conceived as a unit since the initial letters follow the Syriac alphabet and the 23rd exposition begins again with the Aleph. Their topics are exclusively questions of lived Christian piety, while dogmatic theological treatises, for example on Christology or the doctrine of the Trinity, are lacking. Aphrahat was concerned with spiritual practice and not with the dogmatic disputes of his time. Since he wrote in Syriac, I can only quote and discuss his expositions (as well as those of Ephraim below) from translations.

The expositions reveal "very clearly anti-Jewish polemics" (Peter Bruns 1991, 54), because in view of the threat of persecution under the Sassanid ruler Shapur II (309–379 AD), many Christians apparently flirted with conversion to officially tolerated Judaism. At the same time, however, the accounts testify that Aphrahat had intensive contact with rabbis and conducted lively discourses with them.

Animals come into play in the *exposition 13 about the Sabbath*—in the prominent role of the chief witnesses. Aphrahat's core thesis is directed against the Jews around him: God did not give the Sabbath to reward those who keep it and punish those who do not, but to relieve those who have to work hard, and that includes non-believers and animals: "The Sabbath is not set between death and life, nor between righteousness and sin, but is given for rest [...] but not only for men to rest, but also for cattle." (Aphrahat, Expositions 13, 2).

Aphrahat explains in detail that animals can neither sin nor earn salvation on working days and the Sabbath, for, he refers to a belief shared between Jews and Christians that "The animal has no resurrection to receive retribution for keeping the Sabbath. Nor does it go to judgement. Just as no other commandment, no law, was given to the beast to keep, so it has no profit from the Sabbath" (Aphrahat, Expositions 13, 2). And at the end of this section he concludes affirmatively, "This is the proof which I have

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written down, that the Sabbath was given for rest to every creature that toils" (Aphrahat, Expositions 13, 3).

From the meta perspective, one can easily recognise his strategy: by means of the exclusion of a third party, namely animals, from redemption, the dispute between the first two parties, i.e. Jews and Christians, is bridged. Here they can meet and agree. At the same time, however, it becomes clear that Aphrahat and Syrian Christianity in his region are obviously more Hellenised than one might assume at first glance, for the clear emphasis on the conviction that only man can be judged and reach resurrection is typically Hellenistic—as is the talk of "dumb cattle" in the next section, which testifies to the adoption of aloga terminology into the Syrian world of language and thought. So it is Hellenism, of all things, that is supposed to unite Jewish and Christian convictions and unify their interpretation of the Sabbath commandment.

At the same time, Aphrahat also preserves classical biblical thinking when he speaks of a God who cares for animals as much as for all other creatures. "Therefore, the Sabbath is given for keeping, that the servants may rest, the maidservants, the hired servants, the strangers, and the dumb cattle (Ex 23:12), that all who toil may rest. For God is concerned for all his creation, even for beasts and cattle, even for the birds and the beasts of the field." (Aphrahat, Expositions 13, 9). To underline God's concern for animals, Aphrahat cites a considerable list of biblical quotations, pointing to two animal ethical commandments from the Torah, namely Ex 23:10–11 (in the Sabbatical year animals may eat what grows in the fields) and Dt 22:6–7 (one shall not take the incubating mother out of the nest together with her eggs), as well as Ps 147:9 and 36:7, Job 39:5–6, 30 and 38:41, Ps 104:27–29 and Is 34:15–17—biblical passages that speak in general terms of God's care for animals. And Aphrahat summarises: "From this it is evident that God cares for all his creatures and that he forgets nothing" (Aphrahat, Exposition 13, 9).

In this way, Aphrahat's position is ambivalent: on the one hand, he categorically excludes animals—in good Hellenistic tradition—from (heavenly) salvation; on the other hand, he includes them—in good biblical tradition—in the faithful (earthly) care of the Creator. This is hardly a position to be attributed originally to Aphrahat, but rather a reflection of widespread convictions in Syrian Christianity at the time and its confrontation with neighbouring Judaism. The doctrine of creation and the doctrine of redemption enter into an insurmountable hiatus. As inconsistent, even

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schizophrenic as this position is, it can still be found today in many debates on Christian animal ethics.

5.9 Ephraim the Syrian

The second author from the "Syrian Orient", Ephraim the Syrian, was born around 306 in Nisibis, today's Nusaybin/Turkey directly on the border to Syria, into a Christian family and died in 373 in Edessa, today's Şanlıurfa. Unlike Aphrahat, Ephraim lived in the Roman domain and not in the Persian one. In this border region between the Greek, Syrian and Persian cultural spheres, Christianity was theologically very diverse and experienced strong conflicts (Sebastian Brock 1985, 3–5). Ephraim was above all marked by controversies with the followers of Markion, Bardaisan and Mani (Thomas Kremer 2012, 94). He taught as an ascetic and deacon and was an advisor to numerous bishops. When Emperor Jovian (363–364) had to surrender Nisibis to the Persian Sassanids, Ephraim moved to the city of Edessa, a little further west. It was the Roman centre of the region and at the same time the city with the largest Christian community.

Like Aphrahat, Ephraim wrote his works in Syriac. The basis of his teaching is the Bible, which he mostly quotes by paraphrasing. While he was largely unfamiliar with contemporary Greek theologians and their dogmatic (Christological and Trinitarian) key concepts such as person, being and nature, he thought in a very Greek way in terms of the perception of man, animal and creation. He adopted anthropocentrism and its justification quite naturally. However, Ephraim interpreted the scriptural texts in the Antiochian tradition less allegorically than most of his contemporaries and thus added some original arguments to the familiar figures of thought.

Before we deal with his commentary on Genesis, we will first discuss his *hymns.* In them it becomes abundantly clear that for Ephraim man stands far above animals according to divine order: "He has set you apart from the animals" (Ephraim, Hymni de fide 36, 8). Entirely in accordance with the Greek aloga thesis, for Ephraim the animals also have no language and are mute. But this still makes them better than the demons, who constantly speak evil (Ephraim, Hymni de fide 38, 2). Theologically, Ephraim justifies the inability of animals to speak with a difference in their creation. While God breathed a soul into humans and thus made them capable of speech, he did not breathe a soul into animals themselves, which is why they are

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mute (Ephraim, Carmina nisibena 44, 1–13 based on Gen 2:7,19; cf. Thomas Kremer 2012, 223–224).

Through the Fall, man became like animals. But in redemption, God offers man the opportunity to return from the animal-like to the God-like state: "As soon as we had become like the animals, God came down and became like us, so that we could turn around and become like him. O Blessed One, whose mercy has called us from here to there!" (Ephraim, Hymni de fide 37, 2).

Before the Fall, there were no unclean animals: "Before Adam sinned, all creatures were clean. And while they were pure, he adorned them with their names. When that man sinned in his will, the Creator rejected [the creatures] because of [Adam's] sins. He declared some of them unclean so that he might teach [Adam] through them and bring him to purity. As it is written, he became both like wild and domesticated animals (Ps 48:13 LXX). Through them [God] presented [Adam's] uncleanness, that he might see how unclean he had become, that when he saw his slothfulness he might despise it, that when he saw his great wound he might be ashamed, and when he saw how he had become he might weep and seek the splendour he had given away." (Ephraim, Hymni de fide 34, 1–2). So some of the animals are made unclean only for the sake of educational benefit to man. God uses animals as a teaching tool—an extraordinarily anthropocentristic and typically Stoic idea.

It should also be noted that Psalm 49:13 is rendered in the Septuagint version (there under the numbering 48:13). It is completely irrelevant whether Ephraim quotes directly from the Greek Bible or from a Syriac translation with the same and thus also Hellenised wording. What is decisive is the shift in meaning away from the dying human being, who resembles the cattle that fall silent in death, to the unreasonable human being, who becomes like the reasonless cattle when he deviates from the path of reason. And as if to reinforce this, Ephraim emphasises that the animals become a mirror for man because he has voluntarily given up his reason and has become exclusively body like them (Ephraim, Hymni de fide 34, 4). Only because man has turned from the spiritual to the physical can the animals teach him something, for they are exclusively bodies.

While for some Church Fathers some animals stand for good qualities, for Ephraim animals are exclusively images of bad qualities: "By means of the animals man admonishes and reproves himself that he does not become ravenous like a wolf nor kill like a wild animal. He will not adopt the hissing of the serpent or the silence of the scorpion. Neither will he, like

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the latter, strike his friend in secret, nor will he, like the dog, rage against his Maker, nor be 'like a horse or a mule that is without understanding' (Ps 32:9)." (Ephraim, Hymni de fide 34, 5). Only Origen has ever spoken so negatively about animals.

In this ductus, it is relatively clear that, as already stated by Aphrahat, humans alone are destined for resurrection, whereas animals are entirely part of everything that is perishable (Ephraim, Carmina nisibena 44, 14–24). According to Ephraim, the work of animals already remains without reward on earth, so that they are also without hope of a reward in eternity. Human work, on the other hand, is already rewarded in this world, which is why God rewards humans with resurrection after this life (Ephraim, Carmina nisibena 44, 25–57). Moreover, animals do not practise asceticism, but humans do. Their reward is resurrection (Ephraim, Carmina nisibena 44, 58–68). Finally, animals may be killed just like plants, whereas humans must not be killed even in the case of serious illness or old age. This can only mean that animals and plants are not resurrected, but humans are (Ephraim, Carmina nisibena 44, 69–134). All three of Ephraim's arguments for the exclusion of animals from resurrection could be questioned. For us, however, it is sufficient that they manifest (in agreement with Aphrahat, but in far greater detail) the fundamental Greek dichotomy between humans and other animals and underpin a classical Greek conviction.

Ephraim also interprets (like Origen, cf. chapter 5.6.2) the similarities between humans and animals less than their differences from his Bible, as we can see in his *commentary on Genesis.* To do this, we first have to look at the Hebrew text of Gen 1:20–27. It reads as follows: "Then God said, 'Let the waters swarm (יִשְׁרְצוּ—yišrəṣû) with swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth in the firmament of the heavens. And God created (וַיִּבְרָא—wayyibrāʾ) the great aquatic animals and all living creatures that move about after their kind, of which the waters swarm (שָׁרְצוּ—šārəṣû), and all feathered birds after their kind. [...] Then God said: Let the earth bring forth (תּוֹצֵא—tôṣēʾ) living creatures of every kind, of cattle, of creeping things, and of wild animals of the earth after their kind. And so it came to pass. God made (וַיַּעַשׂ—wayyaʿaś) the wild animals of the earth after their kind, cattle after their kind, and all the creeping things on the ground after their kind. [...] Then God said: Let us make man (נַעֲשֶׂה—naʿăśê) in our image, like us! They shall rule over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, over the cattle, over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth. God created (וַיִּבְרָא—wayyibrāʾ) man in His image, in the im-

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age of God He created (בָּרָא—bārāʾ) him. Male and female, he created (בָּרָא—bārāʾ) them."

So we are dealing with three verbs for God's creating, two of which are used to refer to both animals and humans:

- bara, "to create", a term reserved exclusively for God's creative work, first appears in Gen 1:1 (God created the heavens and the earth), but then again in Gen 1:21 for the water and air animals, and finally in Gen 1:27 three times for man.
- asa, "to make", is used first in Gen 1:25 for land animals and then in Gen 1:26 for humans.
- Only the third term, bringing forth from the earth, refers to land animals only.

In Ephraim's Bible the weighting is significantly shifted (as in the Septuagint, cf. chapter 5.6.2), for he reads the same term "bring forth" in the creation of the water and air animals as in the land animals: "Let the waters bring forth all kinds of creeping things as living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth. And God created the greater dragons, and every living soul that the waters brought forth after their kind." (Ephræm, Commentarium in Genesim 1, 26). Thus, Ephraim's Bible, like the Septuagint, aligns the process of creation of water, air and land animals—in the sense of a greater difference between them and humans. Man is now (if one passes over Gen 1:21 and 25!) the only living being that is not indirectly "brought forth" by water or earth, but directly created by God. Moreover, according to Ephraim, man is "formed" by God and not simply "created" (Ephraim, Commentarium in Genesim 2, 9; cf. Thomas Kremer 2012, 213) —a difference that Ephraim probably interprets from Gen 2 and projects into Gen 1. "For Ephraim, therefore, there is an essential difference between the way God 'formed' man, i.e. shaped and created him, and the way the animals were brought forth." (Thomas Kremer 2012, 213). Thus, it can be summarised "that in Ephraim almost all the details are already to be found that are of importance in Greco-Latin patristics in the question of the imago character of man" (Thomas Kremer 2012, 215). Ephraim is very Hellenistic in his approach to these questions.

Ephraim's emphasis on the difference between humans and animals is heightened by his statement that land animals were created outside Paradise, but near it, "so that they might dwell near Adam" (Ephraim, Commentarium in Genesim 1, 27). This opens up a deep chasm between humans and animals, which the Bible does not know, and at the same

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time underpins maximum anthropocentrism: only so that they can serve humans (after the Fall) are the animals placed near Paradise at all. As long as man is in Paradise, he does not need them.

Ephraim's interpretation of Gen 1:28 also corresponds to this. The fertility blessing for man is entirely in the service of the dominium terrae. It is a blessing for dominion over animals, for God is already thinking of the time after the Fall. In Paradise, according to Ephraim, man does not need a blessing of his own, because Paradise is blessed per se. The blessing takes place temporally before man is placed in Paradise, but spatially outside it (Ephraim, Commentarium in Genesim 1, 31), for the animals are there, and man only has contact with them after the Fall.

In his interpretation of the second Creation narrative, Ephraim also reveals relatively harsh anthropocentrism, which is only somewhat mitigated by his sentences about the paradisiacal peace of creation. Thus, in interpreting Gen 2:19, Ephraim writes: "He [God] brought them [the animals] to Adam, that he might show his wisdom, and how the peace was between the animals and Adam before the transgression of the commandment. For they came to him as to a loving shepherd [...] and without fear of him, and they feared neither him nor each other. In front went the band of wild beasts of prey, and behind them went without fear the family of those whom they harm." (Ephraim, Commentarium in Genesim 2, 9). For a moment, the vision of peaceful coexistence between caring humans and fearless animals flashes here.

But in the very next paragraph, Ephraim returns to the language of harsh submission. He interprets the act of naming the animals as an exercise of almost total dominion: "God made Adam a god of creation by making him a ruler who would establish the names [of the animals] exactly as He had established these beings. But whenever Adam desired to become a god, he would be rebuked, reproved and shamed on account of his theft. Since Adam had indeed become a partner [of God], God established the names of all creatures, but reserved for Adam the names of all animals, so that by means of His wise knowledge they would receive the naming of their names as living beings. For without names, children and young people are considered dead. On account of names, those who are called are alive." (Ephraim, Commentarium in Genesim 2, 26, 1). Thomas Kremer (2012, 220) emphasises that the idea of man as a second God was also present in the early Jewish and Persian traditions at that time. And the Greek positioning of man between gods and animals is not far from this idea either. "According to Ephraim, the only thing that matters in Gen 2,19f

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is that Adam takes up his dominion over the earth and becomes lord over everything. [...] Adam is granted universal dominion." (Thomas Kremer 2012, 267 in reference to Ephraim, Commentarium in Genesim 2, 9–10). For Ephraim, this naming testifies to "a tremendous fullness of power: [...] authority to dispose of the essence of the divine work of creation. [...] And by giving the animals names, he really calls them into being, as it were" (Thomas Kremer 2012, 267). Ephraim himself affirms this with the following summary: "Wiser than all the animals was Adam, who was set before the animals as lord and ruler, and wiser than all was he who gave names to all." (Ephraim, Commentarium in Genesim 2, 15).

To substantiate the enormous special position of man in creation, Ephraim uses a metaphor that we have not yet found anywhere: Man is clothed with glory and splendour (cf. Thomas Kremer 2012, 223). We had already seen that animals, according to Ephraim, are created outside Paradise and only man inside in his commentary on the first Creation narrative (Ephraim, Commentarium in Genesim 1, 27, 1 and 1, 31, 1). Ephraim gives the reason for this in his interpretation of the second Creation narrative: Man dwells in Paradise in a room full of glory that the animals cannot look at and which they are consequently not allowed to enter (Ephraim, Commentarium in Genesim 2, 15, 2). For Ephraim, the paradisiacal human being is clothed with a glory that he loses with the Fall, so that he becomes naked (Ephraim, Commentarium in Genesim 2, 13, 2). This is an emphasis that is rarely encountered elsewhere and may have Persian as well as early Jewish roots (Thomas Kremer 2012, 226–232; also Sebastian Brock 1985, 66–69). The metaphor of a garment of glory is there a metaphor for kings and rulers. For Ephraim, man is thus a king and ruler over creation.

Moreover, in the interpretation of the Flood narrative (Ephraim, Commentarium in Genesim 6, 9, 1 and 6, 10, 2), old familiar and new thoughts emerge in equal measure in comparison with the Greek and Latin authors. Ephraim interprets the narrative explicitly literally and not allegorically, as in Carmina nisibena 1, where he compares Noah's situation with his own persecution and expulsion. The ark is a "place of refuge for man and beast" (Thomas Kremer 2012, 390 in reference to Ephraim, Commentarium in Genesim 6, 9, 3), while an allegorical ecclesiological interpretation of the ark, as it dominates in the vast majority of the Church Fathers, is found in Ephraim only in some hymns (Thomas Kremer 2012, 399).

The dominant motif for the interpretation of the Flood narrative is comprehensive animal peace, for the Creator had instilled passivity into preda-

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tors for the time of the Flood and placed a limit on their predatory nature: "Lions go into the ark and cattle without fearful rushing and seeking shelter with the lions. At the same time with them wolves and lambs go in, hawks and sparrows, doves and eagles." (Ephraim, Commentarium in Genesim 6, 9, 3). "And this is marvellous; neither did the lions remember their ferocity, nor did any other kind of land animal or bird desire their habits." (Ephraim, Commentarium in Genesim 6, 10, 2). All living creatures on the ark live in "holiness" (Ephraim, Commentarium in Genesim 6, 12, 4). This interspecies peace on the ark is thus an archetype of the eschatological peace of creation (Ephraim, Hymni de Ecclesia 51, 2)—both an image of the archetype in Paradise and "a prefiguration of the redemption to be expected for humans and animals" (Thomas Kremer 2012, 209 and 390)[24].

A specific feature of the two Syriac Church Fathers Aphrahat and Ephraim is their strong emphasis on sexual abstinence, corresponding to the view of the "sons of the covenant" to which they belong. In Ephraim, this resonates with the Flood narrative. He interprets the sin and violence of the people who cause the Flood primarily in sexual terms—and in turn interprets the asceticism of Noah and all the human and animal inhabitants of the ark primarily as sexual abstinence. He portrays Noah as a priest who must live abstinently during his priestly consummation (cf. Ephraim, Carmina nisibena 1, 45–50). For him, this is an even greater miracle than the paradisiacal peace that reigns between animals and humans on the ark.

The narrative of the Noahide covenant is also highly abbreviated in Ephraim (Ephraim, Commentarium in Genesim 6, 14–15; cf. Thomas Kremer 2012, 405). He comments only on the three Noahide commandments: the prohibition of eating blood, the prohibition of killing people and the commandment of killing those people who have killed themselves. It is important for Ephraim to emphasise that animals that have eaten people or parts of them on earth must give them back when they rise from the dead. What happens in the reverse case to animals that have been eaten by humans is not an issue he addresses. Again, the conviction that resurrection is reserved for humans is evident. Finally, not a word is said about the fact that Gen 9 explicitly states four times that God's covenant applies to

24 Note that according to Kremer, the image of the ark does have soteriological consequences. In the logic of this image, animals will also experience redemption. In this respect, this biblical strand clearly rubs shoulders with the Greek conviction, also received by Ephraim, that there is no resurrection of animals.

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all human and animal creatures. Ephraim ignores this, as do all the other Church Fathers examined here, except Irenaeus of Lyons (cf. chapter 5.3).

In summary, it can be said that the hope that the two Syriac Church Fathers would have a different, less Greek-influenced view of animals has not been fulfilled[25]. Even though they may selectively emphasise animal-friendly ideas, they are firmly anchored in Greek anthropocentrism, which Ephraim even increases with his metaphors and topologies in his commentary on Genesis. The difference between humans and animals achieves an emphasis that is otherwise rare among the Church Fathers[26].

5.10 Cyril of Jerusalem

With Emperor Constantine, we enter a new era in which Christian theologians are increasingly brought up as Christians as children. Cyril of Jerusalem, for example, was born in 313 in the environs of Jerusalem to Christian parents. He later became a priest and, because he was known as an excellent preacher, Patriarch of Jerusalem in 350. He died in Jerusalem in 386.

Cyril was not a scientist, but a pastor and preacher. His 24 catecheses on the individual articles of the Nicean Creed of 325 have come down to us in writing. Catecheses are sermons or lectures for a mixed, not necessarily educated audience who wish to receive baptism. We are therefore dealing with a different literary genre, which is, however, possibly more meaningful than many scientific treatises. Because they were written down, Cyril's catecheses were probably used in many places in the Near East to prepare for baptism.

In the *ninth catechesis,* Cyril speaks *about the article of faith "Creator of heaven and earth, of all that is visible and invisible"*. He goes through

25 Therefore, the thesis of Sebastian Brock 1985, 2–3 must be relativised, at least for the area of creation and animal ethics, which says: "here is a form of genuinely Asian Christianity which is free from the specifically European cultural, historical and intellectual trappings that have become attached to the main streams of Christianity [...] he is the one major representative of Semitic—Asian Christianity in its as yet un-Hellenised—un-Europeanised—form".

26 Sebastian Brock completely ignores this aspect and sees in Ephraim "an appropriate patron saint for ecologically minded people" (1985, 136). That he then tries to support this thesis by comparing Ephraim with the New Age theorist Fritjof Capra (Sebastian Brock 1985, 139–140) is a hardly forgivable faux pas. Even in 1985, Lynn White's thesis should have been known and taken seriously!

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God's six-day work from Gen 1 day by day, so he finally comes to aquatic animals and asks by way of introduction: "Who can describe the beauty of the fish of the sea? Who can describe the size of the sea monsters and the nature of the amphibians, which soon live on dry land, soon in the water?" (Cyril of Jerusalem, Procatechesis et Catecheses ad illuminandos 9, 11). Similarly, he introduces reflection on birds and finally asks, "If you cannot discern the dumbest bird that soars on high, how will you understand the Creator of the universe?" (Cyril of Jerusalem, Procatechesis et Catecheses ad illuminandos 9, 12). In a third step, he comes to land animals and asks, "What man knows even the names of all the animals? Or who can write a special natural history? But if we do not even know the names of the animals, how will we understand their Creator?" (Cyril of Jerusalem, Procatechesis et Catecheses ad illuminandos 9, 13). The diversity, beauty and adaptability of animals is a good reason for Cyril to admire the Creator and his wisdom.

Cyril marvels at the tremendous abilities of animals, but even more at the creativity of God who created them: "God spoke the one word: 'Let the earth bring forth wild, tame and creeping animals (θηρία) after their kind' (Gen 1:24). And at the one word, out of the one earth have become different kinds of beasts: the so pious lamb and the carnivorous lion. There have become the various movements of the reasonless living creatures (ζῴων ἀλόγων κινήσεις), to imitate the expressions of human wills (μιμήσεις ἔχουσαι διαφόρων προαιρέσεων ἀνθρωπίνων): the fox expresses human cunning, the snake shows the poison of human friendships, the neighing horse the exuberance of youth. The busy ant has become to awaken the sluggish and lazy man. If a man spends his youth in laziness, then he will be taught by the reasonless creatures; for the divine Scripture rebukes him with the words: 'Go to the ant, you lazy one, see its ways and imitate it, and be wiser than it!' (Prov 6:6) For take heed how it gathers its sustenance in due season, and do likewise: gather for yourself as treasures for the future the fruits of good works! And again, it is said: 'Go to the bee and learn how diligent she is!' (Prov 6:8) On various flowers they fly about to gather honey for your benefit. Thus, you shall wander through the divine scriptures to work your salvation, and, being satiated by them, say: 'How sweet are your words to my palate; more than honey are they to my mouth.' (Ps 118:103 LXX)" (Cyril of Jerusalem, Procatechesis et Catecheses ad illuminandos 9, 13).

Of course, Cyril understands animals here anthropocentristically as God's teaching tools for humans. But on the one hand, most animals come

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off excellently, both cognitively and morally, and on the other hand, Cyril even emphasises that they "imitate" human decisions, that their behaviour thus shows a certain analogy to human behaviour. And this must be the case if one wants to postulate that humans learn from animals. Finally, with four biblical quotations in a single paragraph, Cyril is much closer to biblical texts than any author we have examined so far. This may be partly due to the genre of the sermon. And yet the biblical references reinforce Cyril's extremely positive view of animals.

Thus, he concludes the treatise on animals with some questions: "Is the artist, then, not worthy of praise? Is creation already evil because you do not penetrate the essence of all that is created? Can you know the powers of all plants? Can you know what benefit each animal brings you? [...] From the various arrangement in creation you shall infer the power of the Creator." (Cyril of Jerusalem, Procatechesis et Catecheses ad illuminandos 9, 14).

After praising the human body in relation to the sixth day of Creation, Cyril concludes his catechesis as follows: "I have now taught you at length about creation. But I have still left out a thousand things, especially from the incorporeal, invisible creation. Now you shall hate those who blaspheme against the wise, good artist. From what has been said and read, from what you can find and know through self-observation, from the greatness and beauty of creation, you shall recognise the Creator accordingly. Reverently you shall bow the knee before the Creator of the world, who made the sensuous and the spiritual, all things visible and invisible, and in grateful, praising words, with unwearied lips glorify God, saying: 'How admirable are your works, O Lord, all things have you made with wisdom' (Ps 104:24), to you be due honour, glory, greatness now and forever. Amen." (Cyril of Jerusalem, Procatechesis et Catecheses ad illuminandos 9, 16).

Cyril quotes the same Psalm 104 here as Origen does in Contra Celsum 4, 75 (cf. chapter 5.6). But while Origen uses the Psalm as (supposed) proof of anthropocentrism and explains that animals were only created for human exercise, Cyril simply leaves the Psalm as praise to God. He invites us to wonder, to joy and to praise, for every creature is for him a single miracle.

Nonetheless, Cyril does not avoid an explicit confession of anthropocentrism in another passage, and does so in the context of a theme that, at first glance, seems to have no relation to non-human creatures. It is his *twelfth catechesis on the article of faith "who took on flesh and became man"*. Here, Cyril first of all inevitably poses the classic dogmatic question "cur Deus

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homo?" and elaborates: "First let us examine the question: Why did Jesus descend to earth? Pay no attention to reasons that my own mind comes up with! [...] If you want to investigate the reason for Christ's incarnation, go back to the first book of Scripture! In six days, God created the world, but the world because of man (ὁ κόσμος διὰ τὸν ἄνθρωπον). The sun, shining in most brilliant rays, was created to shine upon us. All animals were brought into being to serve us. Plants and trees were created for our benefit. Glorious are all creatures, but none of them is an image of God, man alone excepted (οὐδὲν εἰκὼν Θεοῦ, μόνος δὲ ἄνθρωπος). The sun was formed by the mere word, but man was formed by the hands of God: 'Let us make man in our image and likeness!' (Gen 1:26). One honours the wooden image of an earthly king; how much more does the spiritual image of God deserve honour?" (Cyril of Jerusalem, Procatechesis et Catecheses ad illuminandos 12, 5).

According to Cyril, the doctrine of creation could do without the commitment to anthropocentrism. Christology and soteriology, on the other hand, which lie behind the question "cur Deus homo?", would not. Everything in God's creation must come down to man, so that everything in God's creation can come down to Christ, the Logos of God—even before the Fall. For Cyril, like many other Church Fathers after him, interprets Gen 1:26 in such a way that the plural of God "let us make man" refers to God the Father and God the Son together (Cyril of Jerusalem, Procatechesis et Catecheses ad illuminandos 10, 6; 11, 23). Man as a logos-gifted being is thus also an image of Christ, and Christ is not only a special divine man, as the Arians claim, but God from eternity. One senses how much the Christological and Trinitarian questions push to the fore in the 4th century and cover everything else, especially the doctrine of creation.

In order to be able to single out Christ, Cyril, like Origen, must single out the human being. Unlike Origen, however, Freud's second, biological mortification does not play a role for him. Cyril does not see man's self-esteem in danger. Therefore, he can speak very impartially of the beauty and usefulness of animals, marvel at their wonder and ascribe to them outstanding qualities. Like Lactance, he represents sympathetic, animal-friendly anthropocentrism.

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5.11 Basil of Caesarea

Basil, born in 330 in the Cappadocian metropolis of Caesarea (today's Kayseri) and who died there in 379, was at least the third generation of his family to be Christian. His grandfather died as a martyr in the Diocletianic persecution of Christians, which strengthened the family's religious self-confidence. Basil, whose younger brother Gregory of Nyssa we will get to know in the following sub-chapter, studied in Caesarea, Constantinople and Athens and acquired broad scientific knowledge. Influenced by his older sister Makrina, who was already a nun, he decided to become a monk, founded a monastery in Cappadocia in 355 and lived there for five years, during which time he wrote the monastic rule that is still authoritative in Orthodoxy today. His baptism, which was still an adult baptism, took place during this time, in 356. As a monk, Basil lived a strictly vegetarian life and maintained this lifestyle even when he left the monastery to support Archbishop Eusebius of Caesarea. In 364 he was ordained a priest, and in 370 he was elected successor to Eusebius as Archbishop of Caesarea. He held this office until his death.

Basil was in the middle of the dispute between Arians and Nicenes about the appropriate Christology and doctrine of the Trinity, in which the Roman emperors interfered considerably for political reasons. In numerous sermons, however, he also dealt with creation and animals. A new genre of literature goes back to him: the Hexaemeron, literally translated "the six-day", i.e. a series of sermons on the six days of creation in Gen 1. Philon of Alexandria and Theophilos of Antioch had already written extensively on this. Now, however, the interpretation of Gen 1 took on a far greater significance, not only for Basil, but also for several of the early Christian authors who followed. Basil preached the series of sermons during Lent 378, the last year of his life.

His intensive use of pagan scientific literature was a complete novelty. "This approach is anything but self-evident. His predecessors apparently still shied away from treading this path. The Cappadocian's procedure can only be explained against the background of Christian Chrêsis, i.e. the use of non-Christian spiritual and cultural goods." (Rainer Henke 2000, 39). This is justified with two arguments: Systematically, Christian theology assumes that pagan authors also recognised some true things, since they were created by the one God and endowed with reason. And biblically, the three verses Ex 3:22; 11:2; 12:36 are interpreted allegorically, in which the Israelites fleeing Egypt are asked to take with them golden and silver

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artefacts of the Egyptians. In this interpretation, the Egyptians are the pagan philosophers and gold and silver their accumulated knowledge. This also indicates the necessity of selection: not everything that shines in Greek philosophy is gold and thus worthy of being adopted into Christian tradition.

If we think back to the diagram that summarised Stoic anthropocentrism and its core ideas (Chapter 3.5.6), we can easily understand from this example what the method of Chrêsis means for Basil. He adopts statements about animals and the relationship between humans and animals (lower right quadrant) if and only if it

- serves to prove cosmic teleology and the benevolent providence of the Creator (πρόνοια) (upper left quadrant): Natural scientific "information is not an end in itself but serves the preacher as eye-opening evidence that all natural processes are subject to the Creator's providence, that there is 'neither anything superfluous... nor anything deficient' (Hex 9,5: 154,20)." (Rainer Henke 2000, 59)
- is conducive to the clarification of the relationship between God and humans, i.e. portrays man as endowed with the divine λόγος in the image of God and Christ as the λόγος of God in person and thus as the mediator between God and man (upper right quadrant). The attribution of reason to humans alone aims at "the theocentristic orientation of zoology." (Rainer Henke 2000, 46) or
- serves the ethical–spiritual maturation of man (lower left quadrant): "The Christian homilet... takes up... the characteristics of animals cited by the pagan zoologists only where he wants to demonstrate the wisdom of the Creator God on the basis of the purposeful arrangement of fauna or to encourage man to make moral progress or deter him from bad behaviour." (Rainer Henke 2000, 47)

Behind all this lies the conviction that animal behaviour is designed by the Creator in such a way that it can serve man in making ethical and spiritual progress in these three respects. At the same time, its presentation on the basis of biblical texts can show pagan intellectuals the wisdom of the Bible (Rainer Henke 2000, 49).

You can see the epochal change that took place about a generation before Basil: Christianity now has a firm grip on society and the state. The hard conflicts no longer take place with the pagan cults of gods and emperors, but within Christianity between individual groups and currents—in Basil's time between Arian and Nicene Christianity. This allows for much freer,

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more sovereign handling of scientific findings about animals—without the stoic theological–ethical framework of anthropocentrism being attacked in principle. We will see, however, that Basil considerably weakens and relativises the actual anthropocentrist thesis that all creatures exist solely to serve man. He does not give it up completely, but he is not far from it.

5.11.1 Sermons on various topics and occasions

In his *eighth sermon "Against the Angry"*, Basil compares poisonous and wild animals with the human passion of anger: "If we ourselves have once given room to anger, let it run free like a mighty stream, or calmly observed the ugly distortion of those seized by this passion, then indeed the truth of the saying became clear to us: 'An angry man has no decent appearance' (Prov 11:25). For when this passion (πάθος) has once supplanted rational considerations (λογισμόι) and obtained dominion over the soul (δυναστεία τῆς ψυχῆς), it loses the man completely and does not allow him to be a man at all, since reason (λόγος) is no longer at his command. What poison is to poisonous animals, anger is to irritated people. They rage like dogs, advance like scorpions, bite like snakes. Scripture also knows how to name those seized by passion with the names of the animals to which they resemble with their evil quality. They call them 'dumb dogs' (Is 56:10), 'serpents', 'brood of vipers' (Mt 23:33) and the like. For those who are disposed to harm their neighbour and to destroy their kinsmen may justly be reckoned among the wild and venomous beasts, which by nature (ἐκ φύσεως) bear an irreconcilable hatred against men." (Basil of Caesarea, Homilia 8, 1). Thus, when passion (πάθος) instead of reason (λόγος) takes dominion over the soul (δυναστεία τῆς ψυχῆς), man becomes like an animal, and a very harmful one at that. Basil argues Stoically, quite differently from Aristotle, who can also find positive things in anger, but combines his thoughts with quite a few biblical quotations. The Bible and philosophy agree on this perception.

However, Basil shows that animals also display very touching behaviour in a personally delivered example from the *fourth sermon "on the martyr Julitta"*. The sermon is actually about the correct way of dealing with the death of a person we were close to according to Stoic ideals. This is characterised by dispassion (ἀπάθεια), the equanimous acceptance of what God, in his inscrutable wisdom, has ordained for mankind. Thus, Basil writes: "The loss of a beloved child, of a faithful spouse, of a dear friend, or of

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a relative full of loud benevolence is not terribly difficult to a discerning man who has right reason for the guide of life (τὸν ὀρθὸν λόγον ἡγεμόνα της ζωής ἔχοντι)." (Basil of Caesarea, Homilia 4, 4). In order to make the decisive role of reason clearer, Basil now compares human grief with animal grief. The latter is characterised by the fact that animals find it much more difficult to get away from the habitual contact with deceased members of their species: "I myself once saw an ox crying at a manger because his pasture and yoke companion had died. In other animals, too, you can see that they are very attached to habit." (Basil of Caesarea, Homilia 4, 4).

So the message is the same in the face of grief as it is in the face of anger: control your emotions, for that alone is worthy of you! "Do not be upset by misfortune! Do not speak of a blind coincidence of things, as if there were no ruler who governs the world. Nor conjecture an evil creator of the world, nor let intemperate sorrow breed pernicious doctrines; do not fall away from the true faith! [...] Remember that God, who formed and animated us, has given to each soul its own life span, and has appointed to one man this hour of death, to another another." (Basil of Caesarea, Homilia 4, 5).

On the level of content, Basil does not deviate one millimetre from the Stoic teaching, which has become foreign to us today, to bear death with equanimity. What is interesting, however, is the nuances he conveys. While he first formulates his words from the perspective of an uninvolved observer in the third person, he abruptly switches to the perspective of the participant affected at the mention of the ox and speaks in the first person: "I myself once saw...". Obviously, the ox's grief has gone very much to his heart. But the very next sentence switches back to the impersonal form of "can be seen" or "is very much to be seen". It seems as if Basil wants to suppress his sympathy for the ox immediately after he has caught himself in a strong emotion. But in reality, here of all places, he shows very personal feelings that make him seem human. The encounter with the animal stirs his soul—and he recognises something of himself. At the same time, he understands how touching the animal's grief for its fellow animal is.

In his *second sermon on Dt 15:9, "Take heed to yourself!"*, Basil presents the classical Stoic argument that animals naturally recognise and do what is conducive to them, while humans should do so out of rational insight: "It is said, 'Take heed to yourself!' Every animal has innately (οἰκοθεν), on the part of God who creates all things, the faculties (ἀφορμὰς) for the protection of its own existence. You may find by careful observation that most animals, without instruction (ἀδίδακτον), know how to avoid

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what is harmful, and on the other hand are impelled by some natural drawing (φυσικῆ τινι ὁλκῆ) to the enjoyment of what is useful to them. Therefore, also the God who educates us (παιδεύων ἡμας Θεὸς) has given this great commandment, that what is natural to those may be granted to us by means of reason (ὅπερ ἐκείνοις ἐκ φύσεως, τοῦτο ἡμῖν ἐκ τῆς τοῦ λόγου βοηθείας), that what is rashly (ἀνεπιστάτως) accomplished by the reasonless, may be done by us with attention and continued thought, that we may further be conscientious stewards of the faculties given to us by God, fleeing sin as the reasonless flee poisonous fodder, and seeking righteousness as they seek edible herbs. 'Take heed therefore unto yourself!' that you may be able to discern that which is harmful from that which is wholesome." (Basil of Caesarea, Homilia 2, 2).

Again, the contrast between the rational and the reasonless serves to create ethical exhortation. For the sake of encouraging a rational life, Basil then also cites anthropocentrism: "You have received an understanding soul (Ψυχὴν ἔλαβες νοερὰν), with which you know God, fathom the nature of things, pluck the fruit of wisdom so sweet. All land animals, both tame and wild, and all animals that live in the water and fly through the air, are servile and subject to you (δοῦλά ἐστι καὶ ὑποχείρια)." (Basil of Caesarea, Homilia 2, 6). Thus, for Basil, dominion over animals is, on the one hand, evidence of God's goodness and, on the other, evidence of specifically human abilities.

That the gift of reason obliges is also the basis of a thought in the *seventh sermon in times of famine*. Basil castigates the human practice of looking only to one's own advantage in the face of adversity and refers to animals, who are always ready to share: "Let us who are capable of reason show ourselves no more cruel than the reasonless animals! These live from the natural growth of the earth as from a common good (κοινῆ). Flocks of sheep graze on one and the same mountain; many horses seek their food in one and the same meadow, and all animals thus allow each other the enjoyment of the necessary food. But we store up in our bosom what is common to all and keep alone what belongs to many." (Basil of Caesarea, Homilia 7, 8).

In his *eleventh sermon against alcoholics,* Basil (like Irenaeus of Lyons and Clement of Alexandria before him) also cites animals as the "more reasonable" role models. For alcohol promotes sexual licentiousness and perversion, and so drunkards are even more unreasonable than the reasonless: "Yes, I would say that the intoxicated are more unreasonable (ἀλογωτέροι) than cattle: all quadrupeds, even the wild animals (θηρία), have their

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regulated impulses (ὁρμὰι) for mating. But those who are under the spell of drunkenness, and whose bodies are satiated with unnatural heat, are provoked into foul and shameless embraces and lusts every moment and every hour." (Basil of Caesarea, Homilia 11, 3). "The reasonless know the limits of nature (τοὺς ὅρους τὴς φύτεως); but the drunken seek in man the woman and in woman the man." (Basil of Caesarea, Homilia 11, 4).

Humans and animals often have in common that they strive naturally for what is good, such as love for their parents or benefactors. Basil therefore explicitly compares human children with animals. The highlight of his admonition in the *second of his 55 "detailed rules"* is then, of course, their love for God as our father, as our mother as well as our immeasurable benefactor. Here, Basil also refers to the famous quotation from Isaiah, according to which the ox and the donkey know their Lord, but Israel does not.

"What is perfected by free choice (προαίρεσις) is therefore already naturally (φυσικῶς) in us, if we are not wicked in our dispositions through malice. Hence, love against God is required of us as a necessary debt, the missing of which is the most intolerable of all evils to the soul. [...] But if children already have a natural love (φυσική στοργή) for their parents, as is shown both by the behaviour of the reasonless and by the affection of men in their first years for their mothers, we must not prove ourselves more unreasonable (ἀλογωτέροι) than minors and more savage than animals by behaving uncharitably and strangely towards our Creator. [...] Among those whom a natural trait compels to love, the benefactor is uppermost, and this trait is not found exclusively in men, but also in almost all animals, that they are attracted to those who have done them good. It is said that 'the ox knows its owner and the ass the manger of its master'. But let it be far from us that the following should be said: 'But Israel knows me not, neither do my people understand me' (Is 1:3). For what shall I say of the dog, and many other such animals, which show so great an acknowledgment towards their providers? But if we feel naturally drawn in benevolence and love to benefactors, and undergo every effort to repay the benefits previously shown to us, what speech could possibly worthily describe the gifts of God?" (Basil of Caesarea, Regulae fusius tractatae 2).

Animals get angry and animals grieve. Animals take care of themselves and share food with each other. They practise sexuality in moderation and know and love their parents and benefactors. Basil knows a lot about animals, he likes and appreciates them and uses them much more often as an example than as a deterrent. Moreover, as a monk he adheres to

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abstinence from meat and lives a vegetarian life. He also advises this in his *first sermon on fasting*.

In the spirituality of the early monks, fasting, including abstinence from meat, like sexual abstinence, is part of a freely chosen practice of coming close to Paradise and living a life like the angels. "Fasting was already a commandment in Paradise. The first commandment Adam received was: 'From the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat!' (Gen 3:17) [...] Yes, even the life in Paradise is a model of fasting, not only inasmuch as man walked like an angel and by frugality preserved the likeness of the angels, but also because everything that the human mind conceived afterwards, such as drinking wine (οἰνοποσία), slaughtering animals (ζῳοθυσία), in general everything that clouds the spirit of man, was not yet known to those living in Paradise." (Basil of Caesarea, Homilia 1, 3). It is remarkable that Basil writes here of the "slaughter" or "sacrifice" of animals and not of the "consumption of meat", as would have been obvious by analogy with the drinking of wine. While drinking wine is about its alcoholic effect and thus about a human problem, abstinence from meat is about the suffering of the animals that have to give up their lives. This is very clear in the wording, which sounds poetic in Greek because οἰνοποσία and ζῳοθυσία have the same rhythm and ending and rhyme. Strictly anthropocentristic, such a consideration could hardly be justified. Here, the view of the empathetic preacher widens and understands animals as independent téle and sensitive living beings.

However, the paradisiacal duty to abstain from meat in Gen 1 also applies to animals. They too are to eat a purely vegetable diet. That is why Daniel, who is thrown into a lion's den by the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar, becomes a prototype of those who fast, for the lions take him as an example and do not eat him: "Daniel then, the 'man of pleasure' (Dan 9:23; 10:11), who ate no bread and drank no water for three weeks (Dan 10:2), cast into the pit, taught even the lions to fast (Dan 6:16–22). [...] for they did not open their mouths against the Holy One." (Basil of Caesarea, Homilia 1, 7). The whole of creation renounces consuming other living beings—this is the ideal of Gen 1, which Basil takes up and realises with early monasticism.

Finally, Basil forcefully summarises the benefits of meat fasting: "No animal laments its death; no blood is shed; no death sentence is pronounced against animals by the inexorable belly; the knife of the butcher rests. The table is content with that which grows of itself." (Basil of Caesarea, Homilia 1, 7). It is hard to speak much more clearly about one's responsibility for the welfare of animals. Basil paints a picture of peace that could not have

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been more aptly portrayed in Gen 1 and Is 11. Of course, he does not oblige Christians to eat a meatless diet, but "only" advises them to do so in the sense of a free decision—temporal abstinence from meat, however, and the moderate consumption of meat that this signals, are incumbent on all Christians (Ian Jones 2013, 28–29). But his gaze is firmly fixed on the welfare of animals. Argue as you will, but this is definitely no longer anthropocentrism. Although Basil never doubts it in theory, he turns away from it in practice.

5.11.2 The nine homilies to the Hexaemeron

With the Ομιλίαι εις την Εξαήμερον Basil opens a long and illustrious series of works of a new literary genre. The term τὸ ἑξαήμερον, denoting the six-day work of Creation, is first found in Philon, Legum allegoriae 2, 12, and in Christian literature for the first time in Theophilos of Antioch, Ad Autolycum 2, 12. We also first encounter the literary genre of the interpretation of the first Creation narrative in Philon, namely De opificio mundi. Basil then uses ἡ ἑξαήμερος, the six-day Creation narrative, explicitly in the title of the book. "The Hexaemeron of Basil the Great is the earliest work devoted exclusively to the account of creation which has come down to us; it is also the most influential of those which cannot be interpreted allegorically." (Jacobus C.M. van Winden 1988, 1260). It has a direct influence on the next two authors of this genre, namely Gregory of Nyssa, who defends his brother's writing against misunderstandings (chapter 5.12), and Ambrose of Milan, who adopts the sermons of his episcopal colleague Basil almost verbatim in 386 (chapter 5.13).

Basil probably preached the homilies at the beginning of Lent in the last year of his life in 378—and did so within five days, Monday to Friday, with two on all days, namely in the morning and in the evening, and only one of the nine homilies on Wednesday (Stig Y. Rudberg 1997, XVI). Andrew Louth (2009, 44) suggests that it may have been an ancient tradition to read the entire Book of Genesis during Lent.

As early as in the *structure,* Basil visibly distances himself from the Stoic scala naturae. While Philon adapts his structure in De opificio Dei to the Stoic hierarchy of being, Basil sticks strictly to the biblical order. Thus, he arranges the three animal homilies in Hexaemeron 7–9 as follows: Aquatic Animals (7)—Aerial Animals (8)—Land Animals and Man (9) (cf. Basil of Caesarea, Hexaemeron 8, 2, where he explicitly emphasises this). One

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senses the Christian self-confidence that has clearly grown in comparison to Greco-Roman philosophy.

Methodologically, Basil clearly rejects an allegorical interpretation of the Creation narrative: "I know the laws of allegory (νόμους ἀλληγορίας), although I did not draw them from myself, but rather came across them in the works of others. They do not take the scriptural words in their ordinary sense, and do not call water water, but understand by it some other nature; they also interpret plant and fish arbitrarily, and also twist and interpret the origin of creeping and other animals (θηρίων) entirely according to their taste, as the dream-interpreters interpret the dream-appearances entirely according to their head. But when I hear of grass, I think of grass, and plant, fish, wild animal, domestic animal; in general, I understand everything as it is said." (Basil of Caesarea, Hexaemeron 9, 1; cf. also 3, 9). Basil thus distances himself from a tradition that begins with Theophilos of Antioch (Ad Autolycum 2, 16–18, cf. chapter 5.2) and comes to flower with the Alexandrians Clement and Origen (cf. chapters 5.4 and 5.6).

In contrast to allegorism, Basil uses the knowledge of ancient natural science to an enormous degree and with great matter-of-factness (Andrew Louth 2009, 53), but this knowledge is always employed in the service of theological and ethical statements. The most important of these will be presented below:

There is a well-thought-out and perfect divine plan for the benefit of all living beings, but especially of man: Basil describes the divine plan of creation as perfect and encompassing all creatures: "But every one of the created beings (ἕκαστον δὲ τῶν γενομένων) has some purpose of its own (ἴδιόν τινα λόγον) to fulfil in creation." (Basil of Caesarea, Hexaemeron 5, 4). "Nothing beyond what is useful (περιττότερον τῆς χρείας) has our God created, but neither has he forgotten anything of what is necessary (τῶν ἀναγκαίων)." (Basil of Caesarea, Hexaemeron 8, 7). Two examples to prove the perfection of creation are the observation that prey animals have higher reproductive rates to compensate for feeding losses (Basil, Hexaemeron 9, 5; also already Lactance, cf. chapter 5.7), and the physique of animals: "Even if you look at the limbs of animals, you will find that the Creator has given nothing that is superfluous, and left nothing necessary out." (Basil of Caesarea, Hexaemeron 9, 5). One is about animal behaviour, the other about animal morphology. Both show how well animals are adapted to their living conditions.

It is remarkable that Basil advocates comparatively weak anthropocentrism: "Therefore, even if a species of grass is useful only to animals,

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the benefit they derive from it also benefits us..." (Basil of Caesarea, Hexaemeron 5, 2). This is formulated far more cautiously than by some authors before him. Basil recognises that non-human creation is useful to man in three ways: materially, religiously and ethically: "The one is there for man's enjoyment, the other for the contemplation of the miracle of creation. Still other things are terrible in order to resist our recklessness." (Basil of Caesarea, Hexaemeron 7, 6). Nevertheless, Basil emphasises that God cares for all creatures: "The Lord of the wind and the sea has sown a trace of his great wisdom into the little creature. There is nothing God has not foreseen, for which he has not made provision (Οὐδὲν ἀπρονόητον, οὐδὲν ἠμελημένον παρὰ Θεοῦ). All things his never-sleeping eye beholds (Prov 15:3). To all he is near, caring for each one's welfare (ἐκπορίζων ἑκάστῳ τὴν σωτηρίαν)." (Basil of Caesarea, Hexaemeron 7, 5). The term σωτηρία here is quite ambiguous—it can also be translated as "salvation". God thus provides for the "salvation" of all living beings, even the smallest. That is a strong statement!

The scientific contemplation of creation leads to all the greater praise of the Creator (cf. Domenico Ciarlo 2007, 144): Thus, Basil exhorts, "Learn to know the wisdom of God in everything, and never cease to admire it and to glorify the Creator in every creature (διὰ πάσης τῆς κτίσεως δοξάζειν τὸν ποιητήν)!" (Basil of Caesarea, Hexaemeron 8, 7). He sees the diversity of species and their composition as special evidence of God's greatness and creativity, saying, "But to wish to enumerate all the species of fish one by one would be to count the billows of the ocean or to measure the waters of the sea with a hollow hand." (Basil of Caesarea, Hexaemeron 7, 1). He also says that the appropriateness of natural behaviour shows God's greatness, such as the migration of fish and sea creatures from spawning to feeding grounds and from winter to summer abodes: "Who is it that drives them? Where is a royal command? What public notice gives them the appointed time? Who is their guide to foreign lands? Everywhere you see the divine order, how it governs even the smallest things." (Basil of Caesarea, Hexaemeron 7, 4). Basil also interprets the migration of birds in an analogous way (Basil of Caesarea, Hexaemeron 8, 5).

One senses the Bishop's enthusiasm when he concludes his sermon at the end of the day: "The words of Scripture, read only in this way, are a few short syllables. The waters bring forth winged beasts, which fly above the earth in the firmament of heaven (Gen 1:20). But if one explores the meaning of these words, the great wonder of the Creator's wisdom is revealed. Think of how many kinds of fowl he has provided! How has he separated

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them according to species and kind, and how is each kind characterised by their peculiarities! The whole day was not sufficient to describe to you the wonders of the air" (Basil of Caesarea, Hexaemeron 8, 8).

Some animals serve as negative role models for humans: the moral analogue of the "wickedness" (κακία) of animals plays a rather minor role for Basil and mainly concerns predators. He describes the "cunning" of the crab that feeds on oysters as follows: "The crab craves the flesh of the oyster; but because of the hard shell it can hardly get hold of the prey. [...] When it sees the oyster warming itself comfortably in a calm place and opening its shells to the sun's rays, it suddenly throws a small stone between them, thus preventing them from closing and, as you can see, replacing with cunning what it lacks in strength. This is the wickedness of those who have no reason and no voice (Αὕτη ἡ κακία τῶν μήτε λόγου μήτε φωνῆς μετεχόντων). I would wish you the acquisitiveness and skillfulness of crabs, without harming your neighbour." (Basil of Caesarea, Hexaemeron 7, 3). A second example is even more remarkable: the polyp adapts itself in colour to its surroundings so that its prey may feel safe and come so close to it that it can catch it. In this way, the polyp resembles those humans who adapt to their environment, even if it is morally corrupt (Basil of Caesarea, Hexaemeron 7, 3). So there is animal behaviour that is morally not worthy of imitation. Overall, however, the examples of positive animal behaviour far outweigh these.

Many animals serve as positive role models for humans: First of all, Basil sees some ways in which animals can act as role models with regard to virtues that relate to the relationship of humans to themselves. For example, the natural self-limitation of animals should be a model of *moderation* for humans: "How the species of fish have each allotted themselves a corresponding section, do not enter foreign territory, but remain within their boundaries! [...] But we are not like that. Where does that come from? Because we are shifting the eternal boundaries set by our fathers. We distribute the earth, add house to house, field to field, in order to take something from our neighbour. [...] the fish does not contradict the law of God (Ἰχθὺς οὐκ ἀντιλέγει νόμῳ Θεοῦ), but we humans do not want to adhere to the wholesome teachings (ἄνθρωποι σωτηρίων διδαγμάτων οὐκ ἀνεχόμεθα). Do not despise fish because they are speechless and reasonless (ἄφωνα καὶ ἄλογα)! Rather, fear being more unreasonable (ἀλογώτερος) than they, if you do not submit to the decree of God!" (Basil of Caesarea, Hexaemeron 7, 3–4). The final admonition is remarkable. On the one hand, because it is about respect for animals—a tone we have hardly heard before

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in early Christian literature—and on the other hand, because this respect is demanded of all things towards fish, which, according to the Stoic scala naturae, occupy the lowest rank among all animals. Seen in this light, Basil's statements go a long way towards accommodating animals!

For Basil, the consistent orientation of animals towards their future can become a model of human *hope:* He speaks of the "endowment of animals with an eye to the future, so that we too may not cling to this present life but may devote all our care to the life to come." (Basil of Caesarea, Hexaemeron 9, 3). Again, he sees fish, of all things, as particularly exemplary: "The fish know about a certain provision for the future; but we, for lack of hope for the future, waste our lives in animal lust. The fish changes so many seas to find some advantage; what will you say, you who live in idleness?" (Basil of Caesarea, Hexaemeron 7, 5). But the bishop is also impressed by the perseverance of the swallow, which is never discouraged by setbacks in building its nest or rearing its brood (Basil of Caesarea, Hexaemeron 8, 5).

Basil finds role models for *social virtues* rather in the animals of the air and the land—their social behaviour is easier to observe. Thus, he praises the hospitality of crows (Basil of Caesarea, Hexaemeron 8, 5), the care of storks for their old parents (Basil, Hexaemeron 8, 5), i.e. the legendary "stork's thanks" (ἀντιπελαργώσις), which is still so called and applied to humans today, the boundless loyalty of dogs to their masters, beside whom they remain after the latter's death until they themselves starve (Basil of Caesarea, Hexaemeron 9, 4), and in general the love of animals between parents and young: "Incomprehensibly great among animals is the mutual love of parents and their young, because God, who created them, has replaced their lack of reason with an excess of sensual feelings (διότι ὁ δημιουργήσας αὐτὰ Θεὸς τὴν τοῦ λόγου ἔλλειψιν διὰ τῆς τῶν αἰσθητηρίων περιουσίας παρεμυθήσατο)." (Basil of Caesarea, Hexaemeron 9, 4).

This still leaves the *question of the intellectual abilities of animals*: First of all, Basil distinguishes animals as animate from plants as inanimate living beings in the Stoic tradition (Basil of Caesarea, Hexaemeron 7, 1). For him, there are different degrees of ensoulment between the individual animals: land animals have more of the life principle of the soul than water animals (Basil of Caesarea, Hexaemeron 8, 1). In any case, however, the soul of animals is earthly and therefore mortal: "Since, according to Scripture, the soul of every animal is its blood (Lev 17:11), but the blood condenses and turns into flesh, and the flesh decays and dissolves into earth, the animal soul is naturally earthy. [...] Do not think it is older than

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its corporeal substance, or that it will continue after the dissolution of the flesh!" (Basil of Caesarea, Hexaemeron 8,2). Basil thus negates not only the pre-existence of the animal soul (and thus also transmigration), but also its post-existence in eternity. Despite all his love of animals, he sticks to the classical Stoic-Christian position with a (questionable) reference to the Bible.

Basil recognises an ability in some animals that is very similar to human syllogistic reasoning. Two examples are vultures and dogs. Vultures follow migrating armies because they hope to find corpses—and they cannot know this from birth, but only learn it from observation. Basil summarises the much-discussed example as follows: "You see countless flocks of vultures following the armies, which conclude from the armour what will happen to the soldiers. But this is not far from human reasoning (οὐ μακράν ἐστι λογισμῶν ἀνθρωπίνων)." (Basil of Caesarea, Hexaemeron 8, 7). The aloga thesis stands like a dogma in the room, which Basil does not want to question. And yet one wonders why the behaviour of vultures should only be "not remote" from human reasoning and how it can then actually be explained.

The second example comes from Chrysipp—we have already met it in Sextus Empiricus (chapter 3.6.3) and Tiberius Iulius Alexander, the nephew of Philon (chapter 3.6.1): "What the worldly wise have scarcely found after long years of study, namely, the chain conclusions (τὰς τῶν συλλογισμῶν πλοκὰς) that, as you see, the dog knows, only instructed by nature (παρὰ τῆς φύσεως πεπαιδευμένος). For if he tracks a game, and in doing so encounters various tracks, then follows the tracks leading everywhere, yet by such conduct he only pronounces the syllogism (τὴν συλλογιστικὴν φωνὴν): 'The game has turned this way, or that way, or towards a third side; but it has run neither that way nor that way; consequently, it must have run towards this side.' Thus, after rejecting what is wrong, he finds what is right." (Basil of Caesarea, Hexaemeron 9, 4). Thus, according to Basil, the dog does not carry out a syllogistic conclusion, but is "taught by nature". Here, the bishop sticks entirely to the traditional Stoic teaching.

Like Lactance (Chapter 5.7), Basil also cites man's upright walk as a central biological correlation to the gift of reason. He interprets the half-sentence in Gen 1:24 "Let the earth bring forth" as follows: "The animals are earth-born and inclined to the earth. But the 'heavenly plant' (Plato, Timaeus 90 A-B), man, is distinguished as much by his physique as by the nobility of his soul. What shape do the quadrupeds have? Their head is turned towards the earth, looking at their belly and seeking in every

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way to satisfy its lust. Your head is turned towards heaven; your eyes look upwards." (Basil of Caesarea, Hexaemeron 9, 2). The gift of reason, then, serves primarily to orient man towards God, so that he may live up to his kinship with God. As with Lactance, the bodily characteristics of the upright gait and the raised gaze become the code of social order.

Nevertheless, the lack of reason in animals is compensated for by an excess of feelings (Basil of Caesarea, Hexaemeron 9, 4). Thus, despite everything, God's kind care for his creatures becomes visible: "That God compensates for the lack of reason in the animal world at the same time reveals the goodness of the Christian Creator God and his love for every creature, a decisively new moment in the view of nature, especially in comparison with the Stoa. Basil repeatedly emphasised this revolutionary thought in the homilies of the Hexaemeron." (Rainer Henke 2000, 46).

In summary, Basil's great love for animals and the sensitive way he speaks about them is an unmistakable and strong feature of his sermons. It also corresponds to his enthusiasm for the detailed animal observation of natural science. That he justifies monastic abstinence from meat so strongly in terms of avoiding animal suffering and feels compassion for a grieving ox is also new. On the level of practicality, then, Basil is a great animal lover. On the level of theological ethical theory, however, he harbours no fundamental doubts about the outdated positions of Stoic-Christian anthropocentrism and the aloga thesis. These are so deeply and firmly rooted in late antique culture that they are no longer perceived as questionable. Nevertheless, the core position of anthropocentrism, that everything was created solely for the benefit of man, remains extraordinarily weak in Basil. If he mentions it at all, and he does so rather rarely, he weakens it as much as possible. Basil is without doubt one of the "least anthropocentristic" authors of the early Church.

5.12 Gregory of Nyssa

Gregory of Nyssa, born around 335/340 in Caesarea and who died after 394 in Nyssa, was the second youngest of ten children, who first married after his education and was soon widowed. Influenced by his eldest sister, the nun Makrina, and the second eldest of the siblings, his brother the bishop Basil of Caesarea (chapter 5.11), he becomes a monk and in 372, bishop of the newly established diocese of Nyssa, today's Nevşehir in Cappadocia. Theologically, he thought and wrote more systematically than his brother

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and continued his brother's Trinitarian ideas, especially at the Council of Constantinople in 381, where they were incorporated into the Creed. Gregory produced an extensive literary oeuvre, but unlike his brother Basil, he wrote much less about animals.

Gregory understands his work De hominis opificio, "one of the main works of patristic anthropology in the Greek language" (Giovanni Mandolino 2018, 416), which provides most of the content to be presented here, as the completion of what Basil did not elaborate on in the Hexaemeron due to time constraints, namely the Creation and being God's image of man. In doing so, Gregory, like his brother, draws intensively on contemporary natural science. He devotes more attention to the interpretation of the bodily constitution of man than to the interpretation of the soul and the spirit. Some thoughts reveal ideas that Basil had already established, while some appear for the first time.

The guiding question of De hominis opificio is why man is created as the final work of God according to the Creation narrative. Throughout his answer, Gregory underpins strong *anthropocentrism* from the very beginning, using poetic sentences to describe a world perfectly prepared for human use: "Already, then, all had come to its end. [...] And full was the earth of the seasonal fruits, sprouting at the same time as the blossoms, full were the meadows of all that grows in the meadows, and all the reefs and heights, and all the lowlands and hills, and all the valley bottoms, were adorned with fresh green grass and the colourful splendour of the trees, which had just risen from the earth, but were rapidly growing into perfect beauty. But all was merry, of course, and the animals that had come to life at God's command leapt about, sheltering in the bushes in herds and species, every bush and shade-giving shrub resounded with the songs of the songbirds. [...] and all the wealth of creation on land and sea was ready, but the partaker (ὁ μετέχων) was not. For as yet that great and venerable thing (τὸ μέγα τοῦτο καὶ τίμιον χρῆμα), man, was not resident in the world of things. For neither was it appropriate for the ruler (ἄρχων) to appear before the ruled, but only after the preparation of the ruler's territory was it time for the king (βασιλεύς) to appear." (Gregory of Nyssa, De opificio hominis 1–2). Nowhere else have we read the anthropocentristic interpretation of God's six-day work in such rich and imaginative embellishment as here. And nowhere has human kingship been so directly equated with ownership or stakeholdership. To be a king is to be a beneficiary—an equation that can certainly be questioned. "Gregory imagines the scene of creation as a

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lavish banquet laid out for a guest who has yet to arrive—a world made for human consumption." (Eric Daryl Meyer 2018, 43).

Gregory regards free will as the decisive difference between humans and animals and as a constitutive characteristic of the human image of God. Thus, he writes in his treatise on virginity: "He was the image and likeness (εἰκών ἦν καὶ ὁμοίωμα) [...] of the power that is king over all that exists (βασιλευούσης), and therefore in the self-empowerment of decision, he received the likeness of him who has power over all things..." (Gregory of Nyssa, De virginitate 12). From this follows very classically: "The self-empowerment of man is [...] for Gregory the essential trait of the image of God [...] It is necessarily connected with man's endowment with reason." (Martin Streck 2005, 132–133).

Like Basil, Gregory asks above all about the characteristics of the body that predestine man as the ruler of creation and make his leadership role possible. First of all, this includes his lack of physical strength, which makes him in need of help, which is why he begins to dominate and domesticate animals. He needs this, but he can also do it (Gregory of Nyssa, De opificio hominis 7). The second characteristic, which is also already known to us, is the upright walk: "But the form of man is upright and directed towards heaven, and he looks upwards. This is also princely and denotes royal dignity (Ἀρχικὰ καὶ ταῦτα, καὶ τὴν βασιλικὴν ἀξίαν ἐπισημαίνονται). For the fact that among creatures man alone is thus constituted, and all others have their bodies bent downwards, clearly shows the difference of dignity between those bent under dominion and the power above them (τὴν τῆς ἀξίας διαφορὰν, τῶν τε ὑποκυπτόντων τῇ δυναστείᾳ, καὶ τῆς ὑπερανεστώ σης αὐτῶν ἐξουσίας)." (Gregory of Nyssa, De opificio hominis 8).

Finally, Gregory's third specifically human bodily characteristic, which goes beyond that of his brother Basil, is the free play of the hands, which in the first place made possible man's ability to speak. In De hominis opificio 8, "it is shown how the bodily characteristics of man were interrelated and how they were all oriented towards the service of the Logos: The upright walk frees the forelimbs from their function as supporting organs and is thus the prerequisite for the formation of the hands. The hands, in turn, free the mouth from the task of feeding itself directly; but this enables the mouth and tongue to take on a shape that makes possible the articulation of the voice. If, like the animals, we had to pluck the plants with our mouths, we would have a snout, calloused, thick lips and a rough, animal tongue, and would consequently only be able to utter animal sounds." (Urs Dierauer 1977, 236). What Dierauer summarises compactly proves

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Gregory's long and demanding chain of thought from the upright walk to the ability to speak, which would also do credit to modern biology. The human organism is presented as perfectly oriented towards the formation of language.

We have already pointed out elsewhere the hermeneutical problem of constructing a categorical, principled difference in dignity from these categorical, contingent differences in bodily constitution (Eric Daryl Meyer 2018, 46). The problem is not specific to Gregory but concerns all of Stoic natural philosophy. The conclusion from being to ought, as inevitable as it is, always remains precarious from an ethical point of view and requires highly nuanced and very careful exposition. In Gregory, on the other hand (as in the Stoa as a whole), it remains largely unreflective.

It is not surprising that the *aloga thesis* is not specifically explained in a work about the creation of man. In his sermon on the third Beatitude, "Blessed are those who mourn", Gregory does, however, mention it, for on the basis of their lack of reason, he denies animals the ability to mourn: "... anyone who sinks into the pleasures of this life cannot be assumed to mourn. The latter is also proved by the reasonless animals; these are indeed by nature in a pitiable condition—for what is more pitiable than to be deprived of reason? But they do not have a feeling of unhappiness; on the contrary, their life proceeds with a certain joy: the horse is full of high spirits, the bull romps about so that the dust flies up, the pig bristles, the young dogs joke, the calves leap; every living creature can also express its joy through various signs. But if they had any idea of the joy (χάρις) of reason, which they lack, they would not spend their dull, low life in joy (ἡδονή)." (Gregory of Nyssa, De beatitudinibus 3, 4).

Mourning in the true sense, and Gregory is quite Stoic about it, can only be given when someone has a clear idea of loss and the ways of coping with it, and when someone can therefore relate to it. He denies animals this possibility because, for him, they have no reason. For his part, Gregory evaluates their lack of reason objectively as a misfortune, but one that they would and could not feel subjectively—and describes their sensual pleasures in detail. In terms of content, his brother Basil was of the same opinion. However, if we recall the mode of representation with which he describes the mourning ox that he observed, then nevertheless a difference becomes clear. At least performatively, Basil hints that he is not happy with the Stoic concept of animals' inability to truly grieve. Gregory, on the other hand, does vividly describe the joys of animals, but he is obviously not moved to deny them the genuine joy that is reserved for rational beings.

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Where Basil shows empathetic closeness to animals, Gregor remains at an indifferent distance from them.

On the whole, Gregory sees animals as closer to plants than to men within the framework of the Stoic scala naturae, which for him establishes the legitimacy of consuming animals as food in the same way as plants: "Therefore, the general lawgiver also gave over the nature of animals, as not far removed from plant life, to the use of man in the same way, to serve their owners instead of herbs; for 'all flesh,' he says, 'eat as herbs of the field' (Gen 9:3); only a little, indeed, does it seem to be in advance, by virtue of its sentience, of that which grows and multiplies without it. Let this be a lesson to those who are carnally minded, not to tie the mind too much to sensual things, but to be busy in the soul's advantages, since the true soul shows itself in these, but sensibility is also in the animals." (Gregory of Nyssa, De hominis opificio 15). Gregory does not follow the usual distinction between a purely vegetarian diet before the Fall and a carnal diet after the Fall. This is because, for him, the sentience of animals is not an ethically relevant endowment. Instead, he immediately mentions the warning that this assessment contains for humans, namely to set themselves apart from animals.

The human endowment of reason for Gregory thus remains a *commitment to morality* as well. In De opificio hominis 18, he describes in good Stoic manner that the nature of man is composed of two halves, the divine and the animal. The moral task of man now consists in controlling the second through the first. Whereas animals are driven to self-care by natural impulses, man must lead these forces to good through the guidance of reason. Elsewhere, Gregory uses the familiar Platonic image of the charioteer and wild draught animals: "If, on the other hand, reason, like some charioteer (τις ἡνίοχος), drops the reins, who then himself falls under the carriage and is dragged behind it, wherever the draught animals tear the team in their reasonless motion (ἡ ἄλογος κίνησις), then the impulses turn into passion, the malignancy of which can also be seen in the reasonless creatures (τότε εἰς πάθος αἱ ὁρμαὶ καταστρέφονται, οἷον δὴ καὶ ἐπὶ τοῖς ἀλόγοις ἔστιν ἰδεῖν)." (Gregory of Nyssa, Dialogus de anima et resurrectione 8, 7). This image from Plato's Phaedrus (cf. chapter 3.3), which is still echoed in many idioms today—for example, when "unbridled behaviour" is mentioned—, illustrates more clearly than almost any other the efforts of Greek ethics to domesticate the animal in man and make it both harmless and useful. It illustrates the Greeks' deep mistrust of feelings, which then casts its long shadow on animals as well.

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Gregory both theologically and spiritually is strongly oriented towards his older brother Basil but does not have his esprit and above all does not adopt his great love for animals. He makes anthropocentrism unusually strong by explicitly equating the kingship of man, which he recognises in the image of God, with the authorisation to use creation. His biological derivation of man's ability to speak from his upright walk is also genuine. Overall, non-human creation is not a major concern for him.

5.13 Ambrose of Milan

Ambrose was born in Augusta Treverorum (Trier) in 339 and died in Mediolanum (Milan) in 397. His parents belonged to the Roman senatorial aristocracy. His father, Aurelius Ambrosius, was the prefect of the province of Gallia Narbonensis (in present-day southern France) and died early. Ambrose received a good legal education so that he could pursue a career as a civil servant like his father. In 372/373 he became the prefect of the province of Aemilia-Liguria with its seat in Milan, one of the imperial residences at the time. But in 374 he was elected Bishop of Milan by the people, although he was still a catechumen. After consultation with the emperor, he accepted the office and within a week received baptism and the ordinations of deacon, priest and bishop. Because of his new task, he now dealt with theology for the first time. He did not become a great theologian, but rather a church politician who took his theology from Basil of Caesarea (chapter 5.11) and other great theologians of his time and transferred it from the Greek-speaking to the Latin-speaking world.

More than half of his writings are devoted to biblical interpretation and are probably based on sermons. As far as I can see, Ambrose was the only one of the Church Fathers to have written his own treatise on the story of Noah: *De Noe et Arca* from the year 378. Elsewhere, the ark is often the only part of the story mentioned. The wood of the ark and the water of the Flood are understood as an image of the cross of Christ and the water of baptism, and sometimes there is also mention of the two birds, the raven and the dove, which Noah sends out. Above all, however, the ark is used as an image for the church, in which a veritable "zoo" of people are peacefully united and live together in harmony. Ambrose, on the other hand, interprets much of the narrative, and does so in a twofold process: First, he explains the literal sense of the text, then the "sensus altior", the higher, i.e. allegorical sense. He consistently recognises this in man's

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confrontation with his desires and passions. Noah is the righteous, that is, the mind (mens) that subdues all irrational passions and locks them up, as it were, in the ark of his reason (Ambrose, De Noe et Arca 9, 30).

Not everything that Gen 6–9 has to say about animals is interpreted by Ambrose. He often skips over theologically significant verses and instead dwells on questions of detail. For our question, it seems to me that only one longer passage is significant, namely the discussion of the question of why animals have to die in the Flood, although they have not sinned. Ambrose uses several arguments to explain this. First, for him it is like an army that must die if the commander of the army has made a mistake and dies himself: "If man perishes, to whom the Lord God has given a royal power (regalis potestas) over every species of animals" (Ambrose, De Noe et Arca 10, 31), then all animals must perish with man. Even in a plague, animals would eventually be infected along with humans. The second argument is the analogy with the body: if the head dies, all the other parts of the body die with it, which, conversely, need not be the case. "The head and, as it were, the leading organ of the rest of the animals is man (caput et principale quoddam caeterorum animalium homo est)." (Ambrose, De Noe et Arca 10, 32). Finally, Ambrose puts forward anthropocentrism as his third and most important argument. Citing Ps 8:8, he holds that animals were created for the sake of man. Therefore, if man were to be extinguished, their existence would no longer have any purpose: "Because of him are they all; some for the sake of usefulness, some for the sake of pleasure, some for the sake of lust. It was therefore logical to think that when man is extinguished from the surface of the earth, those who were created for his sake should likewise be extinguished." (Ambrose, De Noe et Arca 10, 33).

Not only does Ambrose's allegorical interpretation of the Noah narrative disappoint from an animal theological perspective, but so does his literal one. The fact that animals are saved at all; that God's covenant applies to them just as it does to humans; that they experience a community of destiny, but also a community of law with God and humans, is not addressed by Ambrose. Here, the trained administrator is obviously simply out of his depth.

Probably the most important and best-known piece of writing by Ambrose that refers to the Creation is the *Hexaemeron*, which we will deal with in the following. It is strongly oriented towards Basil's model and interprets the Creation narratives literally, not allegorically. In contrast to the latter, however, the scientific examples are expanded considerably, while the theological and philosophical reflections are reduced to a minimum (cf.

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also Maria Pia Ciccarese 2016, 103–110). Ambrose's paraenetic concern, of course, remains the same as Basil's: amazement at the wonder of creation and the greatness of the Creator. The Bishop of Milan uses the verb "mirari" countless times (cf. Maria Pia Ciccarese 2016, 96–98). He aptly formulates: "Mirabilis natura in maximis [...] mirabilis etiam in minimis" – "Nature is admirable in its biggest facets… and also admirable in its smallest aspects" (Ambrose, Hexaemeron 6, 6, 37).

In terms of content, the focus is on the exemplary nature of animals as "exempla" (Maria Pia Ciccarese 2016, 98–103). Like Basil, Ambrose cites individual negative examples concerning the behaviour of predators, for example when he admonishes that humans should not become predators (Ambrose, Hexaemeron 5, 5, 13–14). Much more extensive, however, as with Basil, are the examples in which animals are considered positive role models. For example, fish, which know their territories by nature and are content with them, admonish moderation and respect for boundaries (Ambrose, Hexaemeron 5, 10, 26–27). Numerous birds are a model of hospitality (Ambrose, Hexaemeron 5, 16, 54). Birds are also used to illustrate mildness and mercy (Ambrose, Hexaemeron 5, 16, 55). A frequent theme is the love of animals between children and parents, for example in the case of water animals (Ambrose, Hexaemeron 5, 3, 7) and crows (Ambrose, Hexaemeron 5, 18, 58). Finally, the doves are mentioned as an example of fidelity beyond the death of a partner (Ambrose, Hexaemeron 5, 19, 62).

Of course, the example of the dog pursuing game and seemingly concluding syllogistically appears again. As mentioned, it comes from Chrysipp, and we encountered it in Sextus Empiricus (chapter 3.6.3), Tiberius Iulius Alexander (chapter 3.6.1) and Basil of Caesarea (chapter 5.11.2). Ambrose comments: "No one doubts that the dog has no reason (exsortem rationis canem esse nemo dubitaverit). And yet, if one observes its acumen (sensus eius vigorem), one would like to think that it makes use of reason in its fine sense of intuition. For example, what very few people in schools are able to accomplish, even if they spend their whole lives learning, namely, to carry out syllogistic deductions (coniunctiones syllogismorum), the dogs, as will be easily seen, know how to do by means of natural instruction (naturali eruditione). [...; here follows the well-known example, note MR]. What humans can hardly manage in spite of long, properly trained thinking, results for the dogs in a natural way (ex natura suppetit): First they convince themselves of what is false, then, after eliminating that which is false, they arrive at the truth." (Ambrose, Hexaemeron 6, 4, 23). Ambrose's explanation thus remains entirely within

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the classical Stoic patterns of explanation, which illuminate the difference between learned and natural abilities and reserve the learned ones for humans.

The Ambrosian commentary on the creation of man makes a strict distinction between the image of God, which is Christ alone, and the human soul, which is created in the image of God, that is, after Christ: "So then our soul accords with the image of God (ad imaginem Dei). In it, man, you are whole; for without it you are nothing, but are earth and are dissolved into earth. [...] It is through her that you rule (per quam dominaris) over all the other beings of the animal and bird world. She accords with the image of God, but the body is formed after the manner of animals (haec est ad imaginem Dei, corpus autem ad speciem bestiarum). The latter bears the pious seal of the imitation of God (pium divinae imitationis insigne), the latter shares the lot (consortium) with the beasts and monsters." (Ambrose, Hexaemeron 6, 7, 43). Ambrose is keen to signal a clear hierarchical difference between man and Christ. Furthermore, he attributes the likeness to the soul alone, not to the body, because the body is mortal, as is the case with animals.

It is astonishing, however, that in the entire Hexaemeron there is hardly an allusion to the command to rule from Gen 1:28–29. The subordinate clause in the quotation just referred to is one of the rare exceptions. If, on the other hand, one follows the overall structure of the treatise on the creation of man, Ambrose moves directly from the morphology of the human body and the significance of the soul to the Sabbath (Gen 2:1–4). That there is a divine plan for creation is echoed everywhere. That everything has its purpose and function, likewise. But Ambrose does not say that everything exists for man. And that man has the role of ruler is only cautiously hinted at. Thus, the Bishop of Milan remains extraordinarily reserved on the question of teleology and anthropocentrism. Reflection on the relationship between humans and non-human creatures does not occur in the Ambrosian Hexaemeron.

5.14 John Chrysostom

John of Antioch, who in the 6th century was given the nickname Χρυσόστομος, Golden Mouth, due to his rhetorical talent, was born around 348 in Antioch and died in 407 in Komana Pontika. His father, a high officer, died soon after John's birth, so that he was brought up alone

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by his Christian mother. He studied law and was baptised in 371. After his mother's death in 372, he went to the Syrian desert as a monk, but due to his poor health had to return to Antioch in 378. In 381 he was ordained a deacon, in 386 a priest and finally in 397 Patriarch of Constantinople. From 403 onwards, he had to go into exile several times because his sharp criticism of rich displeased the empress and emperor. On his way from one place of exile to the next, he died in 407.

Chrysostom is the early Christian theologian from whom the most publications have survived. His oeuvre is enormous. It consists of scientific treatises, biblical commentaries, sermons and letters from his exile. Nevertheless, his writings on creation are limited. They are mainly found in his sermons to the people of Antioch, which are set against a very concrete event: during Lent 387, the Antiochian population destroyed the statues of the emperor and his family standing on pillars in protest against new taxes. The very next day, in retaliation, several inhabitants were killed, including children. In this extremely tense situation, Chrysostom preached twenty sermons "on the pillars", which also made a great impression on the pagan population and noticeably calmed the situation.

First of all, it will come as no surprise that the gifted preacher sees *language as the special, exclusively human characteristic and gift.* In a sermon on repentance that can neither be located nor dated, he states: "For this very reason we have an advantage over wordless creatures (τῶν ἀλόγων ζώων), because we have a word (ἐν τῷ λόγον ἔχειν), can speak to one another through the word, and love the word (λόγου ἐρᾷν); for a man who does not love the word is more unreasonable than the beasts (ἀλογώτερος τῶν κτηνῶν), because he does not know why he has been honoured and whence he has received this honour. Therefore, the Prophet rightly speaks: 'Man, since he was honoured, did not understand, behaved like the unintelligent animals and became like them (Ἄνθρωπος ἐν τιμῇ ὢν οὐ συνῆκε- παρασυνεβλήθη τοῖς κτήνεσι ἀνοήτοις, καὶ ὡμοιώθη αὐτοῖς).' (Ps 48:13 LXX)" (John Chrysostom, De paenitentia homiliae 3, 1). Chrysostom thus interprets logos in this sermon primarily in terms of language; the aloga are, in his perception, primarily speechless. The word is the special splendour and adornment of man; it honours him to be able to speak. To prove this, Chrysostom refers to a scriptural word already known to us, which he mistakenly ascribes to a "prophet", although it comes from a Psalm (and thus, if he wanted to ascribe it to a person, it would have to be attributed to David). This he interprets differently from those authors who have quoted it so far: Man has not understood what his honour is,

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namely, the word, and has thus become like the unintelligent animals. Although the Septuagint does not speak of ἄλογα, but of ἀνόητα, thus rendering impossible Chrysostom's play on words, he interprets the Psalm verse entirely in his sense: He who does not appreciate the logos, language, becomes an animal.

In his seventh homily to the Antiochians on the image columns, Chrysostom asks what could give comfort to people in this precarious situation. And here he comes to *anthropocentrism as the strongest proof of divine love and care,* which he combines quite Stoically with the thesis of man's dominion over creation, symbolised in his likeness to God: "For when you hear that God made the heavens and the earth, the sea, the air, the waters, the many stars, the two great lights, the plants, the four-footed animals, the swimming and flying creatures, in short, all visible things, for your sake and for the sake of your salvation and your honour (διὰ σὲ καὶ τὴν σωτηρίαν καὶ τιμὴν), do you not receive abundant consolation, and receive in this the greatest proof of the divine love, when you consider that God has called into existence a world of such size and nature, of such beauty and extent, on account of you, who are so small? Therefore, when you hear that God made the heavens and the earth in the beginning, do not pass over what has been said hastily, but survey in your mind the expanse of the earth and consider how He has set before us such a delicious and abundant table and has given us many delights in every place. And the greatest thing is that He did not give us this so great and glorious world as a reward for our labour or as recompense for good works, but that at the same time He formed us with it and with this kingship (βασιλεία) honoured our race. For 'Let us make a man,' he said, 'in our image and likeness (κατ' εἰκόνα ἡμετέραν καὶ καθ' ὁμοίωσιν).' (Gen 1:26 LXX). Which means, 'in our image and likeness?' An image of dominion, he says (τῆς ἀρχῆς εἰκόνα φησὶ), and as there is none in heaven higher than God, so let there be none on earth higher than man! This then is the one and first honour which he did him, that he made him in his own image. The second is that he gave us dominion, not as recompense for our labours, but as a pure gift of his human kindness and grace. The third is that he gave it to us as something natural; for some rulership is natural; some comes from a vote; [...] that which is not possessed by nature easily changes and passes to others; [...] Here, then, the dignity of kingship is always obtained by birth, and no one has ever seen a lion forfeit his dominion. Now God has also given us such kingship from the beginning and set it before us all. And not by this alone has he honoured our nature, but also by the pre-eminence of

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place, assigning to us paradise as our chosen abode, and giving us reason, and bestowing upon us an immortal soul (καὶ λόγον δοὺς καὶ ψυχὴν ἀθάνατον χαρισάμενος)." (John Chrysostom, Ad populum Antiochenum homiliae 7, 2).

First of all, this last sentence, in which Chrysostom distinguishes man's endowment with reason from his being made in the image of God, is interesting. Reason is added to the image of God as an additive, like paradise and immortality. This is quite unusual. Early Christian theologians usually equated the image of God with the gift of reason. Chrysostom thinks differently. More important, however, are the two main arguments through which he wants to comfort people, for in the face of imperial punitive measures, the Antiochians felt quite small and frightened. Their situation did not feel like domination at all. Chrysostom comforts them with two thoughts: on the one hand, with the message of anthropocentrism: the small human being is declared the goal and purpose of the great Creation. There could be no greater proof of divine love, Chrysostom is convinced. Ultimately, the Stoic idea of pronoia gains new topicality and existential depth here. The Stoics already saw it as proof of divine care and tried to draw self-confidence from it. This is precisely what Chrysostom does in the time of fear and despair in his hometown.

On the other hand, Chrysostom comforts the Antiochians by pointing out that they have a royal dignity in creation—and by nature, not by choice; permanently, not temporarily; given by God, not earned by performance. The emperor, on the other hand, has his dignity only by choice and temporarily—it can be taken from him tomorrow. The image of God from Genesis 1 is thus socio-politically charged without inciting rebellion against the emperor. Moreover, it is related to a place (the Garden of Paradise) and a time (eternity) that surpass all imperial claims. Neither the imperial palace in Constantinople nor the duration of an imperial reign can match it. This kingship of man also appears in his Homiliae in Genesin. There, in answer to the already familiar question as to why creation was created before man, he writes that it was so that man could enter his festively decorated royal city like a king (Johannes Chrysostomus, Homiliae in Genesin 8, 2).

Obviously, the first argument of anthropocentrism did not convince all listeners. In particular, heterodox critics such as Manichaeans, Markionites, Valentinians unanimously doubt the anthropocentrist teleology of ecclesiastical orthodoxy. Their misgivings and doubts are explicitly taken up by the preacher: "For many, in addition to what has already been said, make the following objection: 'If man is the king of the reasonless (βασιλεὺς τῶν

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ἀλόγων), why then is he surpassed by many of the same in strength, agility and swiftness?'" (John Chrysostom, Ad populum Antiochenum homiliae 11, 4). Again, Chrysostom answers quite classically: man makes use of animals by virtue of his reason, so that they serve him (cf. Blake Leyerle 2019, 279–281). At the same time, according to his continuation of the argument, the human body is so constituted that it can and should also obey reason.

A year before the homilies to the Antiochians on the image columns, in Lent of the year 386, Chrysostom delivered his Sermones in Genesim, homilies on the first chapters of Genesis. In them, appropriately for Lent, the main role is not played by creation but by the narrative of the Fall. This is prepared by Sermo 3 on the question of what "according to his likeness (καθ' ὁμοίωσιν)" means in Gen 1:26, namely *likeness of dominion*. Chrysostom answers with remarkably pointed formulations: 'Not a likeness of essence, but a likeness of dominion (οὐκ οὐσί α ς ἀπαραλλαξία, ἀλλ' ἀρχῆς ὁμοιότης). But that 'after his likeness' means being mild and meek and becoming like God through powers according to the reason of virtue (κατὰ τόν τῆς ἀρετῆς λόγον), as Christ says, 'Be like my Father in heaven' (Mt 5:45). For as on this wide and spacious earth some of the living creatures (τῶν ζώων) are less reasonable (ἀλογώτερα) and some are wilder, so some of the thoughts (τῶν λογισμῶν) in the vastness of our soul are less reasonable and more animal (ἀλογώτεροι καὶ κτηνώδεις), some wilder and more terrible. They are therefore to be subdued and tamed, and to be entrusted in order to reason the dominion (ἀρχή) over them. [...] We subdue lions and return their souls tame, and you doubt whether you can convert the wildness of thought into gentleness?" (John Chrysostom, Sermones in Genesim 3, 1).

The passage above contains a lot of interesting aspects: First of all, the image of God is not interpreted ontologically in the sense of "equality of essence", but ethically in the sense of imitating the exercise of dominion. It implies an obligation and task, which corresponds perfectly to the intention of the Hebrew Bible. Unlike the Hebrew Bible, however, Chrysostom does not understand dominion as a setting of relationships, and certainly not in relation to real animals. Rather, he is concerned with dominion over the "animal in us", i.e. dominion over one's own thoughts and feelings. Man should become mild and gentle like God and tame and domesticate the animal in himself; then he will be the likeness of God.

In his homilies on Genesis, however, we also find a negative interpretation of dominion. Chrysostom interprets the naming of the animals by

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Adam in Gen 2:19–20 as a "symbol of dominion (σύμβολον δεσποτείας)". He compares it to the custom of a master who has bought a new slave immediately giving him a new name (John Chrysostom, Homiliae in Genesin 14, 5, 19)—a harsh, identity-destroying demonstration of power that is far removed from the intention of the biblical text, which in fact speaks not of a change of name but of a naming[27]. Chrysostom thus seems to vacillate: on the one hand he sees human dominion over animals as an imitation of the good, caring Creator God, on the other hand as a pure demonstration of power. And in another place, he describes man's harsh, fear-inspiring dominion over animals (as well as man's fear of some animals) as a consequence of sin (John Chrysostom, Homiliae in Genesin 9, 4). Chrysostom obviously did not become quite clear on this question.

For Chrysostom, too, *animals* can serve as *models* in many ways. Sometimes they are a negative role model for passions (John Chrysostom, Homiliae in Genesin 12, 10), but mostly a positive role model: "Learn from the reasonless (παιδεύθητι παρὰ τῶν ἀλόγων) [...] and marvel at your Lord not only because he created the sun and the heaven, but also because he brought the ant into being; for though it be a little beast (βραχὺ τὸ ζῶον), yet it is full proof of the greatness of the wisdom of God (τοῦ μεγέθους τῆς σοφίας τοῦ Θεοῦ)." (John Chrysostom, Ad populum Antiochenum homiliae 12, 2). It is precisely the small animals such as bees, ants, spiders, birds and many others that Chrysostom cites as examples. As with Basil and Ambrose, positive examples predominate. However, he also knows negative examples and therefore urges discernment: "If there is anything good in them, accept it, and if they have some natural merits, strive to make them your own by your resolution of will (διὰ τῆς προαιρέσεως); for God has gifted you with [the faculty of] volition, that by him you may appropriate their natural advantages (τὰ φυσικὰ αὐτῶν πλεονεκτήματα), and so also be rewarded; for their right conduct does not come from a decision of the will and from reason, but merely from their nature (οὐκ ἐκ προαιρέσεως καὶ λόγου, ἀλλ' ἀπὸ φύσεως μόνης)." (John Chrysostom, Ad populum Antiochenum homiliae 12, 2). What is given to animals by nature, man must acquire autonomously through the προαίρεσις. This is his ability, but also his task. Thus, Chrysostom concludes with the admonition,

27 Note the extremely precise analysis by Benjamin H. Dunning 2015, 71–95. Dunning also shows, among other things, that in Chrysostom there is an explicit connection between the dominion of man over animals and the dominion of man over woman. This connection does not need to be shown in detail here.

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"Gather, then, the best and adorn yourself with it; for you are the king of the reasonless (βασιλεὺς τῶν ἀλόγων)" (John Chrysostom, Ad populum Antiochenum homiliae 12, 3).

If man errs in this moral task, he is, it is now an established phrase, more incomprehensible than animals: "Wherewith, then, shall we excuse ourselves, what shall we say in our defence, if we are more incomprehensible (ἀνοητότεροι) than the reasonless? For a bird once caught in a snare and then escaped, and a deer that has escaped from the net into which it has fallen, cannot easily be caught again by the same means; for experience teaches them all to be cautious. But we fall into the same nets in which we have often been entangled, and do not imitate the caution and care of the reasonless (τῶν ἀλόγων τὸ προνοητικὸν καὶ μεμεριμνημένον), who, after all, are endowed with reason." (John Chrysostom, Ad populum Antiochenum homiliae 15, 2).

In summary, it can be said that creation does not play a particularly important role in Chrysostom's thinking. Compared to his gigantic oeuvre, it only appears in homeopathic doses. The few existing passages, however, reveal a conscious and original conception. Creation in its immensity and diversity demonstrates God's care and man's greatness and can give him confidence in himself and God. Moreover, creation, especially in the form of animals, is an example in the moral sense. Therefore, the concept of likeness and the biblical mandate to rule are primarily interpreted allegorically in terms of inner-psychic processes.

5.15 Nemesios of Emesa

Very little is known about the life of Nemesios, bishop of Emesa (today's Homs in Syria). However, the dating of his immensely widely received work (Moreno Morani 1987, V) "On the Nature of Man" (κεφαλαίωδης περὶ φύσεως ἀνθρώπου/ De natura hominis) shortly before 400 AD is based on several clues from the work itself. Nemesios is both philosophically and medically literate. De natura hominis is the first systematic treatise on Christian anthropology (David Lloyd Dusenbury 2021, xv and 2021a, 45) and has two prominent predecessors: both Hippocrates and Zenon wrote works with the same title (David Lloyd Dusenbury 2021a, 46). Nemesios argues largely on the basis of Greek philosophy, especially Neo-Platonism and the Stoa. At the same time, he was the first Christian author to receive the medical writings of Galen (Galenos of Pergamon, c. 130–210 AD) to a

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greater extent and to make them fruitful for anthropology. What is almost more astonishing, however, is that he acknowledges Aristotle in decisive respects—even if he does not quote him explicitly, but only makes "silent borrowings", where he adopts his thoughts (Martin Streck 2001, 559 and 2005, 21). In early Christianity, Aristotle was not considered worthy of reception; indeed he was downright frowned upon, among other things because he did not grant immortality to the human soul, which makes the positive reception of some of his thoughts by Nemesios all the more remarkable.

Overall, Nemesios is characterised by an optimistic world view, to which his anthropocentrism, strongly linked to the idea of divine providence, contributes considerably. This is already abundantly clear in the first two chapters of his work, which are extraordinarily long and very programmatically conceived. Nemesios begins as follows:

"As is well known, man is in communion with the soulless (τοῖς ἀψύχοις κοινωνεῖ), he participates in the life of the reasonless living beings (τῆς τῶν ἀλόγων ζῴων μετέχει ζωῆς), he participates in the thinking of the reasonable (τῆς τῶν λογικῶν μετείληφε νοήσεως). [...] By reason man unites himself with the incorporeal and rational forms of nature (συνάπτεται διὰ τοῦ λογικοῦ ταῖς ἀσωμάτοις καὶ νοεραῖς φύσεσιν): he deliberates, he thinks, he judges each one, he strives for the virtues, he welcomes the summit of the virtues, piety (λογιζόμενος καὶ νοῶν κρίνων ἕκαστα καὶ τὰς ἀρετὰς μεταδιώκων καὶ τῶν ἀρετῶν τὸν κολοφῶνα τὴν εὐσέβειαν ἀσπαζόμενος). That is why he also stands, as it were, on the borderline between spiritual and sensual essence (ὥσπερ ἐν μεθορίοις ἐστὶν νοητῆς καὶ αἰσθητῆς οὐσίας); through the body and corporeal dispositions he is in communication with the reasonless and soulless living beings, but through reason with the incorporeal beings, as has been previously remarked. The Creator has evidently gradually linked together the different forms of nature, so that the whole of creation is one and related (ὥστε μίαν εἶναι καὶ συγγενῆ τὴν πᾶσαν κτίσιν). From this especially this follows: there is only one Creator of all things (εἷς ὢν ὁ πάντων τῶν ὄντων δημιουργός). He did not merely combine the existence of the individual atoms into a unity. He also fitted the individual things together. [...] He linked them together by the small kinship and difference of their nature (συνάπτων ἀλλήλοις τῇ κατ' ὀλίγον οἰκειότητι καὶ παραλλαγῇ τῆς φύσεως). Therefore, the wholly soulless beings do not differ much from the plants with their nutritive power. On the other hand, these beings are not different from the reasonless and sentient beings. Moreover, the reasonless beings are not entirely separated

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from the sensible ones, they are not without relation to each other, they are united by a natural bond of kinship (δεσμοῦ τινος εἶναι συμφυοῦς καὶ φυσικοῦ)." (Nemesius of Emesa, De natura hominis 1).

As if in a programmatic prologue, Nemesios opens his treatise on human beings with an emphasis on his being integrated into non-human creation. This is anything but self-evident. He sees man as harmoniously embedded in the cosmic community of creation of everything that exists. He has something in common (κοινωνεῖ) with all creatures and is related to them, and likewise these are related among themselves, for otherwise no connection could arise between them. Preliminary to his special position, then, man is a fellow-creature among many others. Creation is an organic unity, everything is connected to everything else and related to each other (cf. Urs Dierauer 1977, 246). The similarities far outweigh the differences. The Stoic scala naturae, contrary to its original intention, is first and foremost interpreted as unifying (David Lloyd Dusenbury 2021, 159) by correlating the peripatetic notion of κοινωνία with the Stoic οἰκείωσις (David Lloyd Dusenbury 2021, 46 and 2021a, 52). These are (Aristotelian) tones that were not heard in the entire preceding patristics—a novelty that does not abolish anthropocentrism, but clearly puts it into perspective.

In this cosmic vision, human beings are located—entirely in the tradition of Greek philosophy—in the middle or borderland between the living beings, with whom he has the body in common, on the one hand, and the spiritual beings, with whom he has reason in common, on the other. He is, as it were, a bridge being between two worlds. Nemesios describes in detail which abilities the gift of reason brings with it. Man can reason, think, judge, but all these abilities amount to morality and piety. If they are not used for that purpose, they are in vain.

At the same time, Nemesios strives to make the gap between the irrational and the rational as small as possible, almost invisible, for he also admits that non-human beings have some abilities that are close to reason. Thus, he writes in the following passage: "After that, God turned from the irrational to the rational being, the human being. Nor did he create him all at once; rather, even before that, he implanted in the other beings certain natural understandings (φυσικάς τινας συνέσεις); he gave them manual dexterity and abilities to do all sorts of things for their good (πρὸς σωτηρίαν). As a result, they seemed to stand closely with the reasonable (ἐγγὺς λογικῶν). Thus, he created the truly rational living being, man (τὸ ἀληθῶς λογικὸν ζῷον τὸν ἄνθρωπον). The same kind of progressive

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development will be found further in the study of the voice..." (Nemesius of Emesa, De natura hominis 1).

In terms of natural science, Nemesios is sufficiently educated in the teachings of Aristotle that he recognises the continuum of nature from the completely reasonless to the very rational living beings (and also, as the last remark suggests, from the completely mute to the extensively speaking living beings). In a difficult analysis of text fragments, Urs Dierauer (1977, 249–251) suggests that Nemesios may have taken his cue from the Stoic Poseidonios. His complete texts are missing, however, so that the possibility of reconstructing them remains limited.

Strikingly often, Nemesios uses terms that actually contain a contradiction in themselves: "natural intelligibility", which is basically "reasonless reasonableness". One senses how Nemesios struggles, since he cannot express a continuum with classical terms but only a binary exclusionary difference. In the end, he comes back to this binary logic when he talks about man as the "truly" rational being. All other living beings are obviously not "truly" rational. This is where the language of Greek philosophy reaches its limits, and one senses this more in De natura hominis than in other early Christian writings.

Nemesios then introduces anthropocentrist teleology with the observation, strongly made in Gregory of Nyssa (chapter 5.12), that man is created as the last creature in Gen 1: "Man was created last. Was it logical, after all, not only that after the creation of all things for his sake (πάντων δι' αὐτὸν γενομένων), things for his need (πρὸς τὴν χρῆσιν αὐτοῦ) were first procured, and only afterwards he himself was brought forth, to use them, but also because, as nature was created which could be comprehended by the intellect and the sense of sight, there had also to be a bond for both together; the universe was to be a unity, sympathetic with itself, and not alien to itself (ἵνα ἓν ᾖ τὸ πᾶν καὶ συμπαθὲς ἑαυτῷ καὶ μὴ ἀλλότριον αὐτὸ ἑαυτοῦ). Then the living being was created that unites the two forms of nature: man (τὸ συνδέον ἀμφοτέρας τὰς φύσεις ζῷον ὁ ἄνθρωπος). Such, in short, are the works of the Creator's wisdom." (Nemesius of Emesa, De natura hominis 1). It is, as it were, like the construction of a vault: the keystone, which connects the two halves of the arch and creates a stable unit, is inserted at the very end, as its name indicates.

The fact that man only enters the stage of the cosmos when everything that is to be of use to him has been provided seems self-evident for Nemesios, but in contrast to Gregory of Nyssa, it does not seem to be the actual main argument. Rather, he is concerned that with man, the unifying being

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comes into the world. Only a being that has reason and body can bind the universe together into a unity. Only through this being does reason not remain alien to the physical and the physical not alien to reason. Only in this being can the world feel compassion for itself. Here, Nemesios considerably shifts the Stoic teleology, which is strongly conceived in terms of purposes. The question of an individual who is entitled with ends or benefits moves far into the background. The ultimate telos is the unity of the cosmos, of the whole. One could almost call Nemesios an ecocentrist or holist.

The unifying function of man, however, places a great burden and obligation on him: "On the border between the reasonless and sensible nature stands man (Ἐν μεθορίοις οὖν τῆς ἀλόγου καὶ λογικῆς φύσεως ὁ ἄνθρωπος ταχθείς); when he turns to the body and loves bodily pleasures more, he prefers the way of life of the reasonless (τὸν τῶν ἀλόγων ἀσπάζεται βίον). [...] When man despises all pleasures of a corporeal kind and turns to reason, he attains the divine, most godly life, to that life which is especially suitable for man; he will then be like the heavenly one (οἷος ὁ ἐπουράνιος) [...] This is the principle of rational nature (λογικῆς φύσεως τὸ κεφάλαιόν): avoiding and repelling the bad, seeking out and embracing the good." (Nemesius of Emesa, De natura hominis 1).

Starting from a completely different point, Nemesios returns to the classical admonition of controlling passions through reason and leading a morally good life. A person who takes this to heart will be "like the heavenly one"—though here is no allusion whatsoever to the likeness of God in Genesis 1. Nemesios, although a bishop, argues purely philosophically.

For Nemesios, animals have no reason, but they do not need one either: "For none of the rational movements are manifested in the reasonless animals; for they have no arts, no sciences, no acts of the will, no virtues, nor is there anything else of reasoning activities (οὔτε τέχναι μαθήματα βουλαὶ οὔτε ἀρεταὶ οὔτε ἄλλο τι τῶν διανοητικῶν) in them. From this it clearly follows that animals have no share in a rational soul (οὐ μέτεστι λογικῆς ψυχῆς αὐτοῖς). It would also be truly foolish to call the reasonless animals reasonable (ἄτοπον λέγειν τὰ ἄλογα λογικά). Although very young boys have only reasonless movement, yet we say: they have a rational soul; for when they have grown up, they manifest the activity of their reason. The reasonless being, on the other hand, which at no time of his life displays the reasoning part, would have a rational soul in vain; for the ability to think will be of no use to him. All men have unanimously admitted: God has created nothing superfluous. If this is true, then the rational soul must

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have been superfluously implanted in both tame and wild animals (τοῖς κτήνεσιν καὶ τοῖς θηρίοις), for it is never able to express its own work in these animals. It would be a reproach against Him who gave the body an improper soul (τοῦ δόντος ἀνάρμοστον ψυχὴν τῷ σώματι)." (Nemesius of Emesa, De natura hominis 2).

Nemesios argues here with the principle of parsimony: God created the world in such a way that nothing is missing, but also nothing is too much. He gave everything the optimal appropriate measure in view of genuine objectives. To ascribe a rational soul to animals, although they could not develop their potential, would therefore be an accusation against the Creator, who then would obviously not have adhered to His principle of maximum efficiency. Here, Nemesios is subject to circular reasoning: animals have no arts and sciences, so they do not need reason and are without reason. Because they are reasonless, they cannot develop arts and sciences. Nemesios thus abandons his own previously established principle of describing a continuum between reasonlessness and "full" reason. Thus, he falls short of his own possibilities.

One senses, however, how much Nemesios wrestles with himself at this point when analysing the following paragraph: "It is better, therefore, to suppose the following: a suitable soul has been inserted into every body; further: the animals, according to their disposition, have nothing more than the natural simplicity which is apparent in their activities. Every single species of the reasonless moves by its own impulse (κατ' οἰκείαν ὁρμὴν); every species has been created for the use and operation of the impulse from the beginning. [...] The Creator did not leave them altogether helpless; rather, He bestowed on each a natural, not a rational, insight (φυσικήν, οὐ λογικήν, ἐνέβαλεν σύνεσιν). To some he even gave cunning (πανουργία), as it is an image of skill and a shadow of reason (ὥσπερ τέχνης εἰκόνα καὶ σκιὰν λογικήν). For these two reasons he did so: the animals were to avoid momentary dangers and to protect themselves from future ones; he also wished, as already stated, to unite the whole of creation under himself (συνάψαι τὴν κτίσιν πᾶσαν ἑαυτῇ)." (Nemesius of Emesa, De natura hominis 2).

Nemesios wavers back and forth and yet does not reach his goal. On the one hand, he speaks Stoically of a "drive" (ὁρμὴ) in animals—a notion that had far-reaching consequences and dominated biology as recently as half a century ago. On the other hand, he returns once again to the oxymoron we have already encountered: the "natural, non-rational insight" (φυσική, οὐ λογική σύνεσις) or, as I pointedly put it, "reasonless reasonableness".

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Nemesios' main aim is to explain why animals can avoid danger and protect their lives, using some artifice (τέχνη), even cunning (πανουργία). We know from modern behavioural research that the use of a ruse actually requires an extremely high level of intellectual ability, such as a "theory of mind", i.e. the knowledge of what the other person is thinking. Only those who can read their counterpart's thoughts can consciously deceive. Some animals can indeed do that, and this is possibly more than just a "shadow of reason" (σκιὰ λογική).

Finally, Nemesios justifies the irrationality of animals empirically with the fact that their behaviour is stereotypical, whereas human behaviour shows enormous variance. We have already met this Stoic argument, which is used above all by Seneca, several times: "But that these animals do not act rationally is clear from this: every single animal of the same species does the same things similarly; the activities of the animals in the herd differ only in such a way that one animal does more, the other less; but the whole species of animals moves only according to a single natural impulse (κατὰ μίαν ὁρμὴν). [...] This is not true in the case of man. There are, after all, innumerable kinds of human activity (μυρίαι γὰρ ὁδοὶ τῶν ἀνθρωπίνων πράξεων). Something independent and voluntary is, after all, reason (ἐλεύθερον γάρ τι καὶ αὐτεξούσιον τὸ λογικόν). Therefore, all men do not perform one and the same activity, as is the case with every single species of the reasonless living beings. These alone move by nature (φύσει γὰρ μόνῃ). The natural movements, on the other hand, are similar in all of them (ὁμοίως παρὰ πᾶσίν). The operations of reason take place differently in different men; they are not necessarily the same in all men." (Nemesius of Emesa, De natura hominis 2; cf. Urs Dierauer 1977, 216).

Nevertheless, Nemesios sees animals as well as human beings as recipients of divine providence: "All things depend on divine will, and from there they derive their lasting existence and well-being. Even the basis of atoms and multiplied things is capable of receiving providence. This is clearly seen in the animals, which are guided by orders and leading beings; there are many kinds of these animals. For example, bees, ants and most animals that gather in flocks are placed under some leaders, whom they follow obediently. This can be seen in particular if one looks at the state constitution of humans. The state constitution is obviously receptive to the concerns and administrative measures of its legislators and its leaders. If the constitution is receptive to these acts, why should it not be receptive to the providence of the Creator?" (Nemesius of Emesa, De natura hominis 43).

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At the end of his treatise on man, Nemesios thus returns to the view of all creation. Here he introduces an aspect that has always fascinated ancient reflection: that animals also form states. Animals form "animal worlds" or "quasi-cities" (David Lloyd Dusenbury 2021, xviii), each with their own rules and power relations. The human poleis are inserted into the zoopoleis. They gradually surpass them in their enormous receptivity to laws but are constructed according to analogous principles. And equally analogously, both are open to divine providence, which is not confined to man alone. What is special about man is that he is the regent of the cosmopolis and, as it were, exercises "global governance" in the polis of creation (David Lloyd Dusenbury 2021a, 57–58).

All in all, Nemesios is probably the best example of the early Christian authors who makes the greatest intellectual (and in his case: purely philosophical!) effort to overcome anthropocentrism—and yet falls short of that goal. He emphasises the organic kinship of all creatures and the interrelatedness of all created things. He reflects intensely on the continuum between complete lack of reason and maximum endowment with reason and struggles to find concepts that can grant animals something like reason. The Stoic form of anthropocentrism, that everything is created for the benefit of man, is not important to him. Rather, his teleology boils down to the unity of the cosmos and thus has holistic echoes. And yet he ultimately remains trapped in both anthropocentrism and the aloga thesis. One suspects how deeply they must have been anchored in the society of the time that he does not questions them fundamentally anywhere.

5.16 Pseudo-Athenagoras

Athenagoras of Athens was an early Christian apologist of the second half of the 2nd century. However, the work "De resurrectione mortuorum", which was published under his name, did not come from his pen, but was written much later under a pseudonym. This is largely undisputed in patristic research. However, the dating of this work generates discussions that flared up again only a few years ago.

Indeed, from the structure and argumentation of the treatise, Nikolai Kiel concludes that De resurrectione "responds directly to Celsus' objections concerning the resurrection" (Nikolai Kiel 2016, 177). In his widespread refutation of the equally widespread food-chain argument (resurrection from the dead is impossible because animals ate parts of the

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human body), Kiel assumes a dependence in this respect on Galen (Nikolai Kiel 2016, 371 and 388) and, like Jacques Schwartz (1914–1992 Strasbourg) and Jean-Marie Vermander (1978, 125–134) before him, concludes that it originated in the first half of the 3rd century (Nikolai Kiel 2016, 390).

Horacio E. Lona (2017, 184–188), on the other hand, considers a much later point in time to be plausible: firstly, the Alethes logos of Kelsos was rather unknown in Athens, but the arguments he put forward in it were, since they were widespread. Secondly, the proximity between Origen and De resurrectione claimed by Kiel does not exist on closer analysis. And thirdly—quite decisively—the Christian reception of Galen only began at the end of the 4th century with Nemesios of Emesa. This is therefore the terminus post quem and justifies the plea for the work being dated later (Horacio E. Lona 2017, 188). As a non-patristician, I do not dare to make my own judgement on this question. However, Lona's arguments seem very plausible to me, which is why I agree with his dating and place "De ressurectione" directly after Nemesios of Emesa.

De resurrectione, like De natura hominis by Nemesios, is a purely philosophical treatise. The Bible does not appear in it, not even in a single quotation. Rather, the anonymous author attempts to prove that resurrection from the dead is necessary. The exposition is of tremendous clarity and possesses an almost scholastic degree of systematisation. At the same time, it represents a clearly Stoic ontology and teleology, while the concrete telos is described and positioned in demarcation from Stoa and Epicurus.

De resurrectione is, as I said, extraordinarily systematic. In chapters 1 to 10, it is first demonstrated in the sense of a *via negativa* that the resurrection of human beings firstly does not contradict human nature, secondly is not impossible for God and thirdly is not unjust towards any group of individuals. The author provides evidence of the first thesis in chapters 5 to 7, where he argues for the belief, bizarre in today's perception, that human flesh, unlike animal flesh, cannot be assimilated after being eaten and concludes that "the human species seems to be biologically engineered for resurrection in a way that animals are not" (Janet E. Spittler 2010, 360).

In his proof of the third thesis, non-human creatures come into play: "The unjust (τὸ ἄδικον) would come into consideration in the resurrection question either with regard to the resurrected one himself or to some other besides him. That no being standing outside humanity and belonging to the world would thereby suffer injustice is clear from the outset. The purely spiritual natures (νοηταὶ φύσεις) will hardly be wronged by the resurrec-

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tion of men; for the resurrection of men brings them neither limitation of their existence nor harm nor dishonour. But neither will any injustice be done by it to the reasonless or to inanimate nature (οὐδὲ τῶν ἀλόγων ἡ φύσις οὐδὲ τῶν ἀψύχων), for the reasonless will no longer exist after the resurrection, and against a non-being there is no wrong (περὶ δὲ τὸ μὴ ὂν οὐδὲν ἄδικον); supposing, however, that they continued forever, even then no wrong would be done to them by the renewal of the bodies of men; for if no injustice is done to them now, in that they must submit (ὑπείκοντα) to human nature and the needs of those who depend on them, and are subjugated and many times enslaved (ὑπό τε ζυγὸν ἠγμένα καὶ δουλείαν παντοίαν), much less will this be the case when men have become immortal and needless of their services, so that they will then be freed from all bondage (ἐλευθερωθέντα δὲ πάσης δουλείας). Nor, if they could speak, would they certainly accuse the Creator (δημιουργὸς), as having degraded them below men against justice, since He had not granted them the same resurrection as them; for a just man does not determine unequal nature to the same end (Ὧν γὰρ ἡ φύσις οὐκ ἴση, τούτοις οὐδὲ τὸ τέλος ἴσον ὁ δίκαιος ἐπιμετρεῖ); moreover, beings who lack the concept of justice cannot make the accusation of injustice[28]. Nor, further, can it be said that injustice is manifest in regard to the resurrected man himself..." (Athenagoras, De Resurrectione 10).

Strictly systematically, the treatise considers all possible scenarios: The resurrection could be unjust to purely spiritual beings, to other human beings or to non-human living beings. It is this last case that interests us. The anonymous author considers two possibilities: Either, which he obviously assumes himself, non-human living beings no longer exist, and against non-existent things by definition there is no injustice, or, what he considers factually not given but conceivable in principle, non-human living beings will be resurrected. Then they will be liberated because humans will have no more needs and servitude will thus be ended—a perceptive thought which clearly contrasts Pseudo-Athenagoras with Irenaeus of Lyons, who also assumes a hierarchy of service in eternity (chapter 5.3). In this second case, the non-human living beings also could not complain if their resurrection was different from that of humans, because it is part of the principles of justice that unequal things must be treated unequally.

28 I will not go into this aspect here. See especially Janet E. Spittler 2010, 359: "In De resurrectione, Athenagoras introduces one of the most important aspects of the Stoic assessment of animals, that is, the impossibility of doing injustice to animals."

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After the resurrection from the dead has thus proved to be impossible per viam negativam, Pseudo-Athenagoras treads the *via positiva* in chapters 11 to 24: "It is now a question of proving the doctrine of resurrection to be true directly from the cause according to which and from which the first man came into being" (Peudo-Athenagoras, De Resurrectione 11). Thus, the author does not want to make the resurrection plausible on the basis of a revelation, but to prove it as necessary from a philosophical point of view. The following very long quotation describes his again extraordinarily systematic considerations:

"We get the reason for creation (ὁ ἀπὸ τῆς αἰτίας λόγος) when we ask ourselves whether man was created accidentally and purposelessly or for a specific purpose (πότερον ἁπλῶς καὶ μάτην γέγονεν ἄνθρωπος ἤ τινος ἕνεκεν); and if for a definite purpose, he is then there to live for himself after his creation, and to continue in the nature created for him, or because some other being is in need of him (διὰ χρείαν τινός); but if he was created with a view to a need, is it then the Creator (τοῦ ποιήσαντος), or some other being who is near to him and enjoys high care. What we can already find on more general consideration is the fact that everyone of understanding, everyone who is moved to action by sound judgement, does nothing of what he deliberately sets in motion purposelessly, but either to satisfy a need of his own, or to benefit another being for whom he is concerned, or because of the work itself, namely, if a natural trait and love (ὁλκῇ τινι φυσικῇ καὶ στοργῇ) moves him to its production. Thus, man (let an example explain the matter) builds a house because he himself needs it; but he also builds shelters for cattle, camels or for the other living creatures that he needs (τοῖς ἄλλοις ζώοις, ὧν ἐστιν ἐνδεής) which are suitable for each of these animals; judging by sight, he does not do this for his own use, but he does so, considering the end purpose (οὐκ ἰδίας ἕνεκεν χρήσεως κατὰ τὸ φαινόμενον, ἀλλὰ κατὰ μὲν τὸ τέλος); first he does it out of care (ἐπιμέλεια) for his fosterlings. [...] Thus do men. But God also did not create man without a purpose, for he is wise; but no work of wisdom lacks a purpose (οὐδὲν σοφίας ἔργον μάταιον). Nor did He create him because He himself was in need of him; for He is in need of nothing at all; but for a being who is wholly without need, none of His works can serve for his own need. But neither did He make man for the sake of another creature. For no rational being capable of judgement, be it a higher or a lower one, was or is brought into existence in order to serve another for use, but in order, once it exists, to have its own life and continuance (Οὐδὲν γὰρ τῶν λόγῳ καὶ κρίσει χρωμένων οὔτε τῶν μειζόνων οὔτε τῶν

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καταδεστέρων γέγονεν ἢ γίνεται πρὸς ἑτέρου χρείαν, ἀλλὰ διὰ τὴν ἰδίαν αὐτῶν τῶν γενομένων ζωήν τε καὶ διαμονήν). Nor can reason attribute the origin of man to any need; for immortal beings are without need, and in no way require any human aid for their existence; whereas beings without reason must, according to the natural course of things, allow themselves to be governed, and render to man the services appropriate to their nature, while they themselves are incapable of availing themselves of man; for right it was and is not, to place ruling and leading in the service of a lesser being, or to subordinate the reasonable to the reasonless (τὸ ἄρχον καὶ ἡγεμονοῦν ὑπάγειν εἰς χρῆσιν τοῖς ἐλάττοσιν, ἢ τὸ λογικὸν ὑποτάττειν ἀλόγοις), which after all is unfit for ruling. If, then, man is not created without a reason or purpose (for no divine work is without a purpose), and if, further, his origin is due neither to a need of the Creator Himself nor to a need of another being created by God, it is clear that, in the first and more general respect, God created man because He is God and because His goodness and wisdom shine forth from the work of creation in general. But if we look at the matter more from the point of view of the created human beings, then it is because He wants them to live, and not a life that is only kindled for a short time but is then extinguished completely. Of course, God has granted a short life to the reptiles, to the air and water animals, and in general to everything without reason, whereas He bestowed upon humans, who have the Creator in them (ἐν ἑαυτοῖς ἀγαλματοφοροῦσι τὸν ποιητήν) and are endowed with reason and discerning understanding (νοῦν τε συνεπιφερομένοις καὶ λογικῆς κρίσεως μεμοιραμένοις), eternal perpetuity. For their destiny is, in the knowledge of their Creator and of His power and wisdom, and in the fulfilment of the law and right, to live throughout eternity without all suffering in those goods by which they also already gave firmness and support to their preceding life, although they dwelt in mortal and earthly bodies. Everything that has come into being for the sake of another, as soon as that for which it came into being ceases, must also cease to be..." (Pseudo-Athenagoras, De Resurrectione 12).

The unknown author first outlines the idea of a "realm of purposes", as we know it in modern times, especially from Immanuel Kant: Nothing is purposeless, everything has its purpose—especially in terms of logically linking the purposes with each other towards the great overall goal, the telos. Pseudo-Athenagoras argues that one must not look too closely at the immediate purpose of an action, but rather at the comprehensive telos towards which it is designed. Only then does one understand the meaning of that action. This, the author emphasises, already applies interpersonally,

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for example when building a house or stable, but even more so when asking about the reason for the creation of the world and of man and thus about the purpose of divine action. The Creator has a reasonable, recognisable plan with his Creation.

However, the divine plan follows two different forms of logic of its own, depending on whether one looks at it from God's perspective or from man's perspective—this idea could also come directly from Kant. From God's point of view, it is clear that He has no needs. So He cannot have created man for the satisfaction of His own needs, but only "because He is God" and because He wants to show His goodness and wisdom. From His point of view, creation happens solely out of freedom and love.

Things are different, according to Pseudo-Athenagoras, "from the point of view of created human beings": Man has the need to live, to acquire knowledge of God and to do good. This need is permanent, and therefore it can only be meaningful if it can also find permanent fulfilment. Therefore, man must necessarily (!) be destined for eternal life, for otherwise his need would not be purposeful, and then the Creator would be proven not to be rational. But that cannot be.

Of course, the argument of pseudo-Athenagoras only works on the premise that the realm of ends actually runs towards a single great and rational telos. If one doubts this premise, and many would do so today, then the argument collapses like a house of cards. What is more relevant to our question, however, is the collateral damage done to non-human creatures: Animals and plants have a need to live, but no need to know eternal life and thus no need to live forever. In accordance with the principle of parsimony, it would therefore not be rational for them to be given eternal life if they do not strive for it at all. No, they exist solely for the sake of man, who, as a rational being, possesses an end in itself and can use animals for his own purposes. However, as soon as man no longer needs non-human creatures (and this is the case in eternity), there is no longer any reason why they should continue to exist.

"If, therefore, the Creator of the world created man to have an understanding life and, having once beheld God's glory and the Creator's wisdom, to abide in the vision of these things forever, according to the intention of the Creator and the nature of man, then from the cause of origin arises the certainty of eternal continuance, and from this the certainty of resurrection, without which there could be no continuance of man. Thus, the resurrection, as is evident from what has been said, is clearly proved by

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the cause of origin and by the Creator's intention." (Pseudo-Athenagoras, De Resurrectione 13).

After Pseudo-Athenagoras has thus proven resurrection to be necessary for thought and thus, from his point of view, to exist, reflections follow on the continuity between earthly and heavenly life in the face of death and the decomposition of the body.

"If one believes in God as the Creator of this universe, then, unless one wishes to be unfaithful to one's own principles, one must conclude from His wisdom and justice, that He watches and cares for all created things (τῇ τούτου σοφίᾳ καὶ δικαιοσύνῃ τὴν τῶν γενομένων ἁπάντων ἀνατιθέναι φυλακήν τε καὶ πρόνοιαν); on the basis of this knowledge, one must then be convinced that nothing of earthly and heavenly things is left without supervision (ἀνεπιτρόπευτος) and without care (ἀπρονόητος), and that the attention of the Creator extends to everything in the same way, to the invisible and the visible, to the small and the greater. For both the totality of creatures needs the providence (πρόνοια) of the Creator and each individual according to its nature and purpose (καθ ὃ πέφυκε καὶ πρὸς ὃ πέφυκεν). It would, however, be useless zeal to now enumerate all the individual species, or to enumerate what is conducive to each form of nature; we must speak only of man here; for he is the object of our enquiry." (Pseudo-Athenagoras, De Resurrectione 18).

According to the author, God's care and providence are fundamental for all living beings. However, he qualifies, to each "according to its purpose", literally "according to what it has become". From the animals' point of view, this could be interpreted as rather cynical, for since the reasonless are Stoically conceived as purposes for others, the Creator's concern is ultimately only that animals (and plants) fulfil their purpose for man. Once they have done their duty, they can go. The cool rationality of a strictly philosophical argument does not allow for any mitigation by positive emotions at this point, which theological arguments would offer.

But why is there a need for a Last Judgement? Pseudo-Athenagoras sees such a judgement as necessary because otherwise it would be better to live completely in pleasure like the animals: "Is it not much safer to assume that the Creator guides and directs His works, looks at everything that somehow exists or becomes and holds judgement over works and thoughts? For if there were no judgement somewhere on the works of men, they would have nothing in advance of the reasonless; indeed, they would be even more unhappy than the latter, since they must dominate their passions and strive for piety, justice and other virtues; the manner of life of tame and wild beasts

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would then be best (ὁ δὲ κτηνώδης βίος καὶ θηριώδης ἄριστος); virtue would be unreasonable (ἀρετὴ δὲ ἀνόητος), the threat of punishment flat ridicule. Unrestricted enjoyment would be the highest of goods (Τὸ δὲ πᾶσαν θεραπεύειν ἡδονὴν ἀγαθὸν τὸ μέγιστον)..." (Pseudo-Athenagoras, De Resurrectione 19).

From all this, the author concludes that there must be judgement, not in this earthly life and also not immediately after death, when the soul and body are separated, but in eternity, where the whole human being is reunited and can be judged as a whole. However, this argumentation, which is again strongly reminiscent of Immanuel Kant, is considerably flawed, for one can certainly ask whether it would not be meaningful and fulfilling to live morally even without judgement. And anyway: is a virtuous life only a means to the end of attaining eternal bliss? Or does virtue not mean living virtuously just (!) because one has recognised it as right?

Now, of course, Pseudo-Athenagoras is in very concrete conflict with his time. He wants to distance himself equally from the two popular philosophies, Stoicism and Epicureanism, and give priority to the Christian message for philosophical reasons. The ideal of the Stoics is dispassion, that of the Epicureans spiritual pleasure. The author contrasts both with the Christian idea of eternal bliss, for plants have already received dispassion from the Creator and animals have received natural pleasure. In the one case, plants would be better off than humans, in the other, animals. Belief in the Last Judgement and eternal life therefore proves to be the golden third way, which deserves preference over the other two:

"Surely it would not be right to assume that beings who act according to immanent moral and rational laws, and therefore also lead an intelligible and moral life, have no higher aim than those creatures who lack logical discernment (ἐπεὶ μηδὲ θεμιτὸν ταὐτὸν ὑποθέσθαι τέλος τῶν τε λογικῆς κρίσεως ἀμοιρούντων καὶ τῶν κατὰ τὸν ἔμφυτον νόμον καὶ λόγον ἐνεργούντων, ἔμφρονί τε ζωῇ καὶ δίκῃ χρωμένων). Thus, painlessness (τὸ ἄλυπον) should not be destined as the final goal for human beings; this, after all, would also come to the completely insentient beings. But neither can the final aim of men lie in the enjoyment of that which nourishes and delights the body, and in an abundance of sensual pleasures (πλῆθος ἡδονῶν); otherwise the life of cattle (κτῆνος) would necessarily have precedence, and the virtuous life would be purposeless; such may be a suitable final goal for cattle, but not for men who have an immortal soul and are capable of logical discernment (οὐκ ἀνθρώπων ἀθανάτῳ ψυχῇ καὶ λογικῇ κρίσει χρωμένων)." (Pseudo-Athenagoras, De Resurrectione 24).

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The unknown author concludes: "The final goal of an intelligent life and logical discernment may be seen, without going wrong, in the fact that man lives inseparably and eternally together with that for which the natural intellect is primarily and first of all given to him, and that he feels unceasing delight in the contemplation of the Giver and His counsels. Admittedly, most people will not reach this high goal because they attach themselves to the things of this world with too much passion and vehemence. But the great number of those who stray from their goal cannot overturn their common destiny. Meanwhile, a special judgement takes place on this, and each individual receives reward or punishment in due measure for the good or evil he has done in life." (Pseudo-Athenagoras, De Resurrectione 25).

Pseudo-Athenagoras is undoubtedly the best example of where consistent Christian anthropocentrism leads. If one shares the basic assumptions of a divine, completely rationalised plan of creation on the one hand and the exclusive endowment of reason in humans on the other, everything else follows quite naturally: Non-human creatures are only created for the sake of humans, and as soon as they have fulfilled their task for them, they can leave. As astute as the unknown author's argumentations are and as perfectly systematised his train of thought is, animals and plants are dispensed with without the slightest remorse. Not the slightest joy about their existence, not the slightest compassion for their sorrows, not the smallest sign of attachment and affection is visible. Analogously, the God of Pseudo-Athenagoras is a cold and rationally calculating God down to the last detail. There is nothing to be seen in him of the Christian image of God, overflowing with love that is given away free of charge. Anyone who wants to understand anthropocentrism will find here the best illustrative material both for its immanently brilliant consistency and for its frighteningly one-sided adequacy in relation to the reality of creation.

5.17 Jerome

Sophronius Eusebius Hieronymus was born in Stridon in the Roman province of Dalmatia in 347. As child of wealthy Christian parents, he went to Rome to study and was also baptised there. After stays in Trier and Aquileia, he travelled to Syria around 373, where he lived for some time as a hermit. In Antioch he learned Greek and Hebrew and was ordained a priest around 379. He then went to Constantinople and again to Rome from 382 to 384. When a young widow, whom he was accompanying

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spiritually, fasted herself to death, Jerome fled Rome in 385 to embark on a pilgrimage to the biblical sites together with the widow Paula and her daughter Eustochium. In 386 they settled in Bethlehem and used Paula's inheritance to found several monasteries and a pilgrims' hospice. Jerome died there in 420.

Jerome left behind a rich literary oeuvre. He is the author of the Vulgate, which was the authoritative Latin translation of the Bible for a long time. It is difficult to say how much he translated from Hebrew and how much he relied on the Greek Septuagint—one suspects the latter. In addition, he wrote other translations, biographies of great personalities, commentaries on the prophetic books, the Gospels and Paul's letters, and an extensive collection of letters.

Jerome was, as can be seen from the list of his works, a biblical commentator. He does not write systematic theological or philosophical treatises. And since he does not interpret the Book of Genesis or the other books of the Torah, the opportunities for reconstructing his theology of creation and animals, if he has one, are slim. Therefore, we will only deal with two rather minor topics: his interpretation of the peace of creation in the Book of Isaiah and his exhortations to abstain from eating meat.

Jerome begins his *interpretation of Is 11:6–8* by stating that Jewish and "Judaising" Christian interpreters often interpret the passage literally and refer to the Second Coming of Christ in such a way "that in the clarity of Christ [...] all wild beasts will return to tameness and, having laid aside their former wildness, wolf and lamb will feed together" (Jerome, Commentarium in Isaiam prophetam 4 ad Is 11,6ss). But such interpretations would have to face two questions: Firstly, whether everything is really to be understood literally and not rather spiritually, and secondly, whether the literal interpretation is worthy of God's majesty, since it would be very much like a fictional story. There is no such perfection of the world with peace between men and animals, but only the perfection of man in virtue. "Jerome is aware that he is paying homage here to a philosophical maxim of the Stoics, but at first he refers unconvincingly to the Psalmist for its correctness, only to seek refuge in philosophy [...] Only now does he also refer to the Stoics, whom he has had in mind all along." (Vincent Buchheit 1990, 33).

It is thus clear to Jerome that the "Judaising" Christians are succumbing to a serious delusion. In reality, he says, Isaiah's vision in spiritual allegorical interpretation is an image for the people in the Church: the persecutor of Christians Paul as a lion and the peace-loving Hananias as a lamb would

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feed together in the Church of Christ, "so that what Noah's ark once represented in the Flood, now the Church represents in the world (ut quod Arca in diluvio, hoc Ecclesia praestet in mundo)" (Jerome, Commentarium in Isaiam prophetam 4 ad Is 11,6ss). Assuming that, the ethical message of the passage is not that the "ox" becomes aggressive, but that the "lion" becomes tame: "non bos vertatur in rabiem, sed leo mutetur in mansuetudinem." (Jerome, Commentarium in Isaiam prophetam 18 ad Is 65,25s). Or put a little differently, it is "not that simplicity passes into ferocity, but that ferocity learns simplicity (non ut simplicitas in feritatem transeat, sed ut feritas discat simplicitatem)" (Jerome, Epistula 106, 1).

While Irenaeus of Lyons (chapter 5.3) emphasises the literal interpretation of Isaiahan animal peace, Jerome, like most of the Church Fathers before him, clearly breaks away from this tradition with reference to Stoic arguments. However, one can only understand this in his case if one knows the background of the "Judaising" Christians against whom Jerome takes a stand. These groups obviously increasingly advocate messianic chiliasm, i.e. they assume a period of exactly one thousand years until the dawn of the final messianic kingdom of Christ—and it is against these groups that Jerome wants to position himself (Vinzenz Buchheit 1990, 31). The Stoic exclusion of non-human creatures from eternity is thus used as a means to invalidate the highly emotional messages of the chiliasts. The collateral damage is to animals and plants.

In another respect, however, Jerome proves to be more "animal-friendly": with reference to the paradise in Gen 1, in which all living creatures eat a purely vegetable diet, he, like all early monasticism, resolutely propagates the belief in a vegetarian lifestyle or at least extensive abstinence from meat (cf. on this Michael Rosenberger 2014, 156–157 and 330 as well as 2016, 64–65). Paradoxically, this impulse is much more Greek and much less biblical than one would like to think: While the Jews fast in a restrained and very varied manner (Veronika E. Grimm 1996, 13–31), numerous philosophers of Greek and Roman antiquity advocate relatively strict and radical fasting due to their decided hostility towards the body (Veronika E. Grimm 1996, 32–56). The early Christians, like their mother religion and like Jesus of Nazareth, initially fasted relatively little (Veronika E. Grimm 1996, 57–84), but with the increasing social and state recognition of Christianity, this changed. Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, Origen and Eusebius paved the way step by step (Veronika E. Grimm 1996, 85–147); Jerome and Augustine made the breakthrough to a form of fasting that had "anorectic features" (Veronika E. Grimm 1996, 148–179).

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Early Christian monasticism in Syria and Egypt engaged in strict vegetarianism from the beginning. When not fasting, the monks ate only bread and salt (Apophtegmata Patrum 217; 226), i.e. dry food as opposed to fresh fruit, cooked vegetables and fatty meat, drank absolutely no wine (Apophtegmata Patrum 566; 593; 787; 974–975) and abstained almost entirely from oil (Apophtegmata Patrum 169). They regarded abstinence as a privileged means of overcoming bodily desires (Apophtegmata Patrum 318; 919). Their xerophagy (ξεροφαγία), the "eating of dry things", whose central features are abstinence from meat and wine, must be understood in the context of sexual morality: According to ancient thought, eating dry food promoted abstinence because eating moist fruit or cooked vegetables stimulates the production of sexual bodily fluids and eating meat makes one feel sexually aroused. The three young men in the royal court of Nebuchadnezzar in Babylon who practise xerophagy (Dan 1:4–16) and do not burn in the fiery furnace (in allegorical patristic interpretation in sexual temptation) serve as a shining biblical example of this (Dan 3; cf. John Cassian, Conversations with the Fathers 12, 11).

On the whole, however, early Christianity remained true to its roots and adopted the restraint of Jesus and Judaism towards overly strict abstinence laws. Above all, it cautioned against turning fasting and xerophagy into an ideology within which every pleasure in eating and drinking is demonised.

The letter from Jerome to the young Roman widow Furia, written around 395 (Jerome, Epistula 54), is decisive for the widespread dissemination of the idea of combining sexual and culinary abstinence. Furia had written a letter to Jerome, whom she did not know personally, asking how she could best realise her intention of remaining a widow and not marrying a second time. In his reply, Jerome first urges her to dress simply and live modestly. Then he turns to food: For all the esteem in which food is held as a gift from God (1 Tim 4:3–4), it nevertheless incited young people to feel sexual desire and was worse than Etna, Vulcano, Vesuvius and Olympus (Jerome, Epistula 54, 9). Galen had already written this in his book on the protection of health.

Jerome, therefore, citing two biblical passages already known to us, warns against "hot" foods that stir up sexual desire: "When eating, avoid all hot foods! I am thinking here not only of meat, about which the vessel of election [meaning Paul, MR] expresses itself in the following words: 'It is recommended not to drink wine and not to eat meat' (Rom 14:21). […] The ardour of the body must be counteracted with food that does not irritate. Daniel and the three young men also fed on vegetables (Dan 1:4–16)."

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(Jerome, Epistula 54, 10). On the one hand, the popular reference to the three disciples in the fiery furnace appears here; on the other hand, Rom 14:21 is quoted in abbreviated form, as in Clement of Alexandria (chapter 5.4), and a general recommendation to abstain from meat is interpreted from the Pauline admonition to abstain from non-kosher meat in consideration of the weak.

In conclusion, Jerome recommends a strict diet to the young widow: culinary abstinence promotes sexual continence. It is good preparation for contemplating Scripture, which in turn is highly recommended (Jerome, Epistula 54, 11). Of course, the connection between sexual and culinary pleasure perceived by Greek philosophy and medicine has a kernel of truth, but both are evaluated negatively by Jerome in a way that contradicts the biblical theology of creation.

The *treatise Adversus Iovinianum* is directed against Iovinian, a monk called "Epicurus of the Christians" (Jerome, Adversus Iovinianum 1, 1). Jerome did not know him personally, but some of Iovinian's writings were brought to him, to which he replied. He took up individual examples of Iovinian's theses without much system and tried to refute them. In Adversus Iovinianum 1, 18 he reflects on the question of the permissibility of eating meat. In doing so, he first confirms that God gave humans permission to eat meat in the "second blessing" after the great Flood (Gen 9), which he had not given in the "first blessing" in Paradise (Gen 1). However, according to Jerome, God gives this permission solely "because of our hardness of heart (propter duritiam cordis nostri)". However, the corresponding regulations (such as the Old Testament permission to divorce or the commandment of circumcision) only apply until the coming of Christ: "But after Christ has come at the end of time, he will turn the omega back to the alpha [...] and we shall eat no flesh." (Jerome, Adversus Iovinianum 1, 18). Again, Jerome appeals to the abbreviated version of Rom 14:21 to also support his thesis biblically.

In Adversus Iovinianum 2, 5–17, Jerome addresses the question in more detail. He first recapitulates Iovinian's thesis, which illustrates his classical Stoic anthropocentrism: "Everything was created to serve mortals. And as man, the rational animal (animal rationale), as it were the inhabitant and possessor of the world (quasi quidam habitator et possessor mundi), is subject to God and worships his creator, so all animals were created either for the food of men, or for clothing, or for ploughing the earth, or for transporting the fruits, or for man himself." (Jerome, Adversus Iovinianum 2, 5). He then has Iovinian quote Psalm 8:5–6, from whose hierarchical

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subordination of animals to humans Iovinian interprets the human authorization to freely use animals (which the text does not give!). "Let it be, says he [Iovinian], the ox prepared for ploughing, for sitting the horse, the dog for helping, the goats for milk, the sheep for wool. And what is the use of swine, besides eating the flesh?" (Jerome, Adversus Iovinianum 2, 5). And after a long enumeration of animals, he concludes, "If they are not eaten, all these were created in vain by God" (Jerome, Adversus Iovinianum 2, 5). Finally, he proves this biblically by reading Rom 14:20 in exactly the opposite sense as Jerome and concludes from this that, for Christians, nothing is unclean and therefore, in principle, everything can be eaten (which comes much closer to the Pauline intention in this text than Jerome's reading). Finally, Iovinian also cites 1 Tim 4:4–5: "Everything that God has created is good, and nothing is reprehensible if it is enjoyed with thanksgiving". And he stresses that Jesus was, after all, called a "glutton and a drunkard" (Lk 7:34; Mt 11:19), and that was a good thing.

Jerome's reply, like Iovinian's exposition, begins with philosophical considerations: "I testify that we do not follow the dogma of Empedocles and Pythagoras, who believed not to be able to eat everything that moves and lives because of the μετεμψύχωσις [in the Latin text, the Greek word for the transmigration of souls is used here, MR], and to hold guilty of the same crime those who cut down a fir or an oak, who are their murderers and poisoners, but that we worship our Creator, who made all things for our use. And as the ox is prepared for ploughing, the horse for sitting, the dog for helping, the goats for milk, the sheep for wool, so are the swine and the deer and the goats and the hares, etc. But these are not immediately made for eating, but for other uses of men." (Jerome, Adversus Iovinianum 2, 5). Many animals have a medicinal use, and analogously there are many other uses of animals. Affirming their use does not mean affirming their consumption.

This answer is interesting insofar as Jerome does not reject the Stoic anthropocentrism of his opponent; on the contrary, he explicitly confirms it. And he also explains why: he firmly rejects the doctrine of the transmigration of souls of the Platonists and Pythagoreans—it is incompatible with the Christian message of the Resurrection. Moreover, the latter also regard the killing of plants as murder—a view from which Jerome clearly distances himself. The affirmation of Stoic teleology obviously seems to him the only way to accomplish this distancing. While the Stoics (and apparently also Iovinian) demonstratively express their anthropocentrism by eating plenty of meat, Jerome, however, does not want to draw this conclusion. For

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him, the use of animals leaves much more room for manoeuvre than just consumption. The consumption of meat does not necessarily follow from anthropocentrism.

As in Iovinian's thesis, Jerome's answer cites the biblical texts second. First, Jerome again emphasises that man lived a vegetarian lifestyle in paradise: "As long as he [Adam] fasted, he was in paradise; he ate and was cast out." (Jerome, Adversus Iovinianum 2, 15). Only after the great Flood did "He [God], acknowledging man's most eager throat, give them permission to eat meat" (Jerome, Adversus Iovinianum 2, 15). Finally, Jerome cites Ex 16:3 and Num 31:4–5, where the Israelites crave the fleshpots of Egypt during their wanderings in the desert: "Despising the food of angels, they craved the flesh of Egypt." (Jerome, Adversus Iovinianum 2, 15). From all this he concludes that a vegetarian diet, though not absolutely obligatory, is strongly advised: "As we prefer virginity to marriage, the same applies to satiety and meat fasting and spirituality." (Jerome, Adversus Iovinianum 2, 17).

Summarising Jerome's positions, we see that the first thing that stands out is a considerable difference in content and language between the textbook against Iovinian and the letters. In his letters (and this can also be said beyond the one examined here), Jerome tends towards great radicalism. At times, it is almost obsessive how he describes and castigates sexual and culinary temptations. There is little sign of inner freedom and serenity. One foresees why Jerome had many bitter enemies among his contemporaries.

The treatise against Iovinian, on the other hand, is much more sober, factual and objective, which makes it easier to understand that and why Jerome adheres to Stoic anthropocentrism—he definitely wants to exclude the doctrine of the transmigration of souls. Secondly, it reveals a clever idea that is encountered for the very first time: Anthropocentrism does not automatically mean slaughtering animals and eating meat. Animal use can also be thought of in a more diverse way. Finally, however, it becomes apparent, especially in comparison with Basil of Caesarea (chapter 5.11), that Jerome has no interest in animals as such. He interprets the account of animal peace in Is 11 allegorically—for him, animals have no place in heaven. And his advocacy of renouncing meat has nothing, absolutely nothing to do with real animals. It is solely about man, who should resist the temptations of the world. Basil describes the same idea quite differently. He affirms the world and earthly realities wholeheartedly, but at the same time has great empathy for non-human creatures. His plea for the renunciation of meat

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has the same biblical references in common with Jerome's but is structured quite differently in terms of its systematic considerations.

5.18 Augustine of Hippo

We come to the last author in our passage through early church and theological history. Aurelius Augustinus was born in 354 in the North African town of Tagaste (today Souk Ahras/ Algeria). His father Patricius was a pagan municipal official and was baptised only shortly before his death, while his mother Monnica was Christian. From 371 Augustine studied rhetoric in Carthage and lived in a non-marital partnership. His partner, whose name he never mentions, gave birth to their son Adeodatus in 372. From 373 Augustine taught rhetoric in various places. At this time, Manichaeism was spreading in North Africa, a still very young religion founded in Babylon in the 3rd century, which thinks and lives in a radically dualistic way which despises the body. From 373 to 382, Augustine belonged to this world religion, whose last activities can still be traced in China in the 17th century. Traces of his Manichaean period can be found in Augustine's thinking even after his conversion to Christianity.

In 383, Augustine moved to Rome with his wife and son, and in 384 to Milan, then the imperial residence. His widowed mother Monnica followed him there in 385, persuaded him to separate from his "unworthy" companion and arranged a suitable engagement. Under her influence, he approached the Christian religion. In 386 he had his decisive conversion experience. He decided to live a celibate life and, together with his son, was baptised by Bishop Ambrose of Milan on the Easter Vigil in 387 (Chapter 5.13). On the way back to Africa, his mother died in the Roman port of Ostia before they embarked. In 391, Augustine founded a monastery in Hippo Regius (today Annaba/Algeria), became a priest and in 396 Bishop of the city. He held this office until his death in 430, during the siege of the city by the Vandals.

Augustine created an extensive body of systematic theological writings, biblical commentaries and sermons that have had a broad and lasting history of reception. Creation and non-human creatures do not play a main role in it but are nevertheless abundantly present. In this context, Augustine often adopts his perception of animals from his great model Ambrose of Milan. Since he understood little Greek, the Ambrosian Hexaemeron, written in Latin, is particularly significant for him, which in turn is a translation

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of the Greek prototype of Basil of Caesarea (chapter 5.11) into the western half of the Empire. Augustine also has Latin translations of other Greek texts (Matthias Baltes/Dieter Lau 1994, 362), so the thoughts of Eastern theology are not completely foreign to him.

In terms of *terminology,* Augustine rarely calls animals animalia, but also hardly ever irrationalia. Rather, he uses the specified terms for domesticated (pecus) and wild (belva, bestia) animals (Gillian Clark 1998, 68). He thus favours neither the scientifically neutral term animalia nor the philosophically pejorative term irrationalia, but rather orients himself towards designations from the real world.

5.18.1 First approach to determining the differences between humans and animals

Nevertheless, Augustine very naturally adopts the *hierarchy of being* that was recognised in his time: Immortal rational beings (angels) are above mortal rational beings (human beings), the latter above non-rational but sentient living beings (animals), the latter in turn above non-sentient but striving living beings (plants), and the latter finally above inanimate matter (Augustine, De civitate Dei 7, 3; 9, 13; 11, 16; 12, 22; Enarrationes in Psalmos 144, 13; cf. Agnethe Siquans 2016, 68). In two places, Augustine even devotes himself specifically to the question of what evidence there is of humans being superior to animals, and answers with the classic reference to animals being tamed by humans, but not vice versa humans by animals (similarly also Augustine, De diversis quaestionibus 13; De libero arbitrio 1, 7, 16). In doing so, he does not find it necessary to justify why reason is the decisive measure of rank and why he denies it to animals (Gillian Clark 1998, 68). For him and his addressees, this is not a question at all.

The *aloga thesis* is also found quite frequently elsewhere in his works (e.g., Augustine, De ordine 2, 11, 31; De libero arbitrio 1, 53; see on this Gillian Clark 1998, 69). Mostly they are simple statements like this: "For even the souls of wild animals live, but understand nothing (vivunt, sed non intelligunt)." (Augustine, De trinitate 10, 4, 6). Occasionally, however, a longer and more nuanced justification is given: "I build a house [...] But in this I am no better than a swallow or a little bee, for the earlier one also builds its nest and the later one its combs artfully. But I am better than them because I am a rational animal (his melior, quia rationale animal sum). But if it is reason that observes proportions, are the proportions

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less suitable and consistent in what the birds build? From the bottom of my heart: they are perfectly consistent. For I am not better in making the proportions of numbers, but in knowing the numbers (Non ergo numerosa faciendo, sed numeros cognoscendo melior sum). What then? Can those work with numerical relations without knowing them? They can indeed. How are they taught to do so? Just as we too adapt the movements of the tongue to the teeth and the palate so that letters and words come out of the mouth, and do not think about with which movement of the mouth we must do this. What good singer, even if musically inexperienced, does not retain both the rhythm and the melody in his memory by natural sense itself (ipso sensu naturali) when singing? Can anything be better regulated? Even if he does not recognise anything, he still acts under the impression of nature (operante natura). So, when is he superior and preferable to the animals? When he knows what he is doing. Nothing else elevates me above the animal than that I am a rational animal (nihil aliud me pecori praeponit, nisi quod rationale animal sum)." (Augustine, De ordine 2, 19, 49).

In this passage, Augustine first of all makes clear the decisive difference between the "sensus naturalis" and the "cognoscere": in humans, too, many activities happen unconsciously, controlled by memory, which contains a sensory memory of the right action and recalls it without thinking. Only when humans begin to rationally analyse their actions, i.e., when they become aware of the rhythm and melody of the song as such, do they act differently from animals. The question remains open as to whether animals can actually not carry out such abstractions at all. We would have some doubts about that today. Conversely, however, the example makes it very clear that humans act rationally much less often than they imagine. Most human actions follow precisely the pattern that Augustine calls "operante natura".

Augustine, like many before him, sees the central physical distinguishing feature in humans' *upright walk*. The inner part, namely reason, is unique to humans. The exterior, however, i.e., the body and life, is common to humans and animals. The only physical difference between them is their upright gait. For humans, this is therefore a striking reminder of their moral obligation: "In all this, we differ from animals only in that we do not have a bent, but an upright body shape. This fact is a reminder given to us by our Creator that we should not, with our better part, that is, with our soul, be like the animals, from whom we differ in having an upright body." (Augustine, De trinitate 12, 1, 1).

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Augustine sees the human body as perfectly suited for the rational soul, which should strive upwards, towards heaven—a sign of the wonderful providence of the Creator: "Furthermore, how gloriously God's goodness, how gloriously the providence of the great Creator (Quanta dei bonitas, quanta providentia tanti creatoris apparet) is shown in our body, although it has nothing in advance of that of animals as far as dying is concerned and is weaker than that of many animals. The position of the sense organs and the distribution of the other limbs, in addition to the appearance, shape and posture of the whole body, already reveal that it is made for the service of a rational soul (ad ministerium animae rationalis factum). For man was not created bent down to the earth, as we see in the reasonless animals (animalia rationis expertia); rather, the form of his body raised up to heaven admonishes him to strive for the things that are above (Col 3:2)." (Augustine, De civitate Dei 22, 24; similarly, De Genesi ad litteram 6, 12, 22).

5.18.2 Appreciation of animal skills

Although Augustine, in some cases, actively justifies the aloga thesis, he recognises numerous remarkable abilities in animals. Thus, at the beginning of the second book of De doctrina christiana, he reflects on the meaning of signs (signa). He also mentions animals, whose ability to *communicate* with each other he recognises. As an example, he mentions a chicken that finds food and informs the other chickens about it by calling. The crucial question of whether the animals communicate consciously or whether their calls are an unconscious repetition of behaviour stored in their memory is left open by Augustine at this point because it is not part of his theme: "Animals also have certain signs among themselves (Habent etiam bestiae quaedam inter se signa), in order to make known the desire of their soul. […] Now whether these signs, such as the expression or the cry of one in pain, without the will to signify anything (sine uoluntate significandi), simply follow the movement of the mind (motum animi), or whether they are really given to signify (an uere ad significandum dentur), that is another question, which does not belong to the matter under discussion he"e." (Augustine, De doctrina christiana 2, 2, 3). This at least leaves open whether certain animals want to signify something intentionally and consciously.

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In contrast to Origen (Chapter 5.6), Augustine even attributes the capacity for *memory,* which must also be presupposed for merely unconscious, sensually induced sign-giving, to the lowest animals according to the conception of the time, fish (Augustine, De Genesi ad litteram 3, 12; cf. Agnethe Siquans 2016, 66). In another context, however, he makes clear that he ultimately locates this animal "intelligence", as astonishing as it may be sometimes, in sensual and not in thinking talents. In this sense, he deals with the classic question of how Argos, Odysseus' dog, was able to recognise his master when he returned to Ithaca, while the humans, including his wife Penelope, did not recognise him because of his physical change. His answer to this question is: "What do you think it is, if not a certain ability to feel, not to know (vis sentiendi, non sciendi)? For in sense (sensu) the animals surpass us, though here is not the place to seek the cause of this; but in mind, reason, science (mente autem, ratione, scientia) God has preferred us to them." (Augustine, De quantitate animae 28, 54: cf. Gillian Clark 1998, 76). So the dog Argos has such an excellent sensory memory of his master that he recognises him long before humans do. According to Augustine, however, he does not need to think.

In the context of the question of how we can love God, Augustine also addresses the question of how we can actually imagine what is going on in the soul of another human being or animal. He sees the indispensable prerequisite for this in a deep form of *kinship* with the soul: "As for the soul, we do not inappropriately attribute its knowledge (nosse) to ourselves because we too have a soul. We have never seen a soul and have not formed a generic or species concept of it from the resemblance to other things we have seen; rather, as I said, we know of its essence because we ourselves have a soul. [...] For the movements of bodies, through which we perceive the life of other beings besides ourselves, we judge on the basis of their resemblance to us (ex nostra similitudine). [...] And this is not a peculiarity of, say, human prudence and intellect (Neque quasi humanae prudentiae rationisque proprium est). Animals also feel that they live (sentiunt vivere), not only of themselves, but also of each other and of us. They too do not see our souls, but experience them from the movements of the body, and quickly and easily through a certain natural connection (conspiratione naturali). So, we know the soul of another from our own, and from our own we believe what we do not know (Animum igitur cuiuslibet ex nostro novimus, et ex nostro credimus quem non novimus)." (Augustine, De trinitate 8, 6, 9).

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According to Augustine, both the idea of what a soul is and the idea of what is going on in another animate being, whether human or animal, are gained solely by analogy with our innermost experiences. We observe the bodily changes in ourselves and others and conclude from them "ex similitudine" the invisible state of the soul. However, this always remains an unproven and unprovable assumption, a belief (credimus). What is decisive for us is that Augustine attributes this ability to animals and humans alike because it is assigned to the anima sensibilis and not to the anima rationalis. And because humans and animals have the same capacity for the faculty of the soul, they can also empathise with each other—animals with humans, humans with animals. Augustine presents a brilliant analysis of the capacity for *empathy* here!

Overall, it is easy to see that Augustine attributes relatively much to the sensual power of the imagination and memory and comparatively little to reason. Thus, he can grant animals numerous abilities that they have in common with humans. The barrier of the aloga thesis is not jumped over, but it is lowered considerably.

5.18.3 The specifically human capabilities

Despite the breadth of Augustine's assessment of animals' abilities, two abilities remain reserved for humans: judgement and free will. He emphasises that animals have sensory perception but cannot judge it from a higher perspective (Augustine, Confessiones 7, 17, 23). Humans and animals have imagination in common, but only humans have the power of judgement (Augustine, De trinitate 10, 5, 7; De civitate Dei 19, 14). Humans alone can distinguish good from evil, what is just from what is unjust (Augustine, Enarrationes in Psalmos 29, 2, 2). The decisive difference for Augustine, and this is thoroughly Stoic, is that imagination is passive and thus a faculty of feeling, while judgement and decision of the will are active and thus faculties of thinking. The dividing line is drawn in a razor-sharp way, and active faculties, according to the Stoic thesis, are only possessed by man. Augustine also argues in this way:

"For every living soul, not only the rational as in men, but also the irrational as in animals, birds and fish, is moved by impressions. But the rational soul either agrees or disagrees with the impressions on the basis of a decision of the will (voluntatis arbitrio); the irrational soul, however, does not have this judgement (iudicium); nevertheless, it is impelled according

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to its nature and kind (pro suo genere atque natura) as soon as it has been influenced by an impression. And it is not in the power (in potestate) of any soul to determine what impressions come to it, whether in the bodily sensory faculty, or in the inner mind itself [i.e. the imagination, MR]; yet the striving of every animal (appetitus cuiuslibet animantis) is moved by such impressions." (Augustine, De Genesi ad Litteram 9, 14, 25).

Sarah Byers assumes that with the redundant formula "voluntatis arbitrium" Augustine wants to make the affiliation to reason as clear as possible in order to nip any misunderstanding in the bud (Sarah Byers 2006, 182). For actually, one of the two terms would suffice perfectly—be it voluntas, be it arbitrium.

The active performance of human reason becomes even clearer in the following quotation: "Animals, too, can perceive bodily things through the external sensory faculty of the body and, when they have been inserted into memory, remember them and strive for what is beneficial, fleeing from what is inappropriate. Meanwhile, to ascertain this and not only to seize it in natural desire, but also to entrust it to memory with intent (de industria) and in this way to keep it there, and when it gradually wants to sink into the past, to imprint it again by recollection and reflection, so that, just as the thought is formed from what the memory carries with it, so also what is in the memory is fixed by the thought; to form and survey artificially produced impressions, by taking out here and there a piece of memory and, as it were, patching it together; to see how in this kind of thing the probable differs from the true: Not in the spiritual, but precisely in the bodily realm, such and similar things are done and remain, although in the realm of the sensible (in sensibilibus) and of that which the soul drew to itself from this through the sense of the body, yet not [entirely] without understanding (rationis expertia), and are common to men and animals (hominibus pecoribusque communia). But it lies on a higher level of understanding to judge these corporeal things according to incorporeal and perpetual reasons (sublimioris rationis est iudicare de istis corporalibus secundum rationes incorporales et sempiternas)." (Augustine, De trinitate 12, 2, 2).

Four aspects seem remarkable to me in this passage: firstly, Augustine describes magnificently what it means to reactivate memories purposefully, literally "with diligence" (de industria), so that they do not fade into oblivion but are reinforced in memory. Secondly, he distinguishes from this the targeted recombination of sensory impressions or memory images, which can lead people to new insights. Thirdly, he admits that even in the realm

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of sensory faculties in humans and animals (!), such recombination "does not happen [entirely] without reason". He thus concedes a minimum of rationality to animals, however one may imagine this precisely. Finally, and here he is back on Stoic ground, he emphasises that a human judgement is made according to immutable principles that are still above the human being, but in which he has a share by virtue of his reason. The introspective analysis of one's own thinking that Augustine presents here is captivating. The only question that remains open is how he knows that the processes in animals are not similar to those in humans. Here, he trusts the Stoic dogma without critical questioning.

Augustine also sees a commonality between humans and animals in the fact that both strive for harmony and peace. However, the peace of man is different from the peace of the animal: "If we were therefore irrational animals (irrationalia animantia), we would strive for nothing more than the orderly harmonisation of the parts of the body and the tranquillity of striving (requiem appetitionum); that is, nothing more than the tranquillity of bodily existence and opportunity for enjoyment, so that the peace of the body may promote the peace of the soul. For if the peace of the body is lacking, the peace of the rational soul (inrationalis animae pax) is also prevented, because it cannot gain the peace of striving (requiem adpetitionum). Both, however, the harmonising of the parts and the tranquillity of striving, serve the peace that soul and body have with each other, i.e. the peace of ordered life and well-being. For as animals show their love for the peace of the body by avoiding pain, and their love for the peace of the soul by pursuing pleasure to satisfy the demands of their striving, so also by fleeing from death they clearly show how much they love the peace by which the soul and body are held together. Since, however, man has a rational soul (rationalis anima inest), he subordinates the whole of what he has in common with the animals to the peace of the rational soul (totum hoc, quod habet commune cum bestiis, subdit paci animae rationalis), in such a way that he views things spiritually and does not forget them, that he looks at things mentally and thereafter so directs his actions that the orderly agreement between cognition and action results, which we have called the peace of the rational soul (ordinata cognitionis actionisque consensio, quam pacem rationalis animae dixeramus)." (Augustine, De civitate Dei 19, 14).

Animals and humans, according to Augustine, equally strive physically for the harmony of their body parts, i.e. for freedom from pain and well-being, and mentally for the fulfilment of their sensual aspirations. However,

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while animals are completely satisfied with the fulfilment of these two goals, a third goal is added for humans on the basis of their reason, which regulates and sometimes suspends the other two: the "peace of the rational soul" as "the ordered agreement between knowing and doing". Achieving this goal supersedes all lower goals of the body and the sensual soul faculty.

Judgement is ultimately the prerequisite of a decision made out of free will in the comprehensive sense (Augustine, De Genesi ad litteram 8, 23, 44; Contra Felicem Manichaeum 2, 3). Nevertheless, Augustine hesitates to deny animals free will altogether, as the following quotation proves: "The freely willed causes (causae voluntariae), finally, proceed either from God or from angels or from men or from other animate beings (animalium), insofar as, in the case of souls that lack rationality (animarum rationis expertium), those movements with which they act according to their nature (secundum naturam suam), when they strive for or avoid something, can be called wills (voluntates) at all." (Augustine, De civitate Dei 5, 9).

Note: In De trinitate, Augustine admits that animals are "not entirely without reason", in De civitate Dei he speaks of the "will" of animals, "insofar as one can call it that". This does not result in a principled denial, but it does relativise the aloga thesis to a certain extent. In any case, Augustine does not seem to be comfortable with the nasty trench of binary Stoic logic. He would have liked to make the transition from human to animal a little smoother.

5.18.4 Humans' and animals' relationship to God

As with reason and will, Augustine also opens the door a tiny crack wide with regard to the relationship of humans and animals with God, without fundamentally questioning the Stoic difference. Thus, on the one hand, he interprets the Logos hymn in Jn 1 in such a way that all creatures are created by Christ, the eternal Word of God, and exist in him—in their corporeality as well as in their liveliness and animateness, i.e. with their entire creaturely existence. But after the word metaphor, the light metaphor appears in the Logos hymn of John's Gospel, and here Augustine makes a distinction. While all creatures behold the light of Christ, animals do so only sensually, whereas human beings do so sensually and spiritually. It is precisely this that constitutes being human, to behold the light of Christ in the rational spirit:

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"Therefore, because there is one Word of God through which all things came to be, which is itself the unchangeable truth, all things are original and unchangeable all at once in Him, [...] Among the things created by the Word is also the body, which is not life. It would not be created by the Word if there were not life in it before it exists. For that which became was already 'life in Him' (Jn 1:3–4), and not just any life; for the soul is also the life of the body; but it too is created because it is mutable. By what was it created if not by the unchangeable Word of God? For 'all things came into being through the Word, and without the Word nothing came into being'. What therefore came to be was already 'life in him', and not just any life, but that life which is 'the light of men' (Jn 1:9), namely the light of the rational spirit by which men differ from animals and by which they are men (lux utique rationalium mentium per quas homines a pecoribus differunt et ideo sunt homines). So there is no bodily light, no light of the flesh, whether it shines down from heaven or whether it is kindled on an earthly flame, for the senses not only of men but also of animals down to the smallest worm; for all these see that light. But that life is 'the light of men'." (Augustine, De trinitate 4, 1, 3).

We also find a similar dynamic in his interpretation of Ps 145:10, whose Hebrew wording "May we give thanks to you, O LORD, all your works, let your pious praise you" is rendered by the Latin translation as Ps 144:10: "confiteantur tibi, domine, omnia opera tua, et sancti tui confiteantur te". The "thanks" and "praise" in the Hebrew text thus become "confess". The bar is thus raised considerably higher in the Latin text. And this is why Augustine is reluctant to ascribe to animals the ability to make an explicit confession: "The addressees of the call to 'confiteri', 'benedicere' and 'hymnum dicere' are not all creatures, but only the rational ones: 'nemo hoc sentiat, quod mutus lapis aut mutum animal habeat rationem intellegendi deum; hoc qui putauerunt, multum a ueritate aberrauerunt' (Enarrationes in Psalmos 144, 13). The anthropological narrowness already noted [...] with regard to Rom 8:19–23 also determines the interpretation of the Creation psalms that stop at the 'Confessio'. As little as the reasonless creature can 'sigh', so little can it rejoice. Man, on the other hand, whom Augustine meaningfully calls 'creatura laudatrix' (Sermo 29, 1), is able to judge the ordered beauty of every creature and to appreciate it, for 'uox quaedam est mutae terrae, species terrae. [...] et hoc quod in ea inuenisti, uox confessionis ipsius est, ut laudes creatorem' (Enarrationes in Psalmos 144, 13)." (Cornelius Petrus Mayer 2002, 108).

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As Augustine pointedly puts it: "They have no voice to confess... they have no voice to preach (uocem non habent confitendi... uocem non habent praedicandi)". (Augustine, Enarrationes in Psalmos 144, 13). And in his interpretation of Psalm 147, he repeats, "Just do not think that the reasonless soul invokes God; the soul cannot invoke God, only rationality (Ne hoc cogitetis, irrationalem animam invocare Deum; non novit anima invocare Deum, nisi sola rationalis)." (Augustine, Enarrationes in Psalmos 146, 18).

It must be said clearly that Augustine is not judging Greco-Roman philosophy here by the standard of the Bible, but the meaning of the Bible by the standard of Greco-Roman philosophy. Where the Bible calls people and animals indiscriminately to the praise of God, Augustine introduces a difference from the outside. In doing so, he can take his cue from the Hellenistically influenced Paul, Philon and many others. And yet it is striking how little the otherwise text-sensitive rhetorician takes the biblical formulations seriously here.

Consequently, for Augustine, as for the great majority of the Church Fathers, man alone is called to eternal salvation, for animals "have neither the capacity for sin nor for virtue; but they live according to a mysterious, marvellous order (occulta pro suo genere moderatione); they give man a lesson, and he understands, in view of their activities, the obligation to strive for spiritual and eternal salvation, that great privilege which constitutes his superiority over all irrational animals (qua omnibus irrationalibus animantibus antecellit)." (Augustine, De Genesi ad litteram 3, 16, 25). Mind you, the human privilege is not eternal salvation, but the obligation to strive for it. Augustine's logic is classic: anyone who cannot sin cannot live virtuously; anyone who cannot live virtuously cannot strive for eternal salvation; anyone who does not strive for eternal salvation does not need to receive it. According to this logic, nothing is taken away from animals—they will miss nothing.

Nevertheless, "they obey God in their own way: 'in suo ... genere obtemperant deo, non rationali uoluntatis arbitrio' (De Genesi ad litteram 9, 14, 24)." (Matthias Baltes/ Dieter Lau 1994, 364–365). They follow the divine order by nature and thus are a model for human beings, who should do so on the basis of their own reflection and decision.

Augustine makes maximum use of the freedom opened up for animals by the Stoic arithmetic of salvation. However, he does not cast doubt on the basic data of the Stoa. In the context of modern debates on animal and Creation ethics, this must seem deficient. In the context of his time, one must nevertheless show him sympathy and respect.

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5.18.5 Ethical consequences for humans and animals

What are the ethical consequences of the preceding considerations? It should come as no surprise that, measured against their philosophical and patristic prehistory, they are largely traditional—albeit with some notable emphases. In one passage of De trinitate, for example, Augustine combines his interpretation of three passages of Scripture in order to show that a man, who is only concerned with himself and his own desires, becomes similar to an animal and thus undergoes a painful descent: "By beginning with a perverse striving for likeness to God, one arrives at likeness to the animals. Thus, it comes about that those who are stripped of their first garment earned garments of animal skins through their mortality (Gen 3:21). The true honour of man is called the image and likeness of God (Gen 1:26); it can only be preserved in reference to Him by whom it was imprinted. [...] So, since he [man], like that [Adam], does not wish to be below anyone, he is driven, as a punishment, even from the centre, which is himself, further downwards, that is, to that in which the cattle delight; and thus 'man', since his honour is the likeness of God, his dishonour the likeness of the beast, 'put in honour, has not seen it, has become like the reasonless cattle, and similar to them' (Ps 48:13 lat.)." (Augustine, De trinitate 12, 11, 16).

The first biblical narrative Augustine reflects on in this passage is the Fall narrative of Gen 3. When man strives to become not only similar to God, but equal to God, and thus to rise one step up the Stoic scala naturae, the opposite happens: he falls down to the level of an animal. Instead of God, he becomes like animals. Then he needs the protection of animal skins, which diminishes him in comparison with his previous clothing, because the garment of virtue protected and adorned him better. The second biblical narrative is Gen 1. Actually, man should have been God's likeness on earth by behaving responsibly and imitating his model in love and virtue. But because he behaved differently, what the Latin translation of Ps 48:13 (Hebrew 49:13) says came to pass: due to a lack of insight, he became like a reasonless animal.

Mirroring this is the ethical imperative to control the "animal in man" with reason. The fifth and sixth days of the work of Creation are interpreted in this sense in the thirteenth book of the Confessiones, which, in contrast to De Genesi ad litteram, presents an allegorical interpretation of the Creation narrative throughout. There it says: "Abstain from unruly, wild pride, the slackening lust of sensuality, and the deceptive appearance

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of science, that the wild beasts may become tame, the domestic animals gentle, and the serpents harmless. For the passionate impulses of the soul are symbolically embodied in them." (Augustine, Confessiones 13, 21). In Epistula 22 to Casulanus, Augustine calls immoderate eating alogia, because it causes one to lose reason. Overall, he follows the Stoic ideal of controlling one's passions through reason (Augustine, De libero arbitrio 1, 8, 18).

His interpretation of the Hebrew Ps 36:7–8 is also about the animal in man: "You save men and animals, o Lord. How precious is your love, o God! People shelter in the shadow of your wings." In Augustine's Latin translation as Ps 35:7–8 this reads: "Homines et iumenta saluos facies, Domine; sicut multiplicata est misericordia tua, Deus. Filii autem hominum sub tegmine alarum tuarum sperabunt."

In a first reflection, Augustine considers what is common to humans and animals, namely that both are included in the divine care for their earthly well-being: "Great is your mercy, and manifold is your mercy, God, and you show it both to men and to animals. For from whom does the salvation of men come? From God. Does not the salvation of animals come from God? For He who created man also created the animals. He who created both saves (saluat) both. But the welfare of animals is temporal (salus iumentorum temporalis). [...] Manifold is your mercy, o God, that not only to men but also to animals may be given what is given to men, this carnal and temporal welfare (carnalis et temporalis salus)." (Augustine, Enarrationes in Psalmos 35, 11).

In a second step, however, Augustine then reflects on the specific vocation of man, which, according to his conviction, distinguishes him from animals, namely the vocation of the hope of eternal salvation. To do this, he relies on a distinction in the Latin text. It speaks once of human beings (homines) and once of children of humans (filii hominum). For Augustine, homines are those people who behave like animals and strive only for physical well-being, while filii hominum are those who behave like humans and "hope under the shadow of God's wings". Thus, he can distinguish: "But those men (homines) rejoice together with the animals in reality (in re), but the children of men (filii hominis) in hope (in spe). The former pursue present goods (praesentia bona) with the animals; the latter hope for future goods (futura bona) with the angels. [...] If we bear the image of the earthly man, we are humans (homines). If we bear the image of the heavenly man, we are children of humans (filii hominum), because Christ is called the Son of Man. Adam, in fact, was man, but not the Son of Man. Therefore, those who desire carnal goods and temporal well-being belong

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to Adam. We exhort them to be children of humans, hoping under the shadow of his wings..." (Augustine, Enarrationes in Psalmos 35, 12). Again, we encounter the Stoic imperative to subdue the animal in man and to follow the spiritual aspirations that carry man up into the sphere of the angels.

But how should man deal with real animals? Augustine comes to this in his interpretation of Ps 146:6: "It is He who creates the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in it. He keeps faithfulness forever." He begins by emphasising that God, who made all animals, including the sparrow, the grasshopper and the worm, gives them all his care: "None of them has He not made, and His care (cura) is for all of them." (Augustine, Enarrationes in Psalmos 145, 13). But God's commandments are addressed only to man: "The care does not extend to the commandment, for the commandment He has given only to man (non ad praeceptum cura est, nam praeceptum soli homini dedit)." (Augustine, Enarrationes in Psalmos 145, 13). But what does this mean in concrete terms? To answer, Augustine brings two apparently contradictory Bible verses into conversation with each other: the verse from Ps 36:7 "You save men and animals, o Lord" and the sentence by the Apostle Paul in 1 Cor 9:9–10, with which he interprets Dt 25:4 "You shall not muzzle the ox for threshing". Paul writes: "Does God care about oxen? Does he not speak everywhere for our sake? Yes, for our sake it was written: Let both the ploughman and the thresher do their work, expecting to receive their portion."

Augustine asks whether the two scriptural texts do not contradict each other. His answer is this: "God does not worry about admonishing you about what to do with the ox. Human nature itself does that (natura ipsa humana). Man was created to feed his animals. It is not for this that he has received commandments from God, but it is put into his mind by God (insinuatum est illi in mentem a Deo), so that he can do it without commandment. For this is how God created him. [...] In relation, then, to the course of the commandment, 'God does not care for the ox' (1 Cor 9:9). With regard to the providence for the universe (ad prouidentiam uniuersitatis), by which he created all things and governs the world, 'you save men and animals, o Lord' (Ps 35:7 lat.)" (Augustine, Enarrationes in Psalmos 145, 13; a very similar argument in Augustine, De agone christiano 8, 9).

This text is captivating in its probity. Very directly and completely transparently, Augustine contrasts a biocentrist quotation from the Old Testament with an anthropocentrist quotation from the New Testament and asks

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whether the contradiction can be resolved. In doing so, he tries to reconcile two concerns: on the one hand, not to discredit the Word of God in the Bible, for that would be an impossibility for him. On the other hand, not to deny or devalue God's care for animals, which is so clearly attested to in the Old Testament. His proposed solution works with a rhetorical trick: Man already knows by nature that animals should be treated well, so he does not need any commandments. He only needs commandments for the right treatment of fellow human beings. Of course, one could quickly question this solution, from both sides: On the one hand, it is unfortunately not the case that humans treat animals well quite spontaneously and without commandment, and on the other hand, human nature does indeed provide stimuli to treat other humans with care. From a factual point of view, therefore, the Augustinian solution is not correct. But it shows how honestly he struggles—on the one hand, to take the whole Bible seriously and not just an excerpt he likes, and on the other hand, not to sweep God's love and care for animals under the table.

In the following passage, Augustine even goes a step further. Some of his contemporaries obviously object to the fact that the New Testament trumps the Old in case of doubt. In this case, Paul beats the Psalm; anthropocentrism beats biocentrism. Augustine counters this with a word from the mouth of Jesus, the highest authority of Christian faith: "Look at the birds of the air: They neither sow nor reap nor gather provisions into barns; your heavenly Father feeds them." (Mt 6:26). From this Augustine concludes, "And apart from man, the animals belong to God's care, that they may be fed, not that they may receive the law. So as far as giving the law is concerned, 'God does not care for the ox' (1 Cor 9:9). But as for creating, feeding, guiding and governing, God cares for all creatures." (Augustine, Enarrationes in Psalmos 145, 14). As I said, for Augustine it is unthinkable that the Word of God can err. That is why he considers the contradiction between Paul and the Psalm claimed by his opponents to be non-existent. But if it did exist, the Lord's Word would beat Paul, and the Lord's Word is biocentrist. Augustine obviously does not advocate unrestricted anthropocentrism.

Ultimately, Augustine is subject to a classic category error in this passage: because the commandments are addressed solely to human beings as moral agents, and their content can only refer to human beings as moral patients. According to this reasoning, there must be a kind of symmetry between rights and duties: Only those who have duties can also have rights. This is not explicitly stated anywhere in this passage, but it is the unspoken

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presupposition that Augustine must make in order for his argumentation to work. And: it is the unthinking presupposition of the whole theoretical edifice around Stoic anthropocentrism. A classic is–ought fallacy.

That Augustine had precisely this consideration in mind can be proven with a passage from his treatise on the customs of the Catholic Church and the Manichaeans. In his discussion of Manichaeism, to which he adhered for a decade, he explicitly refers to the Stoic conviction that there is *no legal community* between humans and non-human beings: "Furthermore, because animals lack reason, there is no legal community (societas iuris/ societas legis) between them and humans (Augustine, De moribus ecclesiae catholicae 2, 17, 54 and 59). But there is a community of all reasonless beings, just as there is a community between rational beings (human beings and angels)." (Matthias Baltes/Dieter Lau 1994, 359). Augustine gives as examples that Jesus sends the legion of demons he casts out of a possessed man into a herd of pigs, which then drowns in the lake (Mt 8:32), and curses a fig tree, which then withers (Mt 21:19). He interprets these two events as follows: "Christ [...] shows that there is no legal community (societas iuris) for us with the animals and trees... For also concerning the people with whom we are united in a legal community (sumus iuris societate coniuncti), he gives certain signs, but in terms of healing people and not killing them. This he would also have done concerning animals and trees, if he had judged that we are united with those in the same community which we ascribe to you." (Augustine, De moribus ecclesiae catholicae 2, 17, 54). Augustine supplements this argumentation with reference to the Bible or Jesus of Nazareth himself in the following with philosophical argumentation with reference to the aloga thesis: there he speaks of the "animal with which there is no connection to a legal community because it has no rational soul (bestia, cum qua scilicet rationalem animam non habente nulla legis societate copulatur)" (Augustine, De moribus ecclesiae catholicae 2, 17, 59). Finally, Augustine supplements his argumentation with a practical life argument: if there were kinship of all corporeal beings (cognatio omnium corporum) among themselves, as the Manichaeans claim, the prohibition to kill would have to apply to all of them, and then man would no longer be able to live, because he would not even be allowed to kill plants in order to feed himself (Augustine, De moribus ecclesiae catholicae 2, 17, 61).

Augustine, basing his argumentation on Old Testament biocentrism, makes us feel a great kindness towards animals. God's love and care is for humans and animals. In this way, he considerably softens Stoic anthropocentrism, which he nevertheless does not question, for only humans

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strive for eternal salvation. This obliges them, but definitely excludes animals from eternal salvation. They do not belong to the legal community of God and man.

5.18.6 The question of meat consumption

In Confessiones 10, 30–34 Augustine goes through the human temptations according to the five senses and in 10, 31, 43–47 he comes to the sense of taste and the question of the right way of dealing with food and drink (cf. also Gillian Clark 1998, 74–75). Among other things, he also addresses the consumption of meat. First, he refers to various biblical examples: to Noah, who is allowed to eat meat (Gen 9:2–3), to Elijah, who fortifies himself with meat at the brook Kerith (1 Kings 17:6), and to John the Baptist, who feeds on locusts (Matt 3:4). Conversely, Esau was corrupted by his desire for a dish of lentils (Gen 25:34), David overcame his desire for water (2 Sam 23:15–17) and Jesus overcame his desire for bread (Mt 4:3). The people of Israel were also rebuked in the wilderness, not because of their desire for meat but because of their grumbling and rebellion against God (Num 11:1–20). From all this, Augustine concludes, "I do not fear impurity of food, but impurity of desire" (Augustine, Confessiones 10, 31, 46). It is not the kind of food but the observance of the necessary measure (meta necessitatis) that is decisive.

Even if it is not explicitly stated in the Confessiones, the question of eating meat is always directed by Augustine against the Manichaeans, to whom he belonged for a decade and who practised strict abstinence from meat. Thus, Augustine emphasises in The City of God that the Fifth Commandment "You shall not kill" does not refer to living beings without sense impressions such as plants, nor to living beings without reason such as animals, but solely to rational living beings. On the other hand, he regards the Manichaeans' conviction that the killing of all living beings is forbidden as "silly stuff (deliramenta)" (Augustine, De civitate Dei 1, 20).

He deals with the Manichaeans' obligatory abstinence from meat in more detail in his treatise on the customs of the Catholic Church and the Manichaeans: "That you abstain from killing animals (ab animalium nece) and from tearing down plants, Christ has pointed out as extremely superstitious, who proves that we have no community of law (societas iuris) with animals and trees, sends demons into a herd of swine (Mt 8:32), and withers the tree on which he finds no fruit (Mt 21:19). [...] But surely the

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Son of God was not about giving a sign of murder, when to kill a tree or animals, as you say, is murder. [...] There is a very sure reason not to kill a man, lest you kill him whose wisdom and virtue are of the highest use to others, or him who may attain to wisdom. [...] Whoever therefore discards a tree, frees a soul from its body, which does not advance in wisdom (animam nihil in sapientia proficientem). [...] Those souls in such bodies cannot grasp the divine commandments." (Augustine, De moribus ecclesiae catholicae 2, 17, 54–56).

Supported by such examples from the life of Jesus, Augustine shows that it is thus again the lack of belonging to the community of law that legitimises the killing of plants and animals. And this in turn is due to lack of reason. Consequently, the aloga thesis is at the origin of his argumentation.

Further on, Augustine also comes to speak of the two-class organisation of the Manichaean community, in which the elect (electi) neither pluck a potato from the ground nor tear off herbs, but gladly receive and eat the plants harvested by the hearers (auditores). Augustine forcefully rejects this clean hands theory: "It makes no difference whether you yourself commit the crime or whether you want someone else to commit it because of you." (Augustine, De moribus ecclesiae catholicae 2, 17, 57).

Finally, Augustine addresses the Manichean argument that a flea may be crushed because this is not a sin due to its small size. Augustine counters this with the continuum of body size between very small and very large animals: From the flea he goes to the fly larva, which is only minimally larger, from this to the adult fly, then to the bee larva and the adult bee, to the grasshopper larva and the grasshopper, to the mouse pup and the adult mouse, and finally on and on until he reaches the elephant. There is only a tiny difference in size between two living beings. If the Manichaeans did not consider it a sin to kill a flea because of its small size, where did they want to draw the line to the elephant (Augustine, De moribus ecclesiae catholicae 2, 17, 64)?

According to everything that is reported about him, Augustine was not a great meat eater. But he wanted to distance himself clearly from the radicalism of the Manichaeans. Their animal- and plant-ethical argumentation seemed neither consistent nor appropriate to him. He could not admit that they also contain positive stimuli because of his former membership and the resulting negative bias.

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5.18.7 Valuing even the least creatures

Nevertheless, Augustine's work is full of admiration and appreciation of even the tiniest creatures. So the reference to the continuum of body size from the flea to the elephant must also be read backwards. Not only is the elephant great, but so is the flea. This leads to the diffident first beginnings of biocentrism (which is not further carried out): "And if [...] they ask me whether I am of the opinion that even the soul of a mosquito is still better than daylight, I will answer: Yes, even it. It would not deter me that a mosquito is so small, but only reinforce the fact that it is alive. For one wonders what animates these tiny limbs, what leads the little body hither and thither according to the wish of its natural desire, what moves the running animal according to the measure of its feet, what makes the wings of the flying creature vibrate and directs them. Whatever this does, it appears to him who considers it rightly as something so great in this little creature that it must be preferred even to the ray of light which dazzles our eyes." (Augustine, De duabus animabus 4, 4).

Augustine demonstrates here high sensitivity for the fascination and wonder of life. His love for the little mosquito makes him attentively observe and describe its behaviour and search for the reason for its movements, which he cannot yet discern with the state of natural science at that time. Nevertheless, he defends small animals, which are often devalued because they feed on waste, carrion or faeces: "Not insignificantly, one also wonders in the case of certain very small creatures whether they are to be counted among the first creations or are a consequence of the corruption of mortal things. After all, the majority of them originate from the infirmities of living bodies, from the refuse, the exhalation or the decay of cadavers, some also from dead trees and rotten plants and fruits. And yet we have no right to say of them all that God is not their Creator. There is in them all a certain adornment of the nature of their kind, and that to such an extent that they suggest to him who looks at them rightly all the greater admiration, all the richer praise of the Almighty Artist, 'who created all things in that wisdom' (Ps 103:24 lat.). [...] It is rather she, Wisdom, who creates even that which is smallest in corporeality, and animates it with a sense so keen that we marvel with far deeper admiration at the agility of a flying gnat than at the size of a striding beast of burden, and wonder more at the buildings of little ants than at the burdens of camels." (Augustine, De Genesi ad litteram 14).

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We have already noticed admiration for the small and smallest animals in many of the Fathers of the Church. The fact that these are also God's creatures and were not produced secondarily from carrion or excrement only after the creation of the world is extremely important to them. If one correlates this assessment with the Platonic Timaeus, according to which the animals as a whole are only subsequently created by sub-gods, the contrast becomes clear. The equal and equally immediate creation of animals and humans relativises the gap between the aloga thesis and anthropocentrism considerably: "Augustine's explanations of animals seem almost scientific or even naturalistic. He displays a high regard for God's creation and does not constantly ask about the usefulness of animals for humans. He also perceives animals independently of humans, but not independently of the Creator." (Agnethe Siquans 2016, 65).

5.18.8 Weak anthropocentrism and cautious criticism of anthropocentrism

Augustine is not very interested in the teleological question. Moreover, he points out the questionability of the Stoic conclusion from the endowment of reason to the position in the hierarchy of purposes. According to Augustine, economic calculations of utility follow a different form of logic than the question of ontology. A horse, for example, has a higher monetary value than a slave. Utility value is therefore not measured by the degree of rationality, but by the extent and urgency of the needs that one hopes to realise (Augustine, De civitate Dei 11, 16). This is an unconventional, very perceptive remark that could still bring joy to today's economic science and current ethics, for dignity and prices, as Immanuel Kant emphasises, follow their own logic and must not be mixed together. In general, dignity is a non-scalar idea that must not be graded. Dignity is not gained by hierarchically subordinating other beings and denying them dignity.

Augustine therefore pays little attention to questions of utility and cosmic teleology. "He does not dedicate much space in his writings to the practical and common use of animals, for example as sources of labour and food." (Midori E. Hartman 2017, 72). Even more, he criticises the fact that many people judge the whole of creation only in terms of its usefulness for themselves and not as something that exists and is valuable in itself, considering "not themselves, but only their usefulness (non eas considerantes, sed utilitatem suam)" (Augustine, De civitate Dei 12, 4).

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The question of benefit is thus a question of perspective: Is it a question of benefit for man or of benefit for God? "The Manichaeans pose this question by saying: Why was it necessary for God to create so many animals, whether in the water or on earth, which are unnecessary for man? Many of them are also harmful and terrible. But in saying such things, they do not understand how beautiful they all are to their Creator and Artist, who uses them all for the guidance of the universe." (Augustine, De Genesi contra Manichaeos 1, 16, 25). At this point, Augustine compares those who ask only about animals' usefulness to man to laymen who enter a craftsman's workshop and see tools lying around that they consider superfluous. The craftsman, however, knows exactly what he needs his tools for and ridicules the laymen. This is what God, the creator and administrator of the world, does to those who consider some of his creatures useless.

Augustine counters the question of utility with the question of beauty and order: "But I confess that I do not know why snails and frogs were created, or flies and worms. But I see that all are beautiful in their way [...]. For I do not look at any animal's body or limbs in which I do not discover that measures and numbers and order belong to a harmonious unity. Whence they come, I do not know, except from the highest measure and number and order, which consists in the unchangeable and eternal majesty of God." (Augustine, De Genesi contra Manichaeos 1, 16, 26). And he concludes, "What, then, are we charged to inquire about the superfluous [animals]? If it displeases you that they are of no use, may it please you that they do no harm; for though they are not necessary to our house, through them the wholeness of this universe is fulfilled (eis tamen completur huius universitatis integritas), which is much greater and better than our house. For God manages it much better than each of us manages his house." (Augustine, De Genesi contra Manichaeos 1, 16, 26). With this reference to the integrity of the universe, Augustine already has one foot in the perspective of holism.

Let us therefore summarise with Agnethe Siquans: "An anthropocentrist perspective is [...] only very rudimentarily discernible in the interpretation of animal creation in De Genesi ad litteram. In De civitate Dei 12, 4, Augustine describes the order of creation, of which animals that have no use are also a part, and thus transcends the limits of a narrow anthropocentrist world view: 'Non ex commodo vel incommodo nostro sed per se ipsam considerata natura dat artifici suo gloriam'. Augustine is thus closer to Celsus' view that the world was not created for man but as a whole

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was God's world (cf. Origen, Contra Celsum 4, 99) than to Origen's anthropocentrism." (Agnethe Siquans 2016, 68).

What Agnethe Siquans points out, because it is truly remarkable in the context of patristics, should not, however, lead one to classify Augustine as an ecocentrist in the full sense. He adopts approaches in this direction and relativises anthropocentrism noticeably. Although he does not completely escape the Stoic thought construct, he weakens it as much as possible. This is also visible in his interpretation of the divine mandate to rule man in Gen 1:28: "This is what the natural order prescribes; this is how God created man. For he said (Gen 1:26): 'He shall rule over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over all the beasts that creep upon the earth.' Gifted with reason, created in God's image, man was to rule only over the reasonless creatures, not over man but over the beast. Therefore, the first righteous were instituted more as shepherds of animals than as kings of men (primi iusti pastores pecorum magis quam reges hominum constituti sunt), which God might also thereby suggest what the order of creatures (ordo creaturarum) required and what the merit of sinners (meritum peccatorum) is." (Augustine, De civitate Dei 19, 15).

Before the Fall, according to Augustine, humans were entrusted not so much with kingship over humans as with shepherding care for animals. This is part of the order of creation. An unjust, subjugating and enslaving dominion only emerges from it after the Fall. The image of God in the sense of similitudo thus obliges us to deal with people and animals in a good way that imitates God and is thus loving and caring (Isabelle Bochet 2010, 509 and 514). It does not establish a right for humans to use animals[29].

In his commentary on Genesis against the Manichaeans, Augustine moves more along classical Stoic and this means ontological lines. There, he expresses the following thoughts about the image of God in man: "That man is said to be created in the image of God is said of the inner man, where reason and intellect are (ubi est ratio et intellectus). [...] For all other

29 Once, Augustine uses the reference to the image of God as an argument against the transmigration of souls: "The human soul is created in the image of God (Gen 1:26). He will not give his image to the dog and the pig (Anima humana facta est ad imaginem Dei; non dabit imaginem suam cani et porco)." (Augustine, Enarrationes in Psalmos 146, 18). Taken out of context, this sentence sounds very harsh and contemptuous of animals, and certainly the wording is not particularly fortunate (Gillian Clark 1998, 71–72). Nevertheless, one should be careful about drawing too many conclusions from this one sentence. The overall Augustinian style is much more animal-friendly.

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living creatures are subject to man (omnia enim animalia caetera subiecta sunt homini), not because of the body, but because of the understanding (propter intellectum) which we have and they have not, although our body is also created in such a way that it shows that we are better than the wild animals and therefore similar to God (Deo similes). For the bodies of all animals [...] are inclined to the earth and not erect like the body of man. This indicates that our spirit must also be raised up to its height, that is, to the eternal spiritual things. Thus, it is evident that man, especially by the Spirit, is created in the image and likeness of God, to which the uprightness of the body bears witness." (Augustine, De Genesi contra Manichaeos 1, 17, 28). The upright walk of man is seen here in good Stoic tradition as a sign of man's vocation to exert his dominion over the earth.

But how can it be, the Manichaeans ask, that man dominates the animals when so many of them kill or harm people without the latter being able to defend themselves against it? It is true that man, according to Augustine, lost the perfection of the image of God with the Fall (amisit perfectionem illam qua factus est ad imaginem Dei). Because of the fragility of his body, he could therefore be killed by many animals (a multis feris propter fragilitatem corporis possit occidi) but be dominated by none (a nullis tamen domari potest), although he himself dominated so many (Augustine, De Genesi contra Manichaeos 1, 18, 29). Here Augustine perceives and takes seriously the factual imbalance of power between humans and animals. Unlike in De civitate Dei, he leaves it at that without asking for the ideal of a caring ruler.

However, Augustine emphasises that humans' dominion over animals and their dominion over the animal in themselves, i.e. over human passions, must be considered together: Rightly understood, the mandate to rule from Gen 1:28 also means that we "subdue all the affects and movements of the soul, which we have similarly to the animals, and let them be ruled by moderation and modesty (dominaremur per temperantiam et modestiam). For if these movements are not mastered, they will tear us out, lead to the most abominable habits, tempt us to indulge in various harmful pleasures, and make us similar to all kinds of wild animals (similes omni generi bestiarum). But when they are mastered and subdued, they become wholly tame and live in harmony with us." (Augustine, De Genesi contra Manichaeos 1, 20, 31). Here, too, Augustine moves strongly in Stoic waters and pleads for the classical Greek subordination of feelings to reason.

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5.18.9 Summary

As a lover of the Bible and a rhetorical language artist, Augustine is inspired by the Holy Scriptures to a higher degree than hardly any other Church Father—and therefore often speaks of God's care for and love of non-human creatures. For him, they belong to the self-evident fluidity of faith. "With his theocentrist view, which also treats non-human creatures with esteem in regard to the Creator, Augustine is clearly in the tradition of Basil, while he opposes Origen's anthropocentristic orientation." (Agnethe Siquans 2016, 70).

From this fundamentally animal-friendly attitude, Augustine extends animals' abilities as far as is at all possible within the framework of Stoic ontology. He attributes as many abilities as possible to humans and animals together. He achieves this by ascribing many more abilities to the senses and memory and far fewer to reason than was customary in his time. Ultimately, this also makes humans more "animal-like"—many of their everyday activities take place without reason because they are based on sensory impressions and memories. Yet, for Augustine, Stoic ontology sets the decisive limit: for him, too, judgement and freedom of will only belong to human beings.

Nonetheless, Augustine is able to weaken anthropocentrism because he does not consider the perspective of utility to be the decisive one. Here, he distances himself noticeably from Stoic teleology, which leaves no room for the non-useful and, due to its strict rationalism, subjects everything to efficiency thinking. For Augustine, considerations of utility always take second place in the context of his faith in a God of overflowing love. And even if he does not take the decisive final step of explicitly turning away from anthropocentrism, it can still be stated: "Animals in Augustine experience respect as God's creatures, as parts of the divine world order. This leads to respect for non-human creation—because of the Creator. Humans have a prominent place in this order of creation, but they are not the centre of the world. This is God, the Creator. Humans are creatures like animals and also part of God's world." (Agnethe Siquans 2016, 71).

5.19 The Animal Ethical Impetuses of Early Christian Theology in the Context of Hellenism. A Summary

At the end of this chapter, it is time to draw some general observations from the analysis of the eighteen authors. To begin with, it is worth recalling

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once again that in the first 250 years of its existence, Christians constituted a vanishingly small minority in the Roman Empire. In the face of an environment that did not believe or believed differently, Christianity had more than enough to do to clarify its central core messages, to make them plausible and to defend them internally and externally. These include belief in the Resurrection and eternal life, in Jesus Christ as the Saviour of the world, in a God who can be experienced in three ways, and the design and meaning of the central liturgical celebrations and sacramental sign acts. Against this background, an elaborated form of animal ethics was not to be expected and did not become visible anywhere. Nevertheless, early Christian theology did not develop entirely without standpoints that were relevant to animal ethics. Without suspecting it and without wanting to, it set out a decisive course which has continued until today.

Two questions guided our investigation in the previous chapter. First, how do the early Christian theologians position themselves in relation to the paradigms of Greco-Roman philosophy and culture that are relevant to animal and creation ethics? And secondly: How do they receive and interpret the passages of the Bible that are relevant to animal and creation ethics? Only the combination of both questions will provide an overall picture of the animal ethical decisions that took place in the first Christian centuries.

5.19.1 The Church Fathers and the Fixed Points of Stoic–Hellenistic Philosophy

In our analysis of animal ethics in Greek mainstream philosophy and especially in the Stoa, five core aspects emerged that span the web of ideas of anthropocentrism and are inseparably interwoven there (cf. chapter 3.5.6): divine providence and care, man's endowment with reason and language as his exclusive proprium, the handling of feelings as the "animals in us" that is "dominated" by reason, the handling of real animals that is also dominated by reason, and, at the centre, the teleology of anthropocentrism.

The early Christian theologians largely adopt these five aspects as a package. However, they weight them very differently in each case—in comparison with other theologians as well as in comparison of the aspects among themselves.

– Only in Origen do we find the *idea of divine providence* (πρόνοια/ providentia) directly connected with strong anthropocentrism. Augustine un-

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derpins it with his reference to the special gifts of man (intellectually in terms of reason, physically in terms of man's upright gait). However, several authors from the 4th century emphasise that divine providence applies to all living beings, including non-humans—such as Lactance, Nemesios of Emesa and Pseudo-Athenagoras. This is basically relativisation, if not indirect neutralisation, of anthropocentrism. On the whole, the idea of providence is not emphasised as strongly as in the younger Stoa. This only happens in Nemesios of Emesa, who also subsumes it comprehensively under the idea of rationality (nothing that God provides for is superfluous or useless, for that would call God into question as pure reason). This idea of rationality, for its part, is questioned in Augustine—he doubts that all creatures are under the maxim of utility. Nevertheless, it has to be said that the idea of divine providence cannot be eliminated from the early Christian faith in creation. It always resonates in the background; indeed, one would not be wrong to claim that Stoic πρόνοια/ providentia is partly responsible for early Christianity's attraction to this philosophical current.

– The *aloga thesis*, which has shaped Greco-Roman philosophy since the 5th century BC, is taken for granted by the Church Fathers. We find clear distancing from it only in Tatian, who was considered a heretic. On the other hand, we find their explicit confirmation and underpinning in Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Ephraim the Syrian, Gregory of Nyssa and John Chrysostom. At least two Church Fathers, namely Basil of Caesarea and Augustine of Hippo, noticeably struggle to mitigate and relativise it—admittedly without questioning it in principle. The idea of a steep, hierarchical scala naturae, which the Stoics closely associated with the aloga thesis, is taken up by only a few of the Church Fathers. Tertullian strongly affirms it, Origen rather weakly. Irenaeus of Lyons is reserved to distant about it; Basil of Caesarea extraordinarily critical of it. Finally, Nemesios of Emesa reinterprets the scala naturae and understands it above all as proof of the interconnectedness of all creatures. He thus turns the Stoic idea on its head. It must be emphasised, however, that none of the Church Fathers goes as far as Philon, who adapts the distribution of the works of Creation on the six days to the Stoic scala naturae. Here the Bible beats Greek ontology—this is so clear as day that it is never questioned. Finally, it is striking that most of the Church Fathers emphasise how wonderful and precious even the smallest and "lowliest" creatures are. To the ears of orthodox Stoics, this must have sounded like provocation.

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- At the centre of the Stoic coordinate system is *anthropocentrism*, which has shaped mainstream Greco-Roman philosophy since the 5th century BC. Not a single Church Father explicitly questions or even denies it. However, the affirmative statements have very different weighting. We find only a weak emphasis in Ambrose of Milan. In comparison, we find a clearer emphasis in Tertullian, Origen, Lactance and Cyril of Jerusalem. The emphasis is strong and very determined in Ephraim the Syrian, Gregory of Nyssa and Pseudo-Athenagoras. In many cases, anthropocentrism is derived from Christocentrism/logocentrism: Christ, the Logos, can only be received and recognised by rational living beings. And because creation is designed for the incarnation of the Logos (understood as becoming a human being and not a creature), it is only there for the sake of human beings. This is explicitly argued by Theophilos of Antioch, Irenaeus of Lyons, Clement of Alexandria, Origen and Cyril of Jerusalem. That anthropocentrism does not necessarily have to come across as arrogant towards animals, however, is shown in particular by Lactance and Cyril of Jerusalem, whose sympathy for animals is unmistakable. In addition, there are recognisable efforts to relativise anthropocentrism in Nemesios of Emesa, Jerome and Augustine. A de facto departure from anthropocentrism is made by Basil of Caesarea, in whom the commitment to anthropocentrism is rather empty of content and has therefore largely lost its effect. The question of eternal life is also connected with anthropocentrism. If only man possesses reason, it is clear to the Church Fathers that only he can freely and reflectively decide on his salvation. Therefore, the aloga cannot have eternal life—they do not aspire to it, and they lack nothing if God withholds it from them.
- The *mastery of the passions* and the senses by the hegemonicon of reason is strongly paralleled in Stoic philosophy with the mastery of the reasonless animals. Passions are "the animal in us". More or less explicitly, Irenaeus of Lyons, Origen, John Chrysostom, Nemesios of Emesa, Pseudo-Athenagoras and Augustine take up this idea. They are usually found in the context of allegorical interpretations of biblical animal texts or in further reflections on animals based on them. Animals are often used as "models" of virtues and vices—for virtues, especially in Basil of Caesarea and, following him, in Ambrose of Milan.
- The fifth and last element is *animal ethics in the proper sense*. With the exception of Clement of Alexandria, who expands and deepens Philon's sensitive interpretation of the animal protection commandments in the Torah, as well as with great restraint from Aphrahat, it is limited to the

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interpretation of the governmental mandate over animals from Gen 1:28. Anciently and biblically, this commission (formally anthropocentric, but not teleologically anthropocentristic!) was meant in such a way that the king or all humans should fairly and sensitively arbitrate conflicts and competitive situations between different animals, but also between humans and animals as well as between humans (cf. chapter 2.2). In the context of the aloga thesis and the Stoic scala naturae, it is interpreted by the Church Fathers as meaning that the rational are to guide and "rule" the irrational. It is striking, however, that several Church Fathers remain very reserved, such as Basil of Caesarea and Ambrose of Milan, or explicitly characterise "dominion" as pastoral care, such as Augustine. The same Augustine, like John Chrysostom, also sees the despotic rule of man over animals as a consequence of sin. The Stoa had already understood ruling over the reasonless not as a reign of terror and arbitrariness, but as wise, rational governance. Only in connection with its strong anthropocentrism did it interpret this reason technically/instrumentally as a use for exclusively human purposes. The Church Fathers only very partially subscribe to this instrumental thinking. Only Theophilos of Antioch, Origen and Gregory of Nyssa advocate a strong anthropocentristic calculation of utility. Cyril of Jerusalem, Basil of Caesarea and Jerome express varying to sceptical views. Lactance, Nemesios of Emesa and Augustine take an explicitly critical and negative stance.

The situation is thus far less uniform than one would spontaneously think. It is true that not a single early Christian theologian shakes the anthropocentrist coordinate system of the Hellenistic mainstream in principle. Despite some unmistakable doubts in detail, the five core aspects of Stoic thought are, if not affirmed, then at least left largely untouched by all of them. And yet the range of the Church Fathers' attitudes towards non-human creatures is wide: some positions cannot be qualified as anything other than "hostile to animals" (Origen, Pseudo-Athenagoras). Some are neutral, but rather distant and alien towards animals (Tertullian, Ephraim the Syrian, Gregory of Nyssa and Jerome). Quite a few, however, let us feel their joy in the proximity to and observation of animals and show pronounced kindness towards animals, in which for them the kindness of God towards animals is reflected (Irenaeus of Lyons, Lactance, Cyril of Jerusalem, but above all Basil of Caesarea, Nemesios of Emesa and Augustine).

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One must therefore look more closely than just at the striking label of "anthropocentrism yes or no". Hellenism ticks anthropocentristically in its overwhelming majority—however one may evaluate that. And the small group of early Christians, who soon lost touch with their Jewish roots, did not recognise the contingency of this Hellenistic idea. Perhaps because they were not yet self-critical enough to do so, but much more likely because they focused their attention on other problems that were more pressing for them.

On the whole, however, animals have far more weight in the thinking of the Church Fathers than would have been expected in the pre-structuring of the cosmological debate of Greek philosophy. This can only be due to the biblical (Creation) texts, which assign much more importance to animals than Plato's Timaeus and even more so the Stoa. The biblical concept of God's personal relationship to all creatures, characterised by love, noticeably softens the harshness and arrogance of Stoic rationalism for many Church Fathers. Such a cold form of anthropocentrism as in the younger Stoa is not to be found anywhere in early Christianity.

Early Christianity sees in the Stoa a congenial philosophy. Unlike Plato, who believes in the transmigration of souls, and unlike Aristotle, who considers both human and animal souls mortal, the Stoa is convinced of an immortal human soul and a unique life on earth. For early Christians, this promises the closest possible proximity to the message of resurrection (in the context of animal ethics in Tertullian, Basil, Jerome and Augustine). The Stoic idea of an inalienable human dignity and universalistic cosmopolitanism can also be ideally united with the Christian image of man and the missionary mandate. And finally, the Stoic idea of good divine providence corresponds excellently to the Christian image of God and the idea of man's endowment with reason to the idea of a Logos who became flesh.

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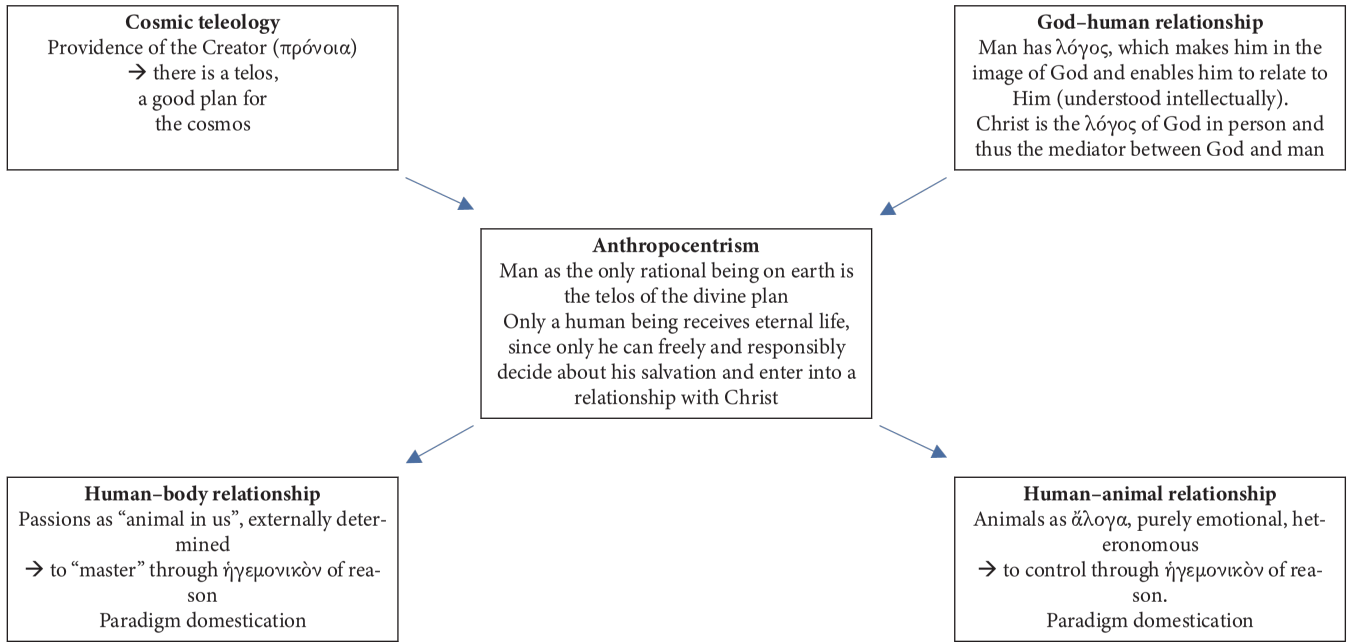
Diagram: The network of ideas of Christian anthropocentrism



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In other words, the Stoic edifice of thought offers the early church so many positive points of contact that its rough edges are generously passed over. Some are even no longer recognisable because the Septuagint has already sanded down and adapted the Bible's contradictions to Greek ontology, which we reflect on again in the following section. The price of this relatively unrestricted reception of the Stoa, however, can no longer be overlooked today: a notion of a divine plan of creation that is far too strong; an intellectually reduced understanding of redemption and the relationship with Christ; tragic devaluation of what is corporeal and of feelings; equally tragic devaluation of animals; and as the centrepiece in the middle, highly problematic teleological anthropocentrism.

5.19.2 The Church Fathers and Biblical Animal Ethics

As we already noted in the introduction to this chapter, the Christian Creation myth is more comprehensive than the Platonic one that dominated the Hellenistic cultural sphere, which leaves the creation of animals to the sub-gods and only mentions it in one sentence at the very end. In Gen 1, one and a half days out of seven are dedicated to animals, they receive the same blessing as humans, land animals are created on the same day as humans, humans are instructed to eat a vegetarian diet just like animals, and all living creatures are given the house of life and rest on the Sabbath. This says a lot about the Christian understanding of creation. A house without inhabitants is meaningless, and the fundamental characteristic is not some exclusive gift but being an inhabitant. Against this background, it becomes understandable why many Church Fathers and their audience are moved by the question of why the Bible speaks so extensively of animals. The broad and largely positive thematisation of animals, their significance for God and human beings and their value require justification in Greco-Roman culture. This is the challenge the Church Fathers face, and this should not be overlooked.

No Church Father would have thought of questioning the paramount importance of the Holy Scripture in any way. Its authority was inviolable for the early church, and anyone who undermined it, like Markion, was immediately identified as a heretic and excluded. Nevertheless, this alone does not guarantee comprehensive and proper reception of the biblical impetuses. In concrete terms, as far as I can see, *four significant constrictions* stand in the way of this in the early Christian era. The first two are of a

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principled nature and were unavoidable, the last two are contingent and could possibly have taken a different course:

– the *dogmatic* narrowing that results from the almost exclusive focus of *a religion in statu nascendi* on a few core statements of its faith. As understandable as it is for a new religion to initially focus on a few core issues and attempt to clarify them discursively, it runs the risk of beliefs creeping in behind the scenes that have not been reflected upon, discussed and tested. At some point, however, they become so deeply and firmly anchored in the belief system that they are difficult to remove even when they are recognised as errors. For the early church, the question of the relationship between humans and animals is precisely one that lies on the periphery of the core field of faith in creation and therefore does not receive the attention it deserves in itself. There is no open inner-church controversy about the aloga thesis and anthropocentrism—and where it does flare up, as with Origen, it is brushed aside relatively quickly because it comes from a church opponent like Kelsos.
– the *fundamental theological* narrowing that results from the (undisputed!) necessity to inculturate the Christian faith into the secular philosophy of society and not vice versa. If early Christianity had chosen the opposite path, it would have remained a fundamentalist sect and never become a religion spanning the world. But it recognised, appreciated and accepted the knowledge and wisdom of the surrounding culture—and this has remained the strategy of the mainstream churches to this day, despite all fundamentalist currents. Nevertheless, in every *process of inculturation,* as open and opening as it is at first, there is also an often-concealed narrowing: The distinction between what can be adopted and what should not be adopted tends to be too adoption-friendly, i.e. not critical enough. In this context, "in dubio pro reo" means: "In case of doubt, the convictions of the secular culture are adopted". Sometimes this later turns out to be a mistake.
– the *religion-genetic* narrowing resulting from the creeping *alienation of the early Church from Hebrew Judaism* and the Hebrew Bible. With the spatial spread of Christianity throughout the ecumenism of the Roman Empire and the shift of its centre away from Jerusalem, as well as with the re-Hebraisation of Hellenistic diaspora Judaism after the Bar Kochba revolt of 132–136 AD, there occurred—partly fuelled by local conflicts and without ignoring some lasting regional processes of exchange—ever greater alienation of the Church from its Jewish root soil. This observa-

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tion holds true even if one does not assume that, with Peter Schäfer (2015, 11), there was a "parting of the ways", i.e. a final and complete separation between the sister religions (!) Judaism and Christianity (cf. also Peter Gemeinhardt 2022, 20–21). Despite all the assurances of the mosaics in the early Christian basilicas, the ecclesia ex circumcisione no longer exists, and certainly not as a halfway equal sister to the ecclesia ex gentibus. With this, however, much knowledge about the Jew Jesus of Nazareth, his culture, his way of life and his handling of the Holy Scriptures is lost.

– the *hermeneutical* narrowing that arises from the increasing *dominance of allegory* as the preferred method of scriptural interpretation. Occasionally, the (purely) allegorical interpretation of the Creation narratives and the biblical vision of animal peace is explicitly rejected (Irenaeus of Lyons, Basil of Caesarea); sometimes it is deliberately used only as one of several methods (Theophilos of Antioch, Augustine). More and more often, however, it is propagated as the only "truly spiritual" method of interpreting Scripture (Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Ambrose of Milan, Jerome). Origen and Jerome explicitly justify this on the grounds that a literal interpretation would make many biblical narratives seem fairy-tale-like or fabulous, e.g. the Noah narrative or the vision of the peace of the beasts. Nevertheless, allegorism must be seen as a highly ambiguous means of resolving this problem. By definition, it is "a method of textual interpretation that presupposes that the literal sense is not the actual or only sense of a text, and therefore attempts to tap into its assumed [...] depth of meaning [...] In order to make this dimension of meaning accessible, the text is related point by point to a system of reference built up by the philosophical or theological convictions of the interpreter" (Thomas Söding 1993, 400). And this is precisely where the problem lies: it is largely left to the subjective (and usually not further substantiated!) judgement of the interpreter which elements of a text he interprets allegorically and with reference to which system of reference he decodes them. Here lies the decisive difference between myths and parables, which are perceived as holistic images, and allegoresis, which breaks down a narrative into many individual images and interprets some of them quite isolated from the overall context. Thus, the biblical vision of animal peace understands the playing of the human infant in front of the adder's loophole as an image of trust and guilelessness, but the infant and the snake as real beings. The allegorism of the Church Fathers(with the exception of Irenaeus of Lyon), on the other hand,

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interprets animals as metaphors for various groups of people and thus eliminates the real animals from the text. The same happens with the Flood narrative: the wood of the ark is typologised as the wood of Jesus' cross, the water of the Flood is typologised as the water of baptism, the ark is typologised as the church, and the animals in the ark are typologised as the various groups of people, wilder or tamer, more educated or less educated. The Noah narrative is thus reinterpreted as an image for living together in the colourful zoo of the church. The bottom line is that the increasingly consistent allegorising of animals in biblical narratives ensures an increasing fading out that real animals are increasingly faded out—to their detriment and damage.

The result of these four narrowings is that the material selection of biblical texts available for animal ethics is becoming more and more limited. And this small residual number of biblical texts is then also formally interpreted in an increasingly Hellenistic way.

– The *allegorical interpretation* eliminates animals from all the texts that appear "fairytale-like" to Hellenism: The vision of animal peace in Is 11 is only interpreted literally by Irenaeus of Lyons, its New Testament counterpart Mk 1:13 only by Clement of Alexandria. Otherwise, the biblical peace of animals is interpreted as a hidden speech about peace among human beings. The Flood narrative Gen 6–9, one of the central Old Testament texts on the ethics of the relationship between humans and animals, is similarly affected: that the animals of all species are saved at all (as the only exception, Origen, Contra Celsum 4, 41); that God's covenant applies to them just as it does to humans (cf. the negative finding in Andrew Louth 2001, 154–155 and also already in Hugo Rahner 1964, 504–547; the only exception is Irenaeus of Lyons); that they form a community of destiny, but also a community of law with God and man; all this is not perceived by the Church Fathers.
– Due to the *alienation from Hebrew Judaism,* attention to the animal ethical norms of the Torah is lost: Only Clement of Alexandria (and, to be precise, Aphrahat with anti-Jewish intent) takes up Philon's great reflections. After that, the corresponding commandments are completely lost sight of. Clement is also the only one who positively appreciates Jesus' reference to God's fatherly and motherly care for animals in Mt 6:24–34 —the alienation is thus not only an alienation from the Old Testament, but also from the Jewish Rabbi Jesus (who, by the way, argues in the wisdom tradition in the specific passage Mt 6). It is most clearly visible in

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the abandonment of the Jewish commandment of ritual slaughter. This commandment, which is so important from the point of view of animal ethics and which gets under the skin emotionally, was imposed on the "Gentile Christians" in the Apostles' Council Acts 15 as one of only three Jewish commandments—against the fierce resistance of Paul. But after Tertullian at the latest, it no longer plays a role and vanishes without any internal church disputes. There are simply no Jewish Christians left who could stand up for the retention of ritual slaughter.

What remains as a written basis for considerations relevant to animal ethics is a relatively manageable body of texts:

- the two Creation narratives Gen 1–3, in which an exclusively allegorical interpretation of animals is forbidden out of respect for the faith in creation,
- the Logos hymn Jn 1, corresponding to Gen 1,
- the Psalms, in which animals are abundantly mentioned (first and foremost Ps 8 and Ps 104, but also many others) and which also defy an exclusively allegorical interpretation,
- Those biblical passages that deal with a vegetarian diet: Gen 1:29 in conjunction with Gen 9:3; Dan 6; 9–10 and Rom 14:20–21 in an abbreviated reading. Tatian and Basil of Caesarea interpret animal ethical reasons for their plea in favour of voluntary vegetarianism from these passages; Clement of Alexandria understands this as natural on the basis of Gen 1, while Jerome interprets vegetarianism in Gen 1 as a state of spiritual purity.

Of course, one must also bear in mind that not all Church Fathers had a complete collection of the biblical books at their disposal. Many scriptural quotations may only have been transmitted to them from the writings of other Church Fathers. Nevertheless, without the aforementioned "restrictions", they would have been able to make far more biblical texts fruitful in terms of animal ethics.

Alongside this serious quantitative restriction of the textual basis is a qualitative shift in interpretation: the Septuagint, the authoritative text of the Old Testament for both the New Testament authors and the Church Fathers, is not simply a translation of the Hebrew text into Greek, but at the same time (mostly unconsciously and unintentionally) its Hellenistic interpretation and "recolouration". This will be illustrated once again by

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the two examples that have come up most frequently in the course of our investigations:

– Gen 1:27 LXX (and its inner-biblical citation in Sir 17:3 LXX) reads: κατ᾽ εἰκόνα αὐτοῦ ἐποίησεν αὐτούς. Here, for the first time, the image of God is reinterpreted in terms of Greek thought. The functional–relational statement that man was created as the image of God (Gen 1:27) becomes the essence–ontological statement that he was created in His image. The preposition κᾰ́τα in the accusative denotes a goal towards which something is done, or a resemblance to a model—in the concrete case, the latter. But this does not correspond to what the Hebrew text says. Georg Fischer translates it very literally as follows: "We want to make 'man' *as* our statue, *as* our likeness!... And God created man *as* his statue, *as the statue of* God he created him." (Georg Fischer 2018, 148 and 153). Fischer thereby interprets the threefold "as our statue" in the sense of a close *relationship* and the "as our likeness" in the sense of an abiding difference (Georg Fischer 2018, 152). The Septuagint, on the other hand, makes it a similarity in terms of being. Since Theophilos of Antioch, this interpretation has guided all patristics.
– Ps 48:13 LXX reads, "παρασυνεβλήθη τοῖς κτήνεσιν τοῖς ἀνοήτοις καὶ ὡμοιώθη αὐτοῖς"—"he resembles the reasonless cattle and becomes like them". The "he" in the patristic reception refers to unreasonable, immoral people. In the original Hebrew of Ps 49,13, however, it is said of rich and poor, wise and foolish alike: "But man does not abide in his splendour; he is like cattle that fall silent." In death, the thought goes, all are equal: rich and poor, man and cattle. In the Septuagint, on the other hand, the silencing in death is replaced by the lack of understanding in life—a completely different statement. You can see how the Septuagint Hellenises the Hebrew text: According to the Stoic conviction, man and animals are precisely not equal to each other in death, since the soul of man is immortal—a conviction that is unthinkable in Israel at the time of the Psalms. And equally unthinkable for the Psalms is to describe animals as "reasonless". Hellenism upgrades humans and downgrades animals—and thus makes it impossible to compare their fates. Thus, the Septuagint and, following it, the Church Fathers must inevitably reinterpret the sentence.

Beyond the reinterpretations in the Septuagint text, some Church Fathers look for those formulations in the Creation narratives Gen 1–3 that can be used (independently of the original intention of the biblical authors) to

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mark a difference between humans and animals, and ignore those formulations that clearly state there is a form of equality between humans and animals. Thus, for example, Origen and Ephraim strongly emphasise that according to Gen 1:20 and 24 LXX, animals were "brought forth" from the water or the earth and not directly created by God. The fact that God "makes" and "creates" animals in the same way as humans (Gen 1:21 and 25 LXX), on the other hand, is passed over. Likewise, Ephraim interprets from Gen 2:7 and 19 that God did not breathe the breath of life directly into animals but reserved this privilege for man alone. Obviously, he seeks what he wants to find and ignores what does not fit into his concept.

So, a plethora of factors from more than half a millennium of intellectual history ultimately leads to the animal ethical ideas of the Church Fathers that have influenced Christian theology to this day. Most of these factors are grounded neither in the Jewish Bible nor in the preaching of Jesus of Nazareth but influence the small and young Church first from "outside"—from the Hellenistic culture that dominates the entire Roman Empire—but then "from within" because practically all Christians were born into this Hellenistic culture and grew up in it. They do not perceive Hellenism as foreign, but as their own—before they turn to Christianity and also after they have become Christians.

Christian anthropocentrism thus has neither (pre-Hellenistic) Old Testament nor Jesuian roots. At the same time, with the social acceptance of Darwin's theory of evolution, it has become a fossil of intellectual history. This is then all the more reason to ask systematically and theologically in the last chapter whether it is not time to put 2000 years of Christian anthropocentrism to rest and establish a new form of creation ethics in its place.

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