

Heidegger, Moral Values, and Non-Human Animals: Philosophical Intersections

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This paper explores the realm of Heidegger's writings to examine how moral ideas intersect with non-human creatures from a phenomenological standpoint. The human-animal dilemma becomes more urgent over time, and our future becomes less predictable. The paper commences by examining the significance of attending to the particularities of *Dasein*, as understood in the Heideggerian framework. This entails moving beyond the limited boundaries of contemporary scientific and technocratic paradigms and illuminating the potential for investigating not only human experiences but also those of animals. This study examines Heidegger's phenomenological understanding of animals, focusing on the post-humanist emotional aspects of human morality. It acknowledges the presence of intersubjectivity and investigates the underlying intersectionality. Additionally, it suggests potential directions for future research and inquiry.

Keywords: moral values – Heidegger – phenomenology – *Dasein* – non-human animals

Introduction

The current study addresses the unresolved inquiries that have been previously raised elsewhere (Chakraborty 2016). In the original paper that inspired this one, the author advocated the postmodernist viewpoint, asserting that mere neutrality, universality, and consistency are inadequate for comprehending non-human animals in a morally perceptive manner (Chakraborty 2016). The proposal put forward in the aforementioned paper argued for the utilization of empathy as a means to better understand the experiences and requirements of animals. By acknowledging the emotive components of human morality, a more empathetic and compassionate approach has been put forward.

The present study will undertake a re-evaluation of Heidegger's perspective of the dynamic relationship between human moral standards and his philosophical views on animals¹ (Heidegger 1995, 209, 249 – 257; Heidegger 2010, 70, 237). Additionally, ideas from academics specializing in Heidegger's works will be incorporated.² In order to enhance our comprehension of this particular association, we apply a contemporary phenomenological methodology that underscores the intrinsic interdependence within this given framework. The core focus of this work concerns the fundamental inquiry: How do human moral principles intersect with the ethical treatment of non-human animals?

The paper is driven by a twofold purpose. Initially, the concept of post-humanism is embraced to widen the scope of philosophical inquiry by adopting a phenomenological perspective that encompasses dimensions beyond the human sphere. In this exploration, fundamental phenomenological concepts are employed to introduce the ideas of intersubjectivity and post-humanism. One of these concepts is embodiment (*Dasein*), which serves as the foundation of Heidegger's interpretation of animals. In this regard, we will discuss Heidegger's fourfold framework, intrinsic value, as well as considerations of death, finitude, and responsibility. Furthermore, we will investigate the notion of a shared world (*Mitwelt*) and Dreyfus' concept of "skillful coping." These frameworks shed light on how animals interact through practical skills and bodily dispositions. We will draw inspiration from Heidegger and Dreyfus to highlight the importance of cultivating ethical intersubjectivity. This is best exemplified by Heidegger's unique understanding of animals' preontological awareness, which leads to an existential connection and responsibility. These involve the cultivation of empathetic bonds, emphasizing animal welfare, and promoting compassionate interactions.

I. Non-Human Animals and the Moral Domain: Phenomenological Perspectives

The recognition of the distinct and situational elements of our encounters is gaining prominence within the scholarly discourse surrounding phenomenology. The concept of embodiment (as put forth by Heidegger in 1962) serves as a means to question the concept of representation and the dichotomies between the mind and body commonly associated with the

¹ Heidegger's animal discourse is primarily found in his 1929 – 1930 lecture course *The Fundamental Concepts* delivered in the winter semester at the University of Freiburg, as well as *Being and Time* and *Questions Concerning Technology*.

² The paper takes into account Dreyfus, Bailey and Foltz's perspectives.

Cartesian philosophy. Significantly, this pattern encompasses not only the experiences of humans but also those of animals because the phenomenon of human experience is not the only way to understand the world. The phenomenological approach challenges traditional views that prioritize human experience and suggests that our embodied experiences are an essential part of how we encounter the world. This means that our bodily experiences cannot be reduced to sensory input alone. Heidegger's work reflects this understanding, and his phenomenological comprehension of animals evolved over time. For Heidegger, animals are characterized by a preontological understanding of their environment, which is why they cannot reach "the worldhood of the world" (Heidegger 2002, 34); their expressions are "mere *psophoi*" (noise devoid of semantic content). "Worldhood of the world" refers to a meaningful and coherent totality, and it is the context in which things and events acquire meaning and significance. The meanings discussed here are not just theoretical but rather practical and involve active engagement with the world. According to Heidegger, this is why humans hold a superior position, as they possess intellectual understanding and have the capacity to undertake meaningful projects.

It is imperative to acknowledge that maintaining a perspective that is not dismissive or antagonistic towards non-human animals is possible. Heidegger criticizes the ontotheological thesis and highlights his worry about the unwelcoming attitudes towards animals. According to him, the reductionist approach, which logical positivists promote, fails to recognize the uniqueness of animal existence and undermines the significance of the role animals play in shaping our understanding of the world (Heidegger 2012). Heidegger, despite arguing against traditional metaphysical systems, aims to broaden humans' moral consideration for non-human animals by acknowledging their unique ways of Being. This moral consideration is not solely based on anthropocentric reasons, but its implications are numerous in considering *Dasein* as a holistic entity, revealing diverse manifestations, and uncovering the deeper meaning of embodiment. However, it is not reasonable to expect Heidegger to provide a moral theory that can be directly used as a theoretical framework for making specific ethical judgments.

Frank Schalow investigates the issue further to unravel a deep-rooted inquiry: How might a Heideggerian perspective, which departs from the modern, anthropocentric tradition, generate a different discourse for addressing the issues raised by the discussion of whether animals can have "rights" and the efforts of animal protection advocates to use legal measures

or similar enactments to prevent abuse? (Schalow 2015, 62) Schalow's argument is not definitive in this regard but is exploratory, emphasizing how Heidegger's perspectives are weighty enough to challenge the anthropocentrism underlying modern legal theories and practices. Schalow focuses on Heidegger's concept of the "fourfold" that provides a basis for new language and discourse, taking into account the intrinsic value of non-human animals and the environment. For Heidegger, the world is not just a collection of objects and resources for human use but rather a network of interconnected beings and components that deserve equal consideration and respect. In his own words, "the fourfold gathers the four regions into their rift, and from that rift they shine forth in their respective ways" (Heidegger 1971, 333).

The primary constituents of the fourfold framework consist of the elemental components of earth, sky, divinities, and mortals. Each of these elements possesses distinct features and holds significant importance. When considered collectively, they form a multifaceted and ever-changing system that supports the existence of life on our planet. The Earth serves as the fundamental physical substrate upon which living organisms depend for their sustenance and continued existence, whereas the sky encompasses the atmosphere and the conditions necessary for it. Divinities encompass the metaphysical and ethereal dimensions of reality, establishing a link between mortal beings and a broader cosmic framework, while mortals pertain to the corporeal entities that reside on the planet and engage in various forms of interaction. Through the fourfold, Heidegger suggests developing a new language that takes into account the intrinsic value of non-human beings as opposed to our current ways of thinking, which are mainly flawed and reduce everything to mere abstract concepts and categories that obscure the true nature of existence. The fourfold scheme is not fixed or static but is a dynamic and ever-changing scheme. In Heidegger's words, "the essential thing in the fourfold is that it is a gathering. In this gathering, the essential sway of each member comes from their presence as a presencing. The presencing of each member belongs to the others and thus itself comes to presence in its own way" (Heidegger 1971, 327). Graham Harman has developed a philosophy of "object-oriented ontology" (Graham 2018, 22),³ which shares some similarities with Heidegger's fourfold. For Harman, all entities, humans, animals, and inanimate objects have their own unique qualities, and they exist in

³ "Object-oriented ontology" is a philosophical stance that highlights the actuality and self-sufficiency of the world, encompassing both human and non-human elements. It opposes the notion that objects are merely passive and subservient to human observation or understanding, contending that objects possess inherent attributes distinct from human awareness.

a complex network of relationships with each other that are nonreducible to individual components (Graham 2018, 22). In this approach, a central principle asserts that objects are deliberately held at arm's length, beyond immediate access or full comprehension, maintaining an element of mystique or unresolved knowledge. Nevertheless, this deliberate distancing does not imply that objects are entirely beyond reach or impenetrable; it simply highlights the partial and confined nature of our understanding. Similarly, Timothy Morton's "hyperobjects"⁴ are intimately intertwined with human existence, and we need to develop new ways of thinking and relating to them to address ecological crises (Morton 2013, 11).

Phenomenologically, the fourfold can be perceived as a pathway that transcends the dichotomic thought patterns that pervaded Western traditions for a long time. It surpasses the reductive divisions between mind and body⁵ and "rests upon the presencing of being, in which everything participates in its own way" (Heidegger 1971, 333), bringing out the possibilities of a new beginning, a new thought. The new intrinsic thought that rules in Heidegger's philosophy reaffirms an existential bond where we dwell. This existential bond, he writes, "is ultimately to be thought ecologically, which is to say, beyond the subject-object dichotomy and toward an understanding of the interdependence of all things" (Heidegger 1971, 153). Earth is not merely a celestial body in the cosmos; it is the very ground of self-concealment and self-disclosure that Western philosophy, science, and technology have sought to conquer. Heidegger's "Building, Dwelling, Thinking" speaks about the Earth as an active and creative force giving rise to all that we see and experience. However, then again, how do Heidegger's ideas about the Earth and self-emergence relate to our treatment of animals? Practices such as factory farming and animal experimentation reveal the ways in which technology violates the intrinsic nature and self-reserve of living beings. Peter Singer's work has provided evidence in support of Heidegger's claim. Singer's work is especially effective in exposing the senselessness of subjecting animals to suffering and cruelty (Singer 1975).⁶ He demonstrates how little is gained by such practices and

⁴ "Hyperobjects" are entities so large and complex that they exceed our capacity to fully understand them. Such hyperobjects may be climate change or nuclear radiation (Morton 2013, 17 – 93).

⁵ Despite Heidegger's discourse on transcending Cartesian dualities, he lands in the division between human "*Dasein*" and animal "*Wesen*" (beings), as well as between "*Welt*" (world) and "*Umwelt*" (environment) (Löwith 1990, 155 – 170).

⁶ Singer posits that animals can experience pleasure and suffering, arguing for their ethical treatment, respecting their capacity, and minimizing exploitative actions.

highlights the insignificant nature of experimenting with results and the negligible impact on cost reduction. This evidence supports Heidegger's view that modern technology has an alluring hold over us, leading us to prioritize efficiency, dominance, and control over other values (Heidegger 2008).

We have become fixated on technology as a source of salvation, and we must work to break free from this enchantment, to come out of "enframing" (*Gestell*) (Heidegger 1977, 20)⁷ where we see beings in terms of their usefulness to us and reduce them to mere resources. The concept of "let beings be" (Heidegger 2001, 150) prompts significant inquiries regarding our treatment of animals, since beings are understood as part of a larger context of Being, and there is a need to treat them with respect and care that comes from recognizing their intrinsic value. This involves moving beyond our self-centered perspective and embracing a more holistic notion of the universe (Foltz 1993, 86). "Being" as an onto-metaphysical notion delves into the nature of existence itself, transcending the realm of individual entities or beings, whereas "being" is contingent and derives its existence from the more fundamental concept of Being. *Dasein* pertains not to a disembodied consciousness or a transcendent being but to a human being connected to the world in modes of engagement, understanding, and interpretation of reality. Heidegger rejects the conventional subject-object framework of epistemology, which assumes that a subject knows an object, and argues that the essence of *Dasein* lies in its being-in-the-world.⁸ In unfolding *Dasein*, one thing becomes clear that the philosophy does not support the idea of objectifying or "othering" beings and using them solely as a means to an end. Instead, it emphasizes the interconnection and interdependence between beings, recognizing their inherent value and the significance of each individual entity.

Hubert Dreyfus, a prominent scholar in Heideggerian philosophy, expounds upon the notion of being as a phenomenon that does not pertain to our possession akin to an object or property. Instead, being emerges from our active involvement with the environment through what Dreyfus terms "skilful coping" (Dreyfus 1991, 93).⁹ According to Dreyfus, our practical skills

⁷ In Heidegger's philosophy, "enframing" (or *Gestell*) diminishes all entities, even humans, to mere manipulable objects, obscuring their deeper essence. This undermines ethical values by reducing everything to exploitable tools, concealing the inherent significance of being.

⁸ This view is, in contrast to Husserlian phenomenology, which emphasizes an isolated individual. Heidegger's philosophy emphasizes the holistic and contextual character of human existence.

⁹ Hubert Dreyfus coins this word "embodied coping" as a deep, prereflective understanding of our environment and its abilities.

and bodily dispositions are not merely a matter of physical movements or automatic responses but involve a deep understanding of the situation in which we find ourselves. As an illustration, during the act of dribbling the basketball along the court, proficient players do not engage in conscious deliberation over the precise coordination of their hands and feet. Instead, they become completely immersed in the dynamic rhythm of the game. Athletes possess the ability to predict the motions of their adversaries, swiftly make decisions, and flawlessly execute their movements with accuracy and elegance. This form of embodied coping necessitates a profound comprehension of the comprehension of the circumstances and the capacity to react suitably, devoid of conscious contemplation. For Dreyfus, “embodied coping” is the primary way through which we discover meanings, make sense of our experiences, and engage with the world around us (Dreyfus 2014). Our skills and habits are not just physical actions but are rooted in a deeper understanding of the world and our place in it. “Embodied coping” is synonymous with skilled coping, and in *A Commentary*, Dreyfus first discusses the concept of skilled coping, which is our ability to engage with the world in a practical, embodied way, without the need for conscious reflection or deliberation. He writes, “The discovery of entities is not an act of relating a sense-datum to a concept but is rather the way one initially copes with equipment by relying on embodied coping skills” (Dreyfus 1991, 97). The primary argument that rests on this claim is that our understanding of the world does not come solely from mental concepts or sensory data. Instead, we use our bodily skills, habits, and practical knowledge to engage with the world and understand it, rather than relying solely on abstract mental representations. Similarly, non-human animals also possess this ability to engage with the world through embodied coping. In his view, animals are not simply passive recipients of sensory data but rather are actively engaged with the environment using their bodily skills and instincts. This means that animals, like humans, are always situated within a particular context and interact with the world in a practical, embodied way. From a moral standpoint, a profound philosophical synthesis emerges that underscores the moral significance of non-human animals. It recognizes their inherent value, agency, and rightful place within the moral domain. This perspective transcends anthropocentric worldviews, urging an ethical contemplation of animals’ well-being, rights, and moral role in the fabric of existence.

II. Philosophical Intersections

The philosophical investigation of the moral environment that non-human animals inhabit represents a profound inquiry into the essence of our humanity and the nature of our duties as guardians of the natural world. Building upon our previous conversation, it is clear that for Dreyfus, when considering interactions between humans and non-human entities, the conventional perspective that regards animals as nothing more than machines or stimulus-response mechanisms is flawed (Dreyfus 1972). His conceptualization of “being” is closely intertwined with his analysis of animal cognition, thereby creating a philosophical overlap between the two areas of inquiry. Dreyfus was particularly interested in embodied engagement (Dreyfus 1972),¹⁰ a pathway to explore human-nonhuman relationships and ways of interacting with the world and ourselves. In *What Computers Can't Do*, Dreyfus discusses the differences between human and animal cognition and argues that animals possess a form of embodied intelligence that cannot be replicated by machines, for “animals are not merely passive responders to external stimuli but are actively engaged in a dynamic and reciprocal relationship with their environment” (Dreyfus 1972, 115).

Considering the rapidly changing nature of modern society, Dreyfus examines the intricate relationships between humans and non-human animals within the context of digital culture. This is achieved by acknowledging the internet as a platform where humans engage with non-human entities such as software programs, digital assistants, and virtual pets. This has resulted in a new type of connection and companionship, thereby changing the way we interact with the world as a whole (Dreyfus 2011). In this context, Dreyfus explores the significance of non-human animals in human society and culture. Humans have historically used animals to create meaning and establish their identity, and our connections with them are influenced by a range of complex social, cultural, and historical factors. We interact with non-human entities (such as animals, virtual pets, and robots) in a way that is based on practical engagement and skilful coping, meaning our interactions are shaped not only by computational rules or algorithms but also by our practical engagement with the world (Dreyfus 2011, 94). For instance, interacting with a dog involves more than just following a set of rules or preconceived notions. Our interaction with the dog is influenced by our

¹⁰ This embodied engagement is a holistic form of cognition that is grounded in our bodily capacities and senses and allows us to navigate and interact with our environment in sophisticated ways.

practical understanding of how to use our body and senses to respond to the dog's movements and behaviors. Similarly, when we interact with a virtual pet or robot, we apply our practical knowledge of manipulating objects and responding to sensory input. This highlights the idea of the intersection between humans and non-human animals from a different perspective.

The points of intersection the paper is exploring can also be examined through "death,"¹¹ a fundamental concern in Heidegger's phenomenology, as it serves as a key to understanding human existence and particular ways in which human beings are distinct from other non-human animals in the world. In Heidegger, death is an ever-present possibility shaping human existence from moment to moment because death "opens up the question of Being." Mark Wrathall's dense interpretation points out the fact that Heidegger's emphasis on death as a possibility is a way of highlighting the finitude of human existence and how they confront their own mortality. Death as a possibility is tied to time and acts as a signal for all our responsibility of choice and actions and living in a way that is truly authentic and meaningful (Wrathall 2006, 46). Only Being (*seyn*) through being-towards-death can understand the nuances of authentic dying, whereas *Dasein* (one's existence) is aware of one's morality and inevitability of death. In contrast to death lies perishing, which animals go through, when their existence comes to an end. This is why our awareness of death shapes our very existence and the world around us (from which moral values are formed).

Heidegger has revealed the "true meaning of death," which is a possibility and not an actuality. Sheets-Johnstone interpreted *Being-towards-death* as the fundamental existential mode of human beings that involves recognition of one's mortality and anticipation of their eventual death (Sheets-Johnstone 2015). Whereas man is *weltbildend* (world forming), *geschichtlich* (historically minded), and *sprach-begabt* (endowed with language), Heidegger's animals are *weltarm*, i.e., poor in the world, and their world is poor. However, this poverty does not signify a lack of sensibility and vitality but rather a lack of world. In a being poor in world, the world itself is poor and empty" (Heidegger 1995, 376). Heidegger makes it clear that the animal's world poverty is not a matter of "hierarchical evaluation" and that it "allows no evaluative ranking

¹¹ Death is fundamental in understanding human existence and shaping our moral values. Despite animals lacking the identical comprehension of death as humans, they remain subject to their own mortality. Heidegger asserts that our recognition of our own limited time can cultivate a heightened value for life's delicacy and worth, potentially influencing our outlook towards fellow living entities. See *Being and Time*, Chapter VI.

or assessment with respect to completeness or incompleteness” (Heidegger 1995, 194). It does not indicate having less but means being deprived (*entbehren*) (Heidegger 1995, 195). Hence, “poor in the world” (Heidegger 1995, 195) or Agamben’s “bare life”¹² (Agamben 2004, 38) highlights the unique features of human existence that make *Dasein* possible and underscores self-awareness, authentic relationships, and reflectivity necessary for human existence.

Humans search for meaning and purpose in life, which leads to the creation of values. Unlike fixed principles or rules, values are subjective and open to interpretation, reflecting diverse perspectives and experiences. The concept of moral values is related to humans in two primary ways. Firstly, awareness of one’s own existence and questioning of one’s being can lead to an understanding of the ethical dimensions of human existence. This questioning can lead to a recognition of the importance of living in a way that is morally responsible. Secondly, humans are inherently embedded within a cultural and historical milieu. This environment shapes our interpretation of the world and ourselves, influencing our conception of moral values. As a result, values are not static but subject to change. Thirdly, the concept of authenticity is closely linked to moral values. Humans can lead an authentic life, which means living true to one’s self and values. Living authentically involves making a choice that reflects one’s values and convictions instead of conforming to social norms and external expectations. Therefore, for Heidegger, moral values are closely connected to the concepts of authenticity and a true life. Christiane Bailey suggests that our level of “familiarity” with animals influences how we perceive their evolutionary advancement. Our understanding of animals is not a fixed or rigid phenomenon but a dynamic process that develops over time. Often, we tend to anthropomorphize animals in our understanding of them; this is not a prejudice to be eliminated, but it is merely a construct of our perception that we should keep in mind. In her words,

I suggest the distinction between higher and lower animals corresponds less to an “objective” divide between primary and evolved animals than to a phenomenological distinction between familiar and unfamiliar animals. This distinction is between forms of life in which we spontaneously perceive

¹² Agamben’s “bare life” refers to the state of mere biological existence stripped of political or legal significance.

meaningful expressions and animals whose lives are so estranged from our own that we cannot immediately understand them (Bailey 2011, 48).

The discussion opens up a significant possibility of an intersection between Heidegger's understanding of non-human animals and human moral values as the ethics of care. Humans have a responsibility to care for the world around them because "Care is the basic mode of Being of *Dasein* [human existence] itself. *Dasein's* being is essentially care... The entity which has this kind of Being, we call 'being-in-the-world.'" The term "world" denotes the totality of those entities that can be encountered within the range of one's access. "To care for" these entities means to secure the possibilities of their Being (Heidegger 1962, 126). It can be well understood from this quotation that humans have a responsibility to care for the world,¹³ including animals, to secure the possibilities of their Being. *Dasein's* existence is characterized by "thrownness" (*Geworfenheit*) into the world (Heidegger 2010, 135)¹⁴ and is always absorbed in the world of concern. This concern impacts not only our being-in-the-world¹⁵ but also our being-with-others, emphasizing the fundamental relationship between ourselves and other beings in the world. Care, therefore, captures this fundamental relationship and our ontological concern for other beings.

The point of intersection directs us to an understanding of the lived world (*Lebenswelt*), more specifically a shared world (*Mitwelt*) that applies to all, including animals. In phenomenology, the world is not just a collection of objects or things but is instead a meaningful and coherent system of relations and experiences that is fundamentally shaped by the way human beings engage with it. Bailey reflects on how Husserl ponders the question of intersubjectivity

¹³ Aldo Leopold's land ethics is based on the idea of treating land with care and respect. Leopold wrote, "a land ethic changes the role of Homo Sapiens from conqueror of the land community to plain member and citizen of it" (Leopold 1949, 204). Arne Naess also developed the idea of "deep ecology" emphasizing care as an important element (Naess 1989). Even for J. Baird Callicott, humans should adopt a care-based approach to environmental ethics that emphasizes the interdependence of all life on Earth and promotes the flourishing of non-human life. (Callicott 1989, 57.)

¹⁴ "Thrownness" captures the idea that individuals do not choose the circumstances of their birth or upbringing and are instead "thrown" into a world that has been shaped by historical, cultural and social forces.

¹⁵ In the "Introduction" to Dreyfus' and Wrathall's *A Companion to Heidegger*, the author provides an accessible overview of Heidegger's philosophy and offers his own interpretation of being as a dynamic and fluid phenomenon, a continuous unfolding, intertwined with our everyday existence and characterized by our ongoing interactions, projects and meaningful encounters with the world.

and enquires how a solipsistic ego could encounter something that has not yet attained the sense of “man” (Bailey 2011, 37). Phenomenological reduction (*Epoche*), by suspending all assumptions, offers a viewpoint where the differences between humans and animals remain open and yet undecided. In a Husserlian understanding,¹⁶ animals and humans exist objectively, and consciousness is linked objectively to the natural lived bodies of both animals and humans (Husserl 2001). Bailey rightly pointed out that during the summer semester lecture course, Heidegger recognized that animals possess a form of understanding (Bailey 2011, 63). Before Heidegger limited *Dasein*'s mode of being to humans in *Being and Time*, he had in mind that animals have a certain level of being as a “being for whom living, being-in-itself, matters to it in some way” (Heidegger 2002b, 51). This lack of clarity can lead us to disregard the inherent nature of animals in the world when making value judgments.

The study takes a phenomenological approach, focusing on how we experience the phenomena we encounter. While it leans towards a realist perspective, it emphasizes the implicit role of human moral values in the understanding of *Dasein*. This underscores the significance of individual agency and responsibility in shaping our moral values and ethical considerations towards non-human animals. *Dasein* (as discussed) refers to a fundamental mode of human existence that is characterized by our ability to make choices and act in ways that align with our values and beliefs. It suggests that humans have a unique responsibility to care for and protect non-human animals and recognize their inherent value as beings in the world. Even Heidegger's emphasis on the existential possibility of death (also endorsed by Wrathall) for human beings, as opposed to the mere perishing of non-human animals, underscores the unique responsibility that humans have towards the natural world and its inhabitants. This responsibility includes recognizing the moral value of non-human animals and working to ensure that they are treated with care and respect, both in life and death.

Heidegger believed that language defines human existence and makes them superior to non-human animals. This is more understandable with the fourfold framework of Heidegger (also Harman's “object-oriented ontology” and Morton's “hyperobjects”), offering a unique perspective on the way human beings and animals exist and coexist, recognizing the inherent worth and value

¹⁶ The Husserlian method of inquiry does not in itself lead to any specific conclusion regarding animals or any particular subject of investigation. However, this study is just a phenomenological inquiry concerning the study of the animals' perspective and our experiences of them.

of all beings. While his views may not align with those of contemporary ethicists, they leave the question open of what the practical implications of ethical considerations and moral values towards non-human animals are and how they can be translated into actionable steps for improving the treatment of these animals. While these steps may call for different research, there are solid philosophical avenues to explore in this regard. Dreyfus' ideas, in particular, can be a helpful guide in this exploration, offering insights into how humans and non-human animals exist and coexist and the moral considerations and ethical values that arise in these intersubjective intersections.

Animal cognition and embodied intelligence have implications for moral considerations and our understanding of intersubjectivity beyond human-to-human relations. The fact that animals are not passive responders and are actively engaged in reciprocal relationships with the environment (Dreyfus 2011) suggests that animals have a form of subjective experience that ought to be taken into account during our moral deliberations. In other words, expanding the understanding of intersubjectivity to include non-human animals is necessary. It is important to consider the perspectives and needs of these animals in terms of ethical considerations. This opens up the possibility of a post-humanistic framework (Haraway 2008),¹⁷ which highlights the need for a more inclusive and interconnected approach to ethics and values and comes up with a different kind of intersubjective space that goes beyond human-to-human relations. Dreyfus, however, was sceptical of the post-humanist approach, arguing that it was based on a flawed understanding of what it means to be a human by emphasizing the possibilities of disembodiment, immortality, and unlimited power, which Dreyfus saw as a denial of our finite, mortal, and vulnerable nature (Dreyfus 2011).¹⁸ The critique of post-humanism, as Dreyfus puts forward, is based on his belief that human beings are not just information processors but embodied and situated beings with a unique form of intelligence that cannot be replicated by machines.

¹⁷ Posthumanism is a philosophical framework that challenges traditional human-centred approaches and recognizes the agency and importance of non-human entities. Donna J. Haraway argues for a reconceptualization of human-animal relations as "companion species" and emphasizes the importance of recognizing the shared evolutionary histories and interconnectedness between humans and non-human animals (Haraway 2008).

¹⁸ For Dreyfus, the post-human condition would not actually represent a true transcendence of human limitations, but rather loss of important human qualities. Humans are embodied beings and are inseparable from our physical, social and cultural environments, as they shape our perceptions, emotions, actions and identity.

He believes that post-humanism risks devaluing the human condition and ignoring the importance of our embodied existence and cultural heritage.

When discussing post-humanism, philosophical issues are approached from a more holistic perspective that expands intersubjectivity beyond the human realm. Considering the agency of animals, machines, and even the environment itself in our social and relational experiences is crucial. This expanded view helps us deepen our understanding of ourselves and our interactions with others, as well as the wider world in which we live. In the subsequent sections, the aim stated in the introduction to explore the ethical intersectionality of non-human animals and moral values is thoroughly explored and substantiated. The paper gave thoughtful consideration to the ideas of Heidegger and Dreyfus, specifically with regard to the intersection of humans and non-human animals. From these concepts, we can envision an intersubjective space where animals and humans interact. This space is explored through Dreyfus' concept of embodied engagement, which reveals how animals actively participate in reciprocal narratives with their surroundings. Concurrently, Heidegger's constructs of "being-towards-death" and the state of being "poor-in-the-world" enrich the discourse, presenting tangible instances that underscore the distinct demarcation between the human and the animal. Through a careful exegesis of posthumanist thought, the discourse stretches even wider, fostering empathetic connections (Dreyfus' embodiment, situated existence), the behavioural methods of non-human animals, and recognizing the interdependence between human beings and non-human animals (as both part of the larger fabric of *Being*) to potentially reshape the contours of ethical contemplation. These intricately woven strands of analysis lend substantial credence to establishing an intersubjective space, acknowledging the inherent worth of non-human animals, and fostering compassionate interactions. This could even involve adopting animal welfare-centred practices, supporting conservation initiatives, and engaging in conversations concerning ethical treatment of animals. Given these, the intent of the paper, built upon Heidegger and Dreyfus, diverges in several keyways. First, it extends its concept beyond an ontological explanation to emphasize nurturing ethical intersubjectivity. This (ethical) dimension, grounded in Heidegger's holistic universe, is a departure from the original ontological focus. Moreover, it contrasts with Heidegger and Dreyfus' primarily theoretical approach by providing a posthumanist practical orientation. The distinctiveness of the paper can be more effectively demonstrated by its incorporation of other philosophers such as Dreyfus, Harman, and Morton. This incorporation highlights the

paper's dedication to establishing a more intricate and comprehensive basis for ethical investigation, which significantly deviates from previous examinations of existence and establishes the necessary basis for a strong, practical involvement with the intricate ethical challenges of mutual understanding in a world that emphasizes the importance of non-human entities.

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