

Exploring Animal Becoming in Postmodern Philosophy

433 words | 1 Page

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Gilles Deleuze's concept of 'becoming animal' stands out as a transformative and evocative notion that challenges traditional understandings of subjectivity, identity, and power dynamics. This essay aims to delve into the intricacies of Deleuze's idea of 'becoming animal' and explore its implications for contemporary thought and praxis. Deleuze, in collaboration with Félix Guattari, developed the concept of 'becoming animal' as part of their broader Deleuzoguattarian philosophy. The notion of 'becoming animal' posits that human subjectivity is not fixed or stable but is constantly in a state of flux and becoming. By engaging with the animal world and embodying animal traits, humans can access new modes of thought, sensation, and affectivity that transcend human limitations.

Central to Deleuze's concept of 'becoming animal' is his critique of traditional dualisms such as human/animal, mind/body, and culture/nature. Deleuze argues that these dualistic frameworks impose rigid hierarchies and oppressive power structures that perpetuate human exceptionalism and disregard the agency and subjectivity of non-human entities. For Deleuze, 'becoming animal' is not just a personal or individualistic pursuit but a political act of resistance against dominant power structures and normative modes of thought. By destabilizing fixed categories and boundaries, 'becoming animal' opens up new possibilities for alternative ways of being, knowing, and relating to the world.

One of the key insights of Deleuze's concept of 'becoming animal' is its transformative potential for human subjectivity and social relations. By embracing animalistic traits and behaviors, humans can break free from the constraints of human exceptionalism and hierarchical dualisms, opening up a space for radical creativity, experimentation, and resistance.

From an ethical and environmental perspective, 'becoming animal' offers a new way of thinking about human-animal relations and ecological interconnectedness. By acknowledging our kinship with non-human animals and recognizing their agency and subjectivity, humans can cultivate a more empathetic and sustainable approach to living in harmony with the natural world. In the context of posthumanist theories, Deleuze's concept of 'becoming animal' resonates with the idea of transcending anthropocentrism and embracing a more inclusive and pluralistic conception of subjectivity and agency. By decentering the human as the privileged locus of meaning and value, 'becoming animal' challenges anthropocentric biases and encourages a more relational and interspecies ethics.

Deleuze's concept of 'becoming animal' offers a provocative and challenging reimagining of human-animal relations, subjectivity, and power dynamics. By disrupting traditional dualisms and embracing animalistic traits, humans can access new modes of thought and being that hold transformative potential for personal, social, and environmental change. The concept of 'becoming animal' invites us to reconsider the boundaries that separate us from other beings and to explore the creative possibilities that emerge from embracing our animality.