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Between cooperation and competition: insights into the relationships between animal advocates and veterinarians in France from the nineteenth century to the present day

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Abstract

This review essay examines relationships between animal advocates and veterinarians in France from the nineteenth century onwards. Due to their role as activists or professionals, they are studied independently of each other. Despite the disagreements that may have arisen between them, both groups claim to have animals' interests at heart and share many common concerns regarding the animal condition. Based on a secondary analysis of the literature on animal advocates and veterinarians, we examine the existence and form of relationships between these two social groups. We identify four types of intersection that allow us to account for the existence of multiple relationships between animal advocates and veterinarians. The initial understanding between animal advocates and veterinarians in the middle of the nineteenth century gave way to a situation of conflict and competition beginning at the end of the nineteenth century. In the middle of the twentieth century, renewed debates on the animal condition and animal husbandry gave rise to the development of ambiguous relationships between veterinarians concerned about health issues and animal advocates who were divided into “welfarists” and “animal rights advocates”. In this respect, the discovery of the intersecting history of animal advocates and veterinarians emphasises the multi-dimensional nature of their relationships, which has fluctuated between cooperation and competition.

Keywords Animal advocacy · Animal rights · Animal welfare · Social movements · Veterinarian · Veterinary profession

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“More than ever before, veterinarians have become the sentinels of animal welfare. [...] As of today, the thinking and debates of members of the Order [of veterinarians] has led to a professional consensus [...]. Every slaughtered animal must be effectively stunned prior to and up until the end of the bleeding process.”

Michel Baussier, chairman of the French national order of veterinarians during the “Veterinarian, the professional guarantor of animal welfare” symposium in the French senate on 24 November 2015.

“Can you imagine the distress and anguish of calves which see fellow creatures die before their very eyes, prior to being slaughtered themselves? The terrible suffering of those which receive several shots from the pneumatic gun or which regain consciousness with a slit throat? The torment of calves which are slaughtered without being stunned and which take several long minutes to die? [...] What are the veterinary services doing about this?”

Sébastien Arzac, co-founder and director of investigations of the French animal rights organisation *L214*, in a letter of information dated 21 February 2020.

Even though both animal advocates and veterinarians say they take the animals’ interests into account, the questions that *L214* activists ask the state’s veterinary services provide a backdrop for the differences that persist between them. To say that these differences simply result from a difference in the level of discourse mobilised by members of a professional group and by activists of a social movement is an unsatisfactory response. It overlooks the fact that animal advocates—the term we use here to refer to all activists who have become involved in the various fractions of the pro-animal movement—and veterinarians today share a set of common positions aimed at putting an end to bullfighting and to the exploitation of wild animals in travelling circuses, and to systematise the use of stunning before the killing of animals in slaughterhouses. Above all, it overlooks the fact that this situation is also the product of the long history of these complex and heterogeneous social groups. This is why in this article, based on the case in France, we propose to question the existence of unknown interfaces and relationships between animal advocates and veterinarians.

In France, these two social groups emerged more or less at the same time, between the end of the eighteenth century for veterinarians and the middle of the nineteenth century for animal advocates. Above and beyond a common concern for the “animal issue”, they shared a certain number of common traits that led them to become involved in the *Société Protectrice des Animaux* (SPA) founded in 1845–1846 (Traïni 2011, 2015; Carrié 2015b), the French equivalent of the British Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA). However, both groups have undergone many changes since their emergence, leading to a transformation not only in the social characteristics of their members and their knowledge and representations but also in their practices and modes of action. This situation leads us to question the existence of intersections between the histories of animal advocates and veterinarians and the (possible) existence of relationships between them. To what extent have veterinarians and animal advocates maintained relations, however ambivalent they may be, and influenced each other over the course of their history? Do the histories of animal advocates and veterinarians intersect, or are they parallel?

In a context where animal advocates mobilisation plays a full part in the (re)construction of the public problem of the animal condition and more than ever

urges veterinarians to take a stand on this issue, we wish to show how the history of animal advocates and veterinarians is punctuated by a succession of common concerns and conflicts that led to the existence of ambivalent, little-known and constantly evolving relationships. After setting out the theoretical framework and the methods used, we identify three key moments in the (re)composition of the intersecting history and relationships between animal advocates and veterinarians in France: the agreement between veterinarians and reformers in the mid-nineteenth century, who sought to reform the practices of the working classes regarding animals; the split and then competition produced by the emergence of an animal sensitivity advocacy at a time when veterinarians were drawing closer to scientific and medical circles at the end of the nineteenth century; and the complex relationships that emerged as from the mid-twentieth century between veterinarians working in livestock farming and animal advocates torn between “welfarism” and “animal rights advocacy”.

(Re)constructing the intersecting history of animal advocates and veterinarians: theoretical framework

(Re)constructing the intersecting history of animal advocates and veterinarians means going beyond the essentialising boundary that aims to render professional or militant groups impermeable to one another. The sociology of the professions has indeed shown that a professional group does not operate in a vacuum. A profession is likely to reconfigure itself according to the mandates given to it by society and the state (Abbott 1988; Bonnaud and Fortané 2018). At the same time, the sociology of social movements highlights the fact that the “space of social movements” (Mathieu 2012) is in constant interaction with social universes that are external to it and that are far from being limited to the political field, as shown, for example, by works on insider activism (Briscoe and Gupta 2016). With the concept of “configuration”, Norbert Elias (1978) asks us to go beyond the boundaries sometimes implied by the notion of social groups, in order to examine the interdependencies that structure them. The existence of relationships between animal advocates and veterinarians is therefore possible beyond the mere structural difference between a militant group and a professional group. This possibility is even enhanced by the many changes that these social groups have undergone since their creation.

Animal advocates in France are part of a social movement with multiple factions and forms of engagement (Traïni 2010, 2019; Carrié 2015b; Poirel 2016). Since the work of Maurice Agulhon (1981), this phenomenon has been widely highlighted by a literature that regularly questions this heterogeneity and which proposes multiple qualifiers to designate the “animal cause” (Traïni 2011, 2015), the “animal rights struggle” (Traïni 2011, 2015), or the “multiple forms of engagement in animal protection” (Traïni 2019), the “ideological nebula of animal advocates” (Carrié 2015b) or “pro-animal” activism (Michalon 2019). In symmetry with the terminology used for other causes, we propose here to use the terms “animal advocacy” and “animal advocates” to refer to all of the different fractions of pro-animal movements and to the activists who are or have been involved in them. This debate has not prevented the emergence of a consensus emphasising the three-way division of ideologies, practices and “emotional registers” (Traïni 2011, 2015) mobilised by animal advocates. We propose here to summarise the

debate by distinguishing between “reformer” animal advocates (as from the mid-nineteenth century), “animal sensitivity” advocates (also referred to as “sensitivists”) (as from the end of the nineteenth century) and the third wave of animal advocates, divided into “animal welfare” advocates (also referred to as “welfarists”) and “animal rights” advocates (from the mid-twentieth century onwards).

In addition to the apparent unity that their status as a profession confers on them today, veterinarians are characterised by a multitude of specialisms and professions (Hubscher 1999; Fritsch 2011) which makes them a composite professional universe. Over the course of their history, the veterinarians who originally oscillated between an agronomic and a medical approach from the end of the eighteenth century to the mid-nineteenth century underwent a process of medicalization from the late nineteenth century onwards, before becoming prime actors of sanitary action regarding livestock farming in the mid-twentieth century in France. The “*Atlas démographique de la profession vétérinaire*” (demographic atlas of the veterinary profession) (ONDPV 2020) lists 18,874 veterinarians registered with the Order in France at the end of 2019. Most of them practise one or more of the three main specialisms. The equine specialism on which the veterinary profession was based originally is today practised exclusively or predominantly by only 6% of veterinarians. The rural specialism (equivalent to the large animal specialism or farm animal specialism in Great Britain) concerns domestic livestock (cattle and others) and is mainly practised on farms. Marked by a continuous and long-lasting decline in the number of its practitioners, it is now a majority specialism for just 19% of veterinarians, while the canine specialism (equivalent to the small animal specialism or companion animal specialism in Great Britain) which is more recent, is dedicated to dogs, cats and other new pets and concerns 71% of veterinarians. These specialisms are mainly practised in veterinary surgeries. Veterinarians can also be civil servants, working for the most part in the state’s veterinary departments, which in 2016 employed over 2100 veterinarians. The members of this “evolving corps” (Fritsch 2009) play a role in health inspection, health control and animal protection in slaughterhouses.

For both animal advocates and veterinarians, the representations, knowledge, practices and social origins of the members of these social groups differ according to the period, factions and specialisms analysed. This heterogeneity increases the possibility of intersections between the histories of animal advocates and veterinarians. To account for this, we propose here to question the existence and form of relationships between animal activists and veterinarians over time by examining the state of their knowledge and their representations (cognitive convergence or divergence), their simultaneous presence in the same organisations or, conversely, in competing organisations (relational convergence or divergence), their socio-demographic characteristics (social convergence or divergence) and the use of common practices or modes of action (practical convergence or divergence). In the light of these criteria, we then offer an ideal-typical account¹ of the existence and nature of their irenic or conflictual relationships.

¹ In this respect, we do not pretend to take account of the infinite variety of individual stances held by animal advocates and veterinarians, but rather of the dominant positions within these social groups.

(Re)constructing the intersecting history of animal advocates and veterinarians: method

We intend to question the existence of intersections in the (socio-)history of animal advocates and veterinarians based on a secondary analysis of the social science literature on these social groups in France. The identification of sources was carried out using separate French and British bibliographical databases: a personal database created by the author as part of a thesis on the socio-history and forms of mobilisation of the animal rights movement (anti-speciesists, vegans, animal rights and/or animal liberation activists) and the VETS² database dedicated to the veterinary profession. The decision to focus on the situation in France was based on the need to take into account the national singularities of these social groups. The sometimes piecemeal information available meant that we occasionally had to refer to the situation in Great Britain, which benefits from more complete documentation.

As a corollary to the differentiation between these social groups, there is little dialogue between these two literatures, and they have different theoretical horizons. Research on French animal advocates is primarily based on social history and on the sociology of social movements. The literature on veterinarians is primarily in the field of the history and sociology of professions. Since 2010, this subject of research has been re-examined by the history of science (Berdah 2018) and by the sociology of public action (Bonnaud and Fortané 2016). In a form of “structural homology” (Bourdieu 1989), the social differentiation between animal advocates and veterinarians is coupled in the academic field with a distinction between two literatures that are largely blind to one another.

This boundary might explain why little is known about the relationships between animal advocates and veterinarians and why, as far as we know, they have not been the object of any other attempt at systematisation. In this respect, by bringing these literatures into dialogue we have an opportunity to reconstruct the evolution of the social environment of animal advocates and veterinarians and hence to understand the existence of an intersecting history and of relationships between them. This also allows us to highlight the influence that animal advocates and veterinarians may have exerted on one another.

Due to their transversal nature, four sources proved to be particularly important when questioning the existence of an intersecting history between animal advocates and veterinarians in France. Christophe Traïni’s book *La cause animale : essai de sociologie historique* (2011) translated in English in 2015 under the title *The Animal Rights Struggle : An Essay in Historical Sociology* (Traïni 2015) and Fabien Carrié’s thesis (2015b) devoted to the comparative social history of ideas of animal advocacy offer an all-round view of the history of animal advocacy in both France and Great Britain. On veterinarians, Ronald Hubscher’s book *Les maîtres des bêtes* (1999) gives an account of how the profession has been structured over the long term and is complemented by science historian Delphine Berdah’s research on veterinary knowledge (2012). The perspectives they open up make it possible to reconstruct the socio-history of the relationships between animal advocates and veterinarians. In this respect, this article is proposed as a review essay that links two relatively independent blocks of

² <https://www.zotero.org/groups/2422200/vets/library>. Accessed September 21 2020.

literature in order to address the (neglected) issue of the relationships between veterinarians and animal advocates.

The singularly French understanding between reformer animal advocates and veterinarians in the mid-nineteenth century

From the seventeenth to the nineteenth century, Europe was marked by a change in the way animals were perceived (Turner 1980; Thomas 1983). In France, the economic boom resulted in an increase in the number of animals (primarily horses and oxen) in order to meet the growing need for mobility and labour (Baratay 2008). It was this context that led to the emergence of veterinarians at the end of the eighteenth century, followed by that of animal advocates in the nineteenth century. These advocates initially struggled to establish themselves as legitimate players regarding the animal condition. The situation changed with the creation of the SPA (French RSPCA) in 1845–1846, whose mobilisations, very different from those of the modern SPA, were in line with veterinarian concerns. The reformers and veterinarians of the mid-nineteenth century then brought about many cognitive, relational and social as well as practical convergences that reflected the existence of their close relationships.

Actors not solicited on the animal issue: animal advocates and veterinarians prior to the creation of the *Société Protectrice des Animaux*

Before the SPA solidified “reformist” animal advocacy, the social position of veterinarians and animal advocates made them fringe players in debates on animal issues in France. Although historiography tends to rediscover the existence of these animal advocacy discourses in France, with the exception of a few local measures introduced in Paris between the 1800s and 1830s and brought to light by Maurice Agulhon (1981), this ideology did not in fact take concrete form prior to the creation of the SPA. Renan Larue (2019) thus shows how, in the eighteenth century, the Enlightenment movement took an interest in the issue of animal suffering and vegetarianism. This “animal issue”, which carried with it social representations of the “sensitive man” (Pelosse 1981, 1982), was even part of political debates during the French Revolution (Baratay 2008, 2012; Serna 2016, 2017), yet remained the work of fringe actors in the field of power. Indeed, legitimate discourses on animals in France at that time were the remit of the natural sciences (Carrié 2015b). However, the first promoters of animal advocacy were essentially recruited from among the educated elite, teachers, clergy or the judiciary, rather than from scientific circles (Pelosse 1981; Carrié 2015b). This fencing off of the intellectual field took place in an unfavourable political context that prevented animal advocacy discourses from solidifying after the French Revolution. Unlike this movement’s trajectory in Great Britain (Carrié 2015b), the literate elites did not succeed in imposing the ideology of animal advocacy in France during the first half of the nineteenth century.

While Fabien Carrié considers the emergence of veterinary medicine to have been a favourable condition for the development of animal advocacy (2015b, p. 173), veterinarians played only a minor role in debates on the “animal issue” as it was formulated in France in the first half of the nineteenth century. The distance separating them from

animal advocates was both cognitive and social. In his history of the veterinary profession, Ronald Hubscher shows that the social recruitment of veterinarians originally took place among rural populations with a relatively low cultural capital. Furthermore, veterinarians struggled to establish themselves as legitimate actors in animal husbandry, oscillating between an agronomic and a medical approach (Hubscher 1999; Berdah 2012). While the growth in veterinary knowledge fostered a new attitude towards animals, it was an attitude that focused on the usefulness of animals (Barroux 2011), whereas prior to the creation of the SPA, French animal advocates concentrated on their sensitivity (Baratay 2011, 2014; Carrié 2015b). Before the mid-nineteenth century, the actors of a budding animal advocacy movement and the pioneers of veterinary medicine therefore had little in common.

Animal advocate-veterinarians or veterinary-animal advocates? The *Société Protectrice des Animaux* (SPA) as the matrix of a federating ideology

It was not until the middle of the nineteenth century that the pro-animal movement came into being in France with the foundation in 1845–1846 of the first sustainable animal advocate organisation: the SPA. The SPA developed a unique approach to the animal issue, bringing together animal advocates and veterinarians (when they did not already overlap).

Although the creation of the SPA owed much to the mobilisation of the British animal advocates of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA)³, who protested against the “cruelty” of their French neighbours (Traïni 2011, 2015), the organisation quickly became independent of the animal advocacy developed by its British counterpart (Carrié 2015b). Like the RSPCA, the SPA sought to reform the practices of the working classes with regard to animals rather than calling into question “all practices in which animals are used for the benefit of humans” (Carrié 2019, p. 28). In France however, this perspective went hand in hand with a desire to rationalise animal husbandry practices “with regard to a practical science of domestication” (Carrié 2015b, p. 228). It is therefore in the dual sense of changing habits of the working classes and agricultural practices that we describe this animal advocacy as “reformist”. This term also highlights the links between animal advocacy and other philanthropic activities of the nineteenth century. The SPA thus developed a rationalised understanding of the animal issue that set aside any (public) reference to sensitivity in favour of an emphasis on the economic utility of animals (Traïni 2011, 2015), even though the values that animal advocates asserted in public might have differed from their private motivations (Baratay 2011, 2014). For Christophe Traïni, this led the SPA to share “the goals of [...] veterinary science – improving animal breeding methods [...]” (Traïni 2015, p. 35).

Éric Pierre (1998a, 1998b, 1998c), Christophe Traïni (2011, 2015) and Fabien Carrié (2015b) thus highlight the role that veterinarians played in the early years of the SPA. From the very outset, the organisation was a real success. Despite strict admission conditions, Fabien Carrié counts 470 members in 1846–1847 and 362 in 1855. The group made up of doctors, veterinarians and pharmacists represented

³ The first animal welfare charity, the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, was founded in 1824 in Great Britain. In 1840, it received the royal approval of Queen Victoria and became a royal society.

respectively 26% and 17.6% of all members at these dates. Within this group, 19.8% and then 20% of the members were veterinarians (Carrié 2015b, pp. 217–224), i.e. 4.2% of the total number of SPA members in 1846–1847 and 3.5% in 1855⁴, a remarkable proportion considering that the veterinary profession had only been in existence for a relatively short time. Above all, veterinarians were most visible in the SPA's governing body, the sole responsible for the organisation's policy at that time. Of the nine founding members, two were trained veterinarians and five were members of the *Société française de médecine vétérinaire et comparée* (French society of veterinary and comparative medicine). The others were doctors or agronomists (Carrié, 2015b, pp. 215–216, table 1), professions which at that time shared common knowledge with veterinarians (Hubscher 1996, 1999). According to Christophe Traïni (2011, 2015), these three social groups continued to play a major role in the SPA until the end of the nineteenth century.

This situation boosted the dissemination of the concerns and representations of SPA veterinarians. For Christophe Traïni, “veterinarians within the SPA were able to participate in broader initiatives which aimed to have the work of veterinarians recognised as an activity requiring scientific expertise gained through studies” (2015, pp. 29–30) to the point that “the monthly meetings of the SPA provided a forum for preparing arguments, to be presented to the French authorities, for reserving the medical treatment of animals to practitioners who had the requisite scientific training” (2015, p. 30), i.e. veterinarians. For Fabien Carrié, “the translation of the ‘animal advocate’ ideology that was then spreading throughout France, because it confirmed the close link between the reform of people’s violent practices concerning ‘animals’ and the mechanical increase of material prosperity, was in line with and made sense of the ‘political medicine’ discourse that they [doctors and veterinarians] produce” (Carrié 2015b, p.224). In this respect, a real cognitive, relational and social convergence would appear to have taken place between animal advocates and veterinarians in the mid-nineteenth century.

Although the role of veterinarians is widely emphasised in the French animal advocacy literature, this is less true the other way round. The literature on veterinarians only concedes a minor role to animal advocacy organisations and offers few clues to explain their involvement in the SPA. For Ronald Hubscher, the adherence of veterinarians to the SPA can be summed up in a logic of social distinction operated by the veterinary elites of Maisons-Alfort and Paris who sought to distinguish themselves from practitioners in rural areas (Hubscher 1999, p. 137). Conversely, Fabien Carrié (2015b) believes that these veterinarians were in opposition to the Maisons-Alfort faculty. Moreover, veterinarian involvement in major animal advocacy organisations would seem to be peculiar to France. Indeed, unlike members of the clergy, the judiciary and women of letters, veterinarians play no central part in works on the history of animal advocacy in Great Britain (Kean 1998) or in the USA (Jasper and Nelkin 1992; Beers 2006). The cognitive, social and relational proximity between animal advocates and veterinarians would therefore appear to be a specific feature of reformist animal advocacy as it has developed in France.

⁴ Calculations made on the basis of Fabien Carrié’s tables and comments (2015b), p. 220–224.

The shared practices of reformer animal advocates and veterinarians of the mid-nineteenth century

The relationship between reformers and veterinarians in the mid-nineteenth century can also be found in practice, through common interests and issues. First and foremost, they share an interest in horses, a central species in the nineteenth century (Roche 2008). It was around this species that veterinarian knowledge and practices were initially structured. Ronald Hubscher (1999) shows that veterinary medicine first developed on the basis of the knowledge of hippiatry drawn from the writings of Antiquity and the Lower Middle Ages. From the eighteenth century onwards, Claude Bourgelat developed anatomical and pathological knowledge concerning the species and laid the foundations for the institutionalisation of veterinary medicine.

Inset 1. Claude Bourgelat: the first veterinarian's "passion for horses"

Born in 1712, Claude Bourgelat is the "patron" of French veterinarians. Born into a family of well-to-do Lyon merchants, he studied law before devoting himself to his passion for horses. In 1740, he became "the king's equerry" at the Lyon Riding Academy. Follower of the Enlightenment movement, he also studied human anatomy, which led him to transfer this discipline to horses, to which he dedicated several written works. He founded the world's first two veterinary schools, in Lyon in 1761 and in Maisons-Alfort, near Paris, in 1765. The French veterinarian oath bears his name, in recognition of his role.

Veterinarians nevertheless initially struggled to establish themselves as legitimate actors in the care of livestock in rural areas (Hubscher 1996, 1999). According to Delphine Berdah (2012), the original objective of veterinary schools was in fact to standardise the production of horses for military use rather than to improve the lot of animals. In the middle of the nineteenth century, veterinarians were therefore less a profession in their own right than "horsemen" trained in specialised schools. Maurice Agulhon and Valentin Pelosse emphasise the extent to which horses, associated with the nobility, were at the heart of the indignation of reformers (Agulhon 1981; Pelosse 1981, 1982). The treatment inflicted on this species by carters and coachmen was a major issue for the SPA (Pierre 1998b, 1998c; Traïni 2011, 2015; Carrié 2015b). This was reflected in the structuring of commissions dedicated to the improvement of the horse's circumstances (Pierre 1998b) or to "sensitivity devices" (Traïni 2009, 2011, 2015) such as the foundation of a school or the creation of prizes for benevolent coachmen (Traïni 2011, 2015). Even the valorisation of hippophagy took place in the name of improving the lot of horses, slaughter for the meat market being considered preferable to rendering (Traïni 2011, 2015). In absolute terms, the Grammont Law only covered the maltreatment of domestic animals in public. In this respect, it primarily targeted the mistreatment of horses (Carrié 2015b). Reformers and veterinarians thus shared a common concern for horses.

Furthermore, the two social groups had the same targets. More than the animals themselves, animal advocates and veterinarians at that time were primarily concerned with the working classes, seeking to transform their practices, beliefs and morals. To use Ronald Hubscher's expression, veterinarians thus saw themselves as "missionaries of progress" (1999, p.169) and engaged in the fight to delegitimise the "empiricals", a term that designated all the farriers, healers and bonesetters who made use of a wide range of popular know-how to treat animals. Ronald Hubscher also shows how, like

schoolteachers of the Third Republic, veterinarians agreed to view the working classes as a population that it was their duty to educate (Hubscher 1999, pp. 169-184). This perspective was even more central in the literature devoted to reformist animal advocacy. It unanimously emphasises that as a priority the mobilisations of animal advocates targeted the practices of the working classes whose violent mores were in need of reform. Maurice Agulhon (1981) thus underlines the extent to which the question of animal advocacy in a nineteenth century, marked by political unrest, was linked to the debates surrounding the perceived violence of the working classes, who were considered dangerous. Conversely, upper-class violence towards animals was far less criticised by reformers. However, Éric Baratay (2011, 2014) points out that the limited number of sources makes it difficult for us to access possible pro-animal mobilisations of the working classes. Research on the situations in Great Britain (Kean 1998) and the USA (Beers 2006) also underline the fact that the upper classes had sufficient resources to defend themselves against animal advocates when they were targeted. As was the case for veterinarians, the working classes were therefore the main targets of animal advocacy.

In the mid-nineteenth century, veterinarians and reformers shared common interests and concerns regarding the condition of horses and the reform of working-class mores. Combined with cognitive, social and relational convergence, this context of practical convergence between reformer animal advocates and mid-nineteenth century veterinarians demonstrates the existence of strong intersections between the history of animal advocates and veterinarians, particularly within the SPA. Moreover, the accumulation of these convergences reflects the proximity and understanding between French animal advocates and veterinarians in the middle of the nineteenth century. Yet this French singularity was equalled only by its brevity, to such an extent that the evolution of these social groups led to their relationships being redefined in the second half of the century.

Conflicts and competition: animal sensitivity advocates faced with the medicalisation of veterinarians (1880–1950)

During the second half of the nineteenth century, a series of reorientations called into question the representations, practices and social characteristics that veterinarians and animal advocates had previously shared. Veterinarians were moving closer to medical circles and to a fast-growing physiological science. This implied experiments on animals and more specifically vivisection⁵, a practice that was opposed by an increasing number of animal advocates, who expressed a growing concern for the sensitivity of animals. This was evidenced by anti-vivisection movements and in the matter of care and shelters for pets. As anti-vivisectionists came into conflict with veterinarians, mobilisations in support of pets ultimately contributed to the emergence of the pet care market. It was thus a profound reconstruction of the relationship between animal

⁵ Unlike the dissection of cadavers, vivisection involved the use of live animals for which anaesthesia was not mandatory in nineteenth century France. It invariably led to the animal's death, sometimes referred to as a sacrifice. Nowadays vivisection is one method of animal experimentation, but does not really exist as an autonomous scientific paradigm anymore.

sensitivity advocates and veterinarian-physiologists that was to play out as from the end of the nineteenth century.

The rapid yet controversial development of the issue of animal suffering

The rapid rise of the pet phenomenon first studied by Keith Thomas (1983) and Harriet Ritvo (1987) in relation to the situation in Great Britain was also seen throughout the nineteenth century in France. Kathleen Kete (1995) shows how domestic animals, especially dogs, became part of the lives of the Parisian upper classes who projected their bourgeois values onto their pets. The latter were thus the object of increasing consideration that Christophe Traïni (2011, 2015) brings to light via the works of romantic writers and the testimonials contained in the SPA bulletin. These reflect the emergence of a “register of pity” (Boltanski 1993; Traïni 2011, 2015), also referred to as a “register of tenderness” (Traïni 2011, 2015) which, during the second half of the nineteenth century, focuses on the care to be given to pets and brings the question of their suffering to the fore. Although this question had been an implicit part of the animal advocacy movement from the very beginning, it was not until the 1870s that “arguments admissible in the public arena [...] gradually shifted from human utility to respect for the animal” (Baratay 2014, p. 396). Éric Pierre thus speaks of the “shift from a protection of utility to a protection of sensibility” (1998b, p. 94) that took place as from the 1880s with regard to the establishment of dog shelters and to the rejection of the idea that the utility of an animal would justify its suffering, as in the case of vivisection, the second major axis of the mobilisation of animal advocates, whom we qualify for these very reasons as “animal sensitivity advocates” (also referred to as “sensitivists”).

Experimental physiology and its corollary, vivisection, were quickly legitimised due to the early autonomy of the scientific field (Charle 2001) and to related medical discoveries. The development of our understanding of veterinarian history has highlighted the active role they played in developing this discipline. Jean-Yves Bory (2013) thus traces the origin of vivisection back to experiments conducted on horses in veterinary schools shortly after their creation. In the second half of the nineteenth century, these schools were characterised by a desire for recognition in scientific and medical circles (Hubscher 1996, 1999). Delphine Berdah’s research (2012) shows how this led to a growing emphasis on physiology. The discipline was integrated into the veterinary school curriculum from 1878 onwards and was fully institutionalised in 1898 with the creation of a chair of pathological anatomy and histology. This logic of medicalization was completed with the early adoption by veterinarians of Pasteurian perspectives on the microbial world and contagion (Berdah 2010, 2012, 2018). These evolutions thus contributed to a profound transformation of the veterinary identity, which definitively moved away from farriery and agricultural education as well as from the representations of sensitivists.

This cognitive divergence went hand in hand with a particularly visible social distancing from the sensitivists. The medicalisation of the veterinarian profession was thus accompanied by a voluntary increase in the social selectivity of veterinary studies, which gradually pushed the working classes away from the profession (Hubscher 1999, pp. 71-82). However, it was probably the gender issue that most marked the social distance between veterinarians and animal sensitivity advocates in the mid-nineteenth

century. Before Jeanne Miquel, who graduated in 1937, all veterinarians were men, while sensitivity advocacy was becoming a more female-oriented movement. Although Éric Pierre (1998a) points out that women had been members of the SPA since its creation, they were marginalised within the reformist animal advocacy faction (Traïni 2011, 2015; Carrié 2015b, 2018b). Conversely, the affirmation of animal sensitivity advocacy owed much to the activism of women, who were increasingly mobilised in organisations dedicated to shelters and the fight against vivisection, such as the *Société Française contre la Vivisection* (French Society against Vivisection) or the *Ligue Populaire contre les Abus de la Vivisection* (Popular League against the Cruelty of Vivisection), where “women were immediately in the majority, both among ordinary members and within the governing bodies” (Carrié 2018). As from the 1870s and 1880s, the rising importance of the animal suffering issue thus led to a cognitive and social distance between sensitivists and veterinarians. While there were links between the mobilisations to support pet care and shelters and those against vivisection, they were to lead to different reconstructions of the relationships between animal advocates and veterinarians and would once again challenge the intersecting history of these two social groups.

Open conflict between animal advocates and veterinarians: the fight against vivisection during the second half of the nineteenth century

Unlike Great Britain, where there had been early and massive mobilisation against vivisection, the fight developed late in French animal advocate circles and was of a lesser magnitude (Carrié 2015a, 2015b). The SPA defended an official *laissez-faire* position on vivisection that was characteristic of the scientised animal advocacy of the doctors and veterinarians heading the organisation (Carrié 2015b). As Jean-Yves Bory (2013) points out, vivisectionists had long populated the ranks of the SPA. Their presence in animal advocacy organisations may well explain why, as early as the 1840s and 1850s, the first criticisms of vivisection came from the scientific field rather than from the pro-animal movement itself (Bory 2013). It was not until the 1860s that debates on vivisection emerged within the SPA, and not until the 1880s that a veritable anti-vivisection movement came into being in France (Bory 2013). This movement catalysed the ethical questions raised by the transformations in scientific practices (French 1975) and, according to Fabien Carrié (2019, p. 34), led to an “autonomi[sation] in France of animal representatives in respect of scientific conceptions”. This autonomy was all the stronger in that the movement questioned the primacy of human interests over those of other animals (Traïni 2011, 2015), contradicting the role that scientists and veterinarians assigned to themselves. This resulted in a relational divergence between the latter and animal advocates. Fabien Carrié (2018b) thus mentions Marie Huot’s comments asking the SPA to exclude veterinarians from its membership in order to avoid continuing to have to make decisions that she deemed to be contrary to genuine animal protection. Without this exclusion ever being pronounced, conflicts over the issue of suffering led to the voluntary departure from the SPA of a number of veterinarians in the 1880s (Pierre 1998b, 1998c). As the influence of sensitivists grew, both veterinarians and doctors distanced themselves from animal advocacy organisations.

Beyond this relational divergence, anti-vivisectionists joined the social struggles of the late nineteenth century. The fight against vivisection was a particularly “female” engagement and, without being reduced to it, was to some extent coupled with a commitment to feminism. These links were first brought to light in relation to the situation in Great Britain by Leah Leneman (1997), who noted how close the anti-vivisection movement was to that of the suffragettes. Later on, the literature devoted to the situation in France also highlighted the multi-positionality of feminist and anti-vivisection activists such as Louise Michel and Marie Huot (Traïni 2011, 2015; Bory 2013; Carrié 2015b). Some of them even go so far as to formulate a “systemic critique” (Carrié 2018b) linking the exploitation of women to that of animals. At times, the fight against vivisection was linked to the struggles of workers, as in the anarchist writings of Louise Michel in France, or more visibly in Great Britain through the reflections of Henry Salt (Dardenne 2005) and the so-called Brown Dog demonstrations (Lansbury 1985). The practice of vegetarianism was also sometimes put forward in these militant circles, although this would seem to be less evident in France than in Great Britain (Carrié 2015b). The corollary of this anchoring of anti-vivisectionism in the space of late nineteenth-century social movements was the spread of the methods and “repertoire of collective action” (Tilly 1986) of the time among animal advocates. Reformist animal advocacy practices of repression and incitement thus gave way to demonstrations, petitions and events characteristic of the social struggles of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. For Christophe Traïni (2011, 2015), the anti-vivisection movement was also built around the emotional register of “exposure”, which translates into the carrying out of investigations aimed at shedding light on and denouncing the practices of vivisectionists. This evolution thus marked a twofold practical divergence, with reformist animal advocacy and with veterinarians who focused on the development of medical knowledge and practices.

Inset 2. Marie Huot, militant anti-vivisectionist and enemy of veterinarians

Born in 1846, Marie Huot was a French feminist, animal advocate and vegetarian. Initially a member of the SPA, she was a critical voice within this organisation. In the 1880s, she helped to create the *Ligue Populaire contre l'abus de la vivisection* and the first animal shelters in France. Her public interventions and spectacular actions, such as in 1883 when she repeatedly hit physiologist Charles-Edouard Brown-Séquard with an umbrella during his vivisection of a monkey, made her a major figure in the anti-vivisection movement at the end of the nineteenth century.

The divergence between anti-vivisectionists and veterinarians at the end of the nineteenth century was thus total: cognitive and social as well as relational and practical. It culminated in the counter-mobilisation of veterinarians and vivisectionists who took advantage of the legitimacy of physiology and experimental medicine (Berdah 2012) to delegitimise anti-vivisectionists. This backlash was designed to present anti-vivisectionists as enemies of science and to mobilise sexist resources. Using an analysis of the professional journal *La semaine vétérinaire*, Christophe Traïni (2011, 2015) shows how veterinarians’ and physiologists’ motives for indignation regarding anti-vivisectionism intermingled to present it as a movement to resist progress and science. This critique of vivisectionists was reinforced by a strategy to pathologise the militant nature of animal advocacy. Strengthened by the medical authority of its members, *La Semaine vétérinaire* relayed in France the equivalent of the concept of zoophil-psychosis forged in the Anglo-Saxon world (Buettinger 1993).

This so-called mental illness, which, according to its promoters, only affected women, was touted to cause a disproportionate consideration for animals of which the engagement in anti-vivisectionism was a symptom. It was the vehemence of this counter-mobilisation, which was “made more violent by [its] reliance on a combination of both scientific and sexist prejudices” (Traïni 2015, p. 154), that led to the discrediting of anti-vivisectionists. The intersecting history of animal advocates and veterinarians was no longer one of cooperation, but of conflict, and despite a brief resurgence of anti-vivisectionism at the beginning of the twentieth century in France (Bory 2013), animal advocates henceforth directed their efforts towards shelters and pet care.

Animal sensitivity advocates and canine veterinarians in competition for pet care

Shelters initially struggled to establish themselves. In the second half of the nineteenth century, they were promoted by sensitivists who refused the killing of pets and their use for animal experimentation, as practised in animal pounds. Shelters first developed in Great Britain (Turner 1980) and in the USA (Beers 2006) from the 1860s onwards. In France, it was not until the 1880s that the issue began to be discussed (Pierre 1998b, 1998c). They were initially criticised by reformers and veterinarians who did not consider these animals useful and who felt that their resources could be put to better use elsewhere. Christophe Traïni (2011, 2015) thus relates the ephemeral creation of the first SPA shelters in 1881 and 1885. Controversial, they were closed in 1888, and it was only with the creation of the *Assistance aux Animaux* organisation in 1899 that they became established in France (Traïni 2011, 2015). As Jérôme Michalon (2013) points out, little research has been carried out on the question of animal shelters in France, but if we take the work of Diane Beers (2006) on the situation in the USA, we can nevertheless formulate the hypothesis that the reconversion of the driving forces of the anti-vivisectionist movement is likely to have favoured the development of shelters. Parallel to the question of shelters was the matter of pet care. Veterinarians initially showed little interest in this population, which bore no relation to the animals they considered useful, their usual clientele or their field of knowledge (Hubscher 1999). A sign of the marginal nature of this issue for veterinarians, Delphine Berdah’s well-documented work on veterinary knowledge (2010, 2012, 2018) does not examine the development of canine specialism. For a time, the cognitive and social divergence of animal advocates and veterinarians on this issue went hand in hand with a relational and practical distancing.

Yet it was between the 1850s and the mid-twentieth century that the first signs of the pet care market were to be seen in the initiative of a small number of veterinarians who were numerically marginal and marginalised by the rest of the profession. Ronald Hubscher (1999) thus establishes a link between the transformations of sensitivity towards pets, which he somewhat hastily dates at the foundation of the SPA and the Grammont Law, and the activity of a small number of Parisian veterinarians who, during the second half of the nineteenth century, devoted part of their activity to pet care. According to Hubscher, their “adherence to the protective society [would] open the doors to a female clientele, key to their success” (1999, p. 256). He also emphasises how the development of canine care at the turn of the twentieth century was linked to changing methods of locomotion. The development of the automobile and public transport called into question the centrality of horses in towns and cities, in a period

where the care of this species was one of the only sources of income for urban veterinarians (Hubscher 1999, p. 252). According to Christophe Traïni, veterinarians saw pet care just as much as an opportunity for social advancement as it was a professional option to remain abreast of changes in animal protection—a thesis he developed from an examination of the singular career of veterinarian Fernand Méry (Traïni 2011, 2015). A detour via the situation in Great Britain, which is better documented, sheds light on the role that dog shows played in the emergence of pet care. Alison Skipper (2019) shows how these competitions contributed towards the development of veterinarians' canine knowledge, not only to fight disease and fraud but also because of competition from unqualified healers. In their book *The Invention of the Modern Dog*, Michael Worboys, Julie-Marie Strange and Neil Pemberton (2018) explain this argument by underlining how this passion accompanied the development of surgical practices for treating the pets of the well-to-do classes, and how the RSPCA encouraged said veterinarians to take an interest in animal well-being by promoting the use of anaesthetics during operations. Around the 1900s, however, these initiatives remained the preserve of just a small number of veterinarians marginalised by the remainder of the profession. Ronald Hubscher (1999) opposes them to the majority of the profession and Alison Skipper (2019) shows how they were considered by most of their colleagues as bourgeois, sensitive and effeminate men who could not cope with the reality of veterinary work.

Inset 3. Fernand Méry, a borderline case of a sensitivist canine veterinarian

Fernand Méry was born in 1897. His career was marked by the singular nature of his dual position as a canine veterinarian and militant animal advocate. Born into a family of tradesmen from the Hérault region, his attachment to the family mare led him to devote his life to veterinary medicine. In Paris, he discovered the existence of a bourgeois clientele who were looking for pet care. At the same time, he rallied to the animal protection cause, and in 1970 created the *Conseil National de la Protection Animale* (CNPA), “an organisation which led veterinarians to consider themselves to be in the front line of the struggle to protect animals” (Traïni 2015, p. 120).

The reconstruction of the interactions between sensitivists and veterinarians concerning the pet care market gradually manifested itself throughout the twentieth century. Once again, the limited amount of French research means we must borrow from the situation in Great Britain in order to account for this logic. Above and beyond the evolution of the economic profitability of veterinary specialisms (Surdez 2009), Andrew Gardiner's research (2014) establishes a direct link between the development of the canine specialism and the mobilisation of sensitivists. He shows how one animal advocate organisation, the *People's Dispensary for the Sick Animals of the Poor*, questioned the scope of intervention of British veterinarians during the inter-war period. Headed by Maria Dickin, this organisation was particularly critical of a veterinary profession that it considered reluctant and unfit to care for pets. To meet its requirements, the organisation trained its own healthcare personnel and created its own veterinary hospitals to the point of developing an “alternative veterinary profession” (Gardiner 2014). Faced not only with competition from this organisation but also with questions about their qualifications, their skills, the scope of their jurisdiction and with what was perceived to be the return of the “empiricals”, British veterinarians reacted by developing their expertise with pets and by making themselves available to a wider clientele. It would appear that this same competitive relationship between

veterinarians and sensitivists existed in France several decades later. Ronald Hubscher (1999, pp. 367-369) establishes a link between the animal-care activities of the SPA during the second half of the twentieth century and the veterinary profession's awareness of the need for pet care. This competition was thus likely to be a factor in practical and relational convergences between animal sensitivity advocates who sought to reduce the suffering of pets, and veterinarians who moved into the pet care market, for want of any cognitive convergence which, perhaps, was to be found in the increasing number of animal-contact care practices that brought animals and suffering humans together (Michalon 2011). Without calling into question the existence of intersections between the history of animal advocates and veterinarians, the cooperative relationships that initially existed between them in the mid-nineteenth century were thus transformed into conflictual relationships at the end of the nineteenth century, before gradually giving way to a situation of competition.

Ambiguous relationships: animal welfare and animal rights advocates faced with the professionalisation of veterinarians practising on livestock farms (1950 to today)

While relationships between animal sensitivity advocates and canine veterinarians became normalised during the second half of the twentieth century, the rapid growth of intensive livestock farming once again called into question the existence of and form of relations between animal advocates and veterinarians. While veterinarians (rural veterinarians or farm animal veterinarians, state veterinary services, veterinarians in the pharmaceutical or agri-food industries) were playing an increasing role in livestock farming support, a third wave of animal advocates was taking shape. This movement was divided into two factions: "animal welfare" advocates (also referred to as "welfarists") who sought to improve the welfare of farm animals without challenging the legitimacy of the practice of livestock farming, and "animal rights" advocates who are against all forms of animal exploitation. The concept of animal welfare provided an opportunity for an uneven reconstruction of relations between farm animal veterinarians and welfarists, at the same time as a new conflict was emerging with animal rights advocates.

A new cognitive divergence: animal advocates and veterinarians faced with the rapid growth of intensive livestock farming

The process of intensified livestock farming began over the course of the nineteenth century and accelerated sharply in France after the Second World War. It was in this context that veterinarians completed the process of establishing themselves as a profession in their own right, with their own guaranteed jurisdiction and prerogatives. Yet their presence on farms was nothing new. State authorities had been using veterinarians to manage epizootic diseases since the beginning of the nineteenth century, when a better understanding of animal diseases began to take form (Berdah 2012). In the second half of the nineteenth century, with the spotlight being thrown on risks linked to the consumption of meat from sick animals (Hardy 2003), veterinarians appropriated the field of meat inspection, recognition of the veterinary profession

henceforth being based on its dual role of managing epizootic diseases and health inspection (Hubscher 1999), a field in which they still play a central role today, despite the evolution of health standards (Bonnaud and Coppalle 2008). Yet until the middle of the twentieth century, and despite its recognition by the state, the role of veterinarians remained highly controversial on livestock farms, where “empirical” healers continued to provide a considerable level of care. According to Delphine Berdah (2010), it was in relation to the management of bovine tuberculosis that veterinarians managed to establish themselves on farms. The laws of 7 July 1933 and 6 December 1954 provided the structure for the “health tripod” model, which provided rural veterinarians and state veterinary services with a primary role in the control of this disease, alongside livestock farmers. The legal changes in the pharmaceutical market created by the 1975 law benefited veterinarians, who permanently imposed themselves over the “empiricals” (Bonnaud and Fortané 2018), becoming the central actors in the management of so-called production animal diseases (Bonnaud and Fortané 2020), as had initially been the case in the dairy sector in Great Britain (Woods 2007, 2014). So it was by responding to the issues raised by the intensification of livestock farming that the veterinary profession established itself in the mid-twentieth century, to such an extent that it is now defining the boundaries of veterinary public action (Bonnaud and Fortané 2016). Ronald Hubscher thus considers that veterinarians played a central role in the “vast technical and commercial system” (1999, p. 315) of livestock farming. For historian Susan D. Jones (2003), veterinarians even contributed to the legitimisation of livestock farming, by positioning themselves as the guarantors of a moral code that reconciles animal exploitation and humanism. This evolution of veterinary representations and identity reflected a new cognitive distancing from the animal advocates of the third wave who, on the other hand, were developing a more or less profound criticism of animal exploitation.

In the second half of the twentieth century, animal advocates showed a renewed interest in the ethical issues raised by animal exploitation, of which intensive livestock farming appears to be one of the main examples. Their discourse moved far away from the concerns of state veterinary services and rural veterinarians who dominated the profession’s official bodies. As Fabien Carrié demonstrates (2015b), the emergence of this third wave of animal advocacy in France once again involved a process of importing and frenchifying developments that first appeared in the Anglo-Saxon world. According to Christophe Traïni (2011, 2015), this renewal of animal advocacy can be explained by the rise of ecological movements and of sensibilities towards “wild animals”, which contribute to “the progressive extension of the register of tenderness, and subsequently the emotional register of exposure, toward all animals treated equally” (Traïni 2015, p. 174). Damien Baldin (2014) uses the situation in France to show how, between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, sensibilities with regard to livestock farming and meat production shifted from a regime of sensibility that sought to keep the sight of animal blood at bay to a regime of sensibility built around the question of the suffering of farm animals. Parallel to this evolution, animal advocates of the third wave also took an interest in themes such as the legitimacy of hunting and questioned the absolute authority of established organisations (Carrié 2015b). All of these developments contributed to the development of an animal advocacy that takes a critical look at livestock farming activities or, more generally, at animal exploitation. Depending on the extent of this criticism, it is possible to make an analytical distinction

between two factions, although in practice there are bridges between them. The first, known as the welfarist movement, seeks to improve animal welfare in livestock farming situations without calling into question the principle of animal exploitation. In France, this faction is embodied by organisations such as the *Œuvre d'Assistance aux Bêtes d'Abattoirs* (OABA) and *Welfarm*. The second, known as the animal rights movement, brings together all the anti-speciesist, animal rights and animal liberation movements that challenge all forms of animal exploitation and that promote veganism, such as the *L214* association⁶. The mobilisations of this movement essentially target (without being limited to) livestock farming activities. For veterinarians, there is therefore less cognitive divergence with welfarists than with animal rights advocates. The history of the concept of animal welfare thus bears witness to the persisting albeit lopsided relationships between welfarists and veterinarians, as opposed to a far deeper conflict with animal rights advocates.

The concept of animal welfare, indicative of a partial reconstruction of relations between welfarists and veterinarians

Despite their cognitive divergence, the notion of animal welfare is mobilised both by welfarists and by the veterinary profession, which claims to have become the “sentinel of animal welfare”⁷ according to President of the veterinary order Michel Baussier, who is also on the Board of Directors of the welfarist organisation *Fondation Droit Animal, Éthique et Science (LFDA)*⁸. However, the consensus displayed around this notion does not signify that it means the same thing for each of these social groups. On the other hand, it is evidence of a partial and uneven reconstruction of the social, relational and practical interactions between welfarists and sanitary veterinarians such as rural veterinarians and the state’s veterinary services.

While sometimes described as a scientific concept stemming from the animal welfare science, the notion of animal welfare is nonetheless rooted in the actions of animal welfare advocates. It was only later that this notion would be taken up again by the veterinarians of the twentieth century. However, the welfarist movement, its activists and the notion of animal welfare were rarely studied in France, and once again we need to turn to the Anglo-Saxon world if we are to understand its origins. For Christophe Traïni (2011, 2015), the increasing number of welfarist mobilisations in the second half of the twentieth century is linked to the publication in 1964 of *Animal Machines* (Harrison 1964), a book by vegetarian activist Ruth Harrison, daughter of anti-vivisectionist activists, investigating the transformation of livestock farming practices and their consequences for animals. Its success led to the creation of committees to draft new standards and to the passing of the British Animal Welfare Act in 1968. At the same time, organisations such as Compassion in World Farming (CIWF), founded in 1967 by a dairy farmer, endorsed the structuring of the welfarist movement (Traïni 2011, 2015). According to Fabien Carrié, the book’s success was largely due to the fact

⁶ The name “*L214*” refers to an article of the French Code rural stating that all animals are sentient beings and therefore should be treated in adequation with their biological needs.

⁷ https://static.veterinaire.fr/fileadmin/user_upload/Colloque_BEAC_Conclusion_Michel_Baussier.pdf. Accessed September 18 2020.

⁸ This organisation was created in 1977 under the name of *Ligue Française pour le Droit des Animaux*, before being renamed in 2010.

that the moral arguments formulated by the author were backed by solid technical knowledge (Carrié 2015b, pp. 580-581). Abigail Woods's work (2012a) made it possible to specify the conditions behind the emergence and circulation of the concept of animal welfare. The term was first used to designate animal advocacy mobilisations in the 1950s. It was then promoted by the Brambell Committee in 1964 to replace the notion of prevention to cruelty and to emphasise the need to consider both the mental and physical state of farm animals. As early as 1965, the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food mentioned animal welfare in its reports and the term then spread to the British veterinary services as from the passing of the 1968 Agricultural Act, which made veterinarians the guarantors of animal welfare. It was only later on that the concept spread throughout scientific circles and was taken up by veterinary research. With reasoning that could easily be adapted to the situation in France, Abigail Woods (2012b) also showed how the growing importance attached to animal welfare in veterinary ethics was linked to the recognition of the veterinarian profession's jurisdiction and competence. Before veterinarians enjoyed a real professional monopoly in farm animal care, the primary challenge for veterinary ethics was to ensure that animals benefited from care provided by professionals trained in veterinary medicine rather than from the promotion of the notion of animal welfare.

While we still do not know how this notion spread in France, certain sources highlight the existence of practical convergences between French welfarists and veterinarians. The hypothesis of a welfarist movement directly imported from Great Britain must moreover be tempered by the creation in 1961 of the OABA in France. Damien Baldin (2014) notes many points in common between the expectations of welfarists and the activities of French veterinarians during the second half of the twentieth century. He believes that many of the veterinarians' demands, such as the stunning of animals before bleeding made law by the decree of 16 April 1964 (religious reasons excepted), could only "come about through the evolution of the animal protection movement in the 20th century" (Baldin 2014, p. 66). And while it would be anachronistic to speak of animal welfare in the France of the 1960s, the notion finally found its place. Among welfarists, it was especially mobilised by the French branch of the CIWF set up in 1994 (Traïni 2011, 2015). The success of the concept among French veterinarians would appear to have come later. In his review of the veterinary and related professions, Philippe Fritsch (2011) does not mention the role of veterinarians in relation to animal welfare. It was not until 2015 that veterinarians took full ownership of animal welfare with the reform of the National Order of Veterinarians and the profession's code of ethics, which made it one of their missions. Practical convergences were thus also to be found between welfarists and veterinarians in the second half of the twentieth century in France.

However, this reconstruction of relationships between veterinarians and welfarists was not only partial, it was also uneven. Indeed, the professionalisation and the state recognition of veterinarians put welfarists in a position of inferiority in relation to veterinarians. Damien Baldin (2014) thus shows how the political decisions of 1954 on bullfighting, of 1963 on the criminalisation of cruelty to pets and of 1964 on stunning before slaughter made veterinary services the preferred public action tool for applying these changes in sensibility regimes and for meeting the demands of welfarists. The role now given to the State veterinary services provided them with considerable room for manoeuvre in reinterpreting the demands of "welfarists" in terms of the concerns of

both veterinarians and the State. Despite practical and (to a lesser extent) relational convergences, the interactions between veterinarians and welfarists would appear to have been uneven, although further research would be required to fully grasp this new reconstruction of the intertwined history of animal advocates and veterinarians.

Animal rights advocacy: activists in conflict with veterinary services

The differences between these veterinarians and animal rights advocates ran deeper and resulted in a cognitive, practical and relational divergence that was reminiscent of the conflicts surrounding vivisection. The appropriation by these veterinarians and their organisations of the concept of animal welfare in no way challenges the legitimacy of livestock farming practices and the adjunctive role they play. For Michel Baussier, “the veterinarian was born with and for livestock farming” and “livestock farmers must know that they can count on the support of the veterinary profession”⁹. However, for animal rights advocates, all forms of animal exploitation are illegitimate. Unlike welfarists, they therefore consider the notion of animal welfare to be insufficient. The origin of animal rights ideology and activism is often reduced to the publication of Peter Singer’s *Animal Liberation* in 1975 (Singer 1975). In his book, the philosopher systematises the demands of a movement that valorises animal liberation and anti-speciesism, a notion that promotes equal consideration of the interests of all sentient animals¹⁰, including humans. Carrié (2015b) and Traïni (2011, 2015) reintegrate this genesis within a broader intellectual, cognitive and activist movement. On the one hand, they describe how this ideology is embedded in the intellectual developments of the 1960s and 1970s as in the case of the “Oxford group” who wrote *Animals, Men and Morals*, published in 1971 (Godlovitch et al. 1971). They also reintegrate the movement within the space of social movements, emphasising that it also emerged in the 1960s among militant groups (such as the Hunt Saboteurs Association) that opposed hunting and animal experimentation. The importation of animal rights advocacy into France came later. To a far greater extent than the LFDA created in 1977 by a group of intellectuals and scientists who mobilised the notion of speciesism without going so far as to demand the abolition of animal exploitation, it was the militant groups that published the *Cahiers Antispécistes* journal created in 1991 who brought anti-speciesism and the animal rights perspective into France (Traïni 2011, 2015; Carrié 2015b). This movement was embodied by activists from organisations such as *L214*, *Droits des Animaux*, *269 Life France*, *269 Libération Animale* or *Vegan Impact*, to mention only a handful of them. These organisations demanded an end to the exploitation of all animals and targeted in particular the practice of livestock farming not only due to its scale and the amount of animal suffering it caused but also because of its symbolic significance.

Inset 4. Sébastien Arzac and Brigitte Gothière: the activist trajectory of two animal rights advocates

These anti-speciesists are among the most visible animal rights advocates in France. During his childhood, Sébastien Arzac was marked by the killing of animals that his

⁹ https://static.veterinaire.fr/fileadmin/user_upload/Colloque_BEA_Conclusion_Michel_Baussier.pdf. Accessed September 18 2020.

¹⁰ For animal rights advocates, the concept of sentience refers to the capacity of a living being to subjectively experience suffering and emotions, as opposed to sensibility, which does not include this subjective element.

farming grandparents sometimes slaughtered. He and his partner Brigitte Gothière became vegetarians, and then vegans in the 1990s, developing close links with the activists who published the *Cahiers Antispécistes*. They played an active role in the *Stop-Gavage* collective launched in 2003, which mobilises against foie gras, supported by INRA¹¹ (French National Institute for Agricultural Research). At the same time, Sébastien Arzac worked for a while for the welfarist association *Protection Mondiale des Animaux de Ferme* (World Protection of Farm Animals). In 2008, they created an association to promote anti-speciesism and the abolition of meat: *L214*, of which Brigitte Gothière is both the director and the main spokesperson. As of 2020, this organisation had approximately 70 employees, nearly 45,000 members and was followed on social networks by more than 700,000 people.

Alongside these demands, the activist careers of animal rights advocates led them to practise (Traïni 2012) and, for most of them, to actively promote veganism (Carrié 2018a). This practice, which aims to exclude any product or activity involving the use of animals from one's food and consumption, runs counter to the dominant representations of veterinarians and crystallises many tensions in public debate, even though it is less widespread in France than in the USA (Cherry 2016). This divergence is also apparent in terms of knowledge. Although the animal rights advocates mobilise the knowledge of ethology and the cognitive sciences to promote the concept of sentience, a pre-eminent place is given to moral philosophy, as can be seen from the contents of the *Cahiers Antispécistes*¹² or, more recently, *L'Amorce*¹³. This perspective contrasts with the way in which veterinarians approach animal ethics: an examination of the curricula of French veterinary schools shows that animal ethics courses attach considerable importance to "animal welfare science" and to the legal framework of animal protection rather than to moral philosophy. The philosophical virtuosity deployed by anti-speciesists thus differs from the legal and medical expertise valorised by veterinarians. In this respect, the "*Révolution antispéciste*" (Bonnardel et al. 2018) promoted by animal rights advocates differs from the dominant representations of veterinarians practising on livestock farms.

Animal rights advocates are very much embedded in the space occupied by contemporary social movements, particularly in France. Comparing them to their European counterparts, ethnologist Catherine-Marie Dubreuil (2001, 2013) argues that French animal rights advocates have attached less importance to the notion of veganism than to the concept of anti-speciesism, causing them to declare a determination to fight against all forms of domination. This has led them to formulate a "systemic critique" (Carrié 2015b) of animal exploitation which, by analogy, links this phenomenon to the logic of sexist and racist discrimination and is leading French animal rights advocates to valorise a convergence with feminist and anti-racist movements. Their militant methods clash with the rationales of the veterinary profession, particularly rural veterinarians and state veterinary services with whom a conflict seems to be taking place. For example, the investigations carried out by *L214* on French livestock farms and in slaughterhouses regularly criticise the negligence of state veterinary services and lead to conflicts with the Ministry of Agriculture and its veterinarians in charge of livestock farming and

¹¹ <https://stop-foie-gras.com/fichiers/ancien-site/inra/INRA-foie-gras.pdf>. Accessed September 18 2020.

¹² <https://www.cahiers-antispécistes.org/>. Accessed September 18 2020.

¹³ <https://lamorce.co/>. Accessed September 18 2020.

animal welfare issues¹⁴. Despite a relative social convergence between veterinary students and the animal rights advocates who have a significant educational capital (Fritsch 2005; Poirel 2016), our exploratory analysis would appear to indicate that the cognitive divergence between anti-speciesist animal rights advocates on the one hand and the state veterinary services and rural veterinarians on the other is accompanied by practical and relational differences, although further work would be needed to clarify the extent of these differences.

Conclusion

The (socio-)history of animal advocates and veterinarians is interspersed with multiple, complex and ambivalent relations. Sometimes it is animal advocates who have influenced the practices of veterinarians; sometimes it is the latter who have affected the mobilisations of animal advocates. So, in many respects, the history of animal advocates and veterinarians is one of intersection. Their relationship is nevertheless far from unambiguous. While the context of understanding that characterised relations between reformer animal advocates and veterinarians in the mid-nineteenth century quickly gave way to a conflictual relationship on the matter of vivisection between sensitivists and veterinarians who were medicalising their profession, the interactions between these social groups did not cease with the decline of anti-vivisectionism. As the twentieth century wore on, their relationships were first rebuilt through a competitive situation that helped structure the pet care market. From the mid-twentieth century onwards, the establishment of veterinarians on farms simultaneously led to lopsided relations with welfarists and a new conflict with animal rights advocates. The existence of cognitive divergences between animal advocates and veterinarians did not therefore result in a breakdown in their relations, even though they were conflictual, and did not prevent the realisation of relational, social or practical convergences. A little-known example of the porosity between a professional group and a militant group, the intersecting history of animal advocates and veterinarians thus highlights the multi-dimensional nature of relations between social groups in perpetual evolution, fluctuating between cooperation and competition.

At the same time, this work allows us to identify the blind spots in the literature on animal advocates and veterinarians in France. While their role in the mid-nineteenth century and in the controversy surrounding vivisection is now well known, further work remains to be done to better understand the history of the canine specialism and the role of animal shelters and welfarists in animal advocacy, while animal rights activism is the subject of ongoing research. It also allows us to highlight the utility of studying the ever-changing relationship between animal advocates and veterinarians. Frédéric Keck and Miriam Ticktin's (2015) reflection on the effects of veterinary expertise could thus be extended to pro-animal mobilisation. Following on from Ulrike Thoms (2015), the imposition of the concept of animal welfare on veterinarians questions their role among livestock farmers and the boundary with the demands of welfarists. Florence Burgat (2009) also points out that, unlike many Anglo-Saxon advocates, in the short term the majority of French animal rights advocates are not

¹⁴ This assertion is based on an analysis of *L214*'s press releases between September 2015 and July 2020.

opposed to improving livestock farming conditions. This situation makes dialogue with veterinarians possible and has been reinforced with the professionalisation of *L214*. Jean-Baptiste Del Amo's militant history of *L214* (2017) shows how the organisation's animal rights goals include welfarist demands that are compatible with the expectations of most veterinarians. On an individual basis, some veterinarians even support animal rights organisations. In this respect, the forms of animal advocacy engagement of some veterinarians, particularly when they practise as liberals (Champy and Israel 2009), would benefit from further research. The rise of the animal condition issue in the public debate also raises questions about the evolution of the mandates granted to veterinarians, particularly in the case of veterinary inspection services whose ambivalent role in terms of animal protection requires examination. These are all unexplored perspectives that question the never-ending evolution of relations between veterinarians and animal advocates.

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