

Human–animal sexual relations and the construction of masculinity in livestock farming contexts: The case of Andalusia (Spain)

Agustín Coca-Pérez

Universidad Pablo de Olavide, Spain

Rafael Cáceres-Feria

Universidad Pablo de Olavide, Spain

José María Valcuende del Río

Universidad Pablo de Olavide, Spain

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Abstract

The meaning of sexual practices between humans and animals cannot be understood exclusively as an identity category, a pathology, or the expression of uncontrolled sexuality. Up until now, medical-psychiatric approaches have dominated the study of these sexual practices. In the cases from south Spain that we analysed here, sexual relations with animals are, for certain males, framed within their process of learning about normative sexuality, being therefore inextricably linked with the construction of masculinity.

Keywords

Bestiality, human–animal sexual relations, masculinity, Spain, zoophilia

Introduction

The presence of animals is a constant feature of our lives, as it has been in the places where much of this research has been conducted. It is true, as John Berger (1980) points out, that, since the Industrial Revolution, animals have become

Corresponding author:

Rafael Cáceres-Feria, Departamento de Antropología Social, Psicología Básica y Salud Pública, Universidad Pablo de Olavide, Km 1 Carretera de Utrera, 41013 Sevilla, Spain.

Email: rcacfer@upo.es

increasingly distant from us. But in the Andalusian rural world, where we have carried out our fieldwork, the links between people working in agriculture and livestock and animals, although increasingly weak, are still close and familiar, unlike the relationships established in urban societies between humans and pets. For our informants in this study, animals were: tools, pets, means of transportation, resources, symbols... But animals were also something else; they were also present in sexual games among children and adolescents. This was a secret but widely known reality.

Through the research that we have carried out in these rural contexts for several decades, we have been familiar with such sexual practices. However, this is the first time that we have attempted to approach them critically in our research. We have not been the only ones to ignore or oversee this reality. Indeed, this is the first anthropological study that directly tackles sexual relations between humans and non-humans in Spain.

In Anthropology, the rethinking of the opposition between nature and culture (Descola, 1996; Ingold, 2013; Kohn, 2013; Viveiros de Castro, 2003) has generated a change of perspective by blurring the border between human and non-human animals. Within such debates, some authors have even focused on forms of animals' agency and the different meanings acquired by interspecies interaction (Despret, 2013; Haraway, 2008). This renewed interest in analysing relations between animals and humans allowed us to return to our fieldwork diaries and recover a series of notes that we had previously considered anecdotal. Following this, we went on to search for new testimonies from men who had come into sexual contact with animals or who knew about these practices in the south of Spain. It was a complicated task, since these relations are currently being resignified, and it is increasingly difficult to obtain information on account of the stigma they entail. Such prejudices are patent in much of the research that tackles this subject, and even in the silences of our ethnographies.

Although we did not use an ethnographic methodology in this research, access to masculine contexts of sociability in the different ethnographic research conducted for years in this area has been central to this approach. Only long-term research provides in-depth knowledge of the societies observed, allowing a certain degree of confidence and trust to be established between researchers and informants. This is essential to tackle certain subjects. But what are we looking for in this approach to sexual practices with animals in rural farming contexts?

On the basis of this exploratory study we call into question perspectives that view sexual relations with animals in terms of pathology and identity, failing to take into account the distinctly symbolic nature of human sexuality (Plummer, 1984). This article examines the norms that govern sexual relations between men and animals, and the meaning of these practices throughout the lives of the males interviewed, who share a 'secret' through which they reinforce solidarity between their peers.

From bestiality to zoophilia

Interpretations of sexual practices between humans and animals have fundamentally been used to stigmatize 'others'. From the perspective of urban societies, bestiality is situated in the rural sphere, in subordinate groups or 'primitive societies'. Kinsey and his colleagues (1948) located cases of human–animal sexual practices among young livestock farmers in the USA. As Miletski (2002) points out, the stereotype of a zoophile is a poor, ignorant peasant. Allusions to these practices are particularly profuse in contexts of colonization (Amodio, 2012; Bazant, 2002; Vega Umbasia, 1994). This is no coincidence since accusations of sexual practices considered immoral were a clear way of justifying control and dominion over barbarian, indigenous, and subordinate groups. Bestiality, through the discourse of power, merges human and beast. They must both be taught, dominated, punished, or, using Foucault's terms (1975), 'disciplined' through the control of their bodies and their sexuality. 'Civilized' urban societies would be free from this scourge. When human–animal sexual relations start to be seen in cities, the perspective changes: it ceases to be a moral problem and becomes a medical question. What for the 'primitives' is immorality and ignorance, for the civilized is a mental disorder.

The reasons for condemning this type of practice were not the same in different historical–temporal contexts. In Europe, up until the late 19th century, the terms sodomy¹ and bestiality, which had a clear moral and religious component, and were included in some legal codes, were broadly used. In 1886, the German psychiatrist Von Krafft-Ebing (1894) coined the terms zooerasty and zoophilia² to refer to behaviours considered pathological, which implies sexual and emotional attraction towards animals. Yet he reserved the term bestiality to refer to instrumental practices aimed exclusively at satisfying sexual desire. Havelock Ellis (1923: 72), following this distinction, considered that bestiality applied to 'the individual [who] is fairly normal, but belongs to a low grade of culture' whereas zoophilia, on the other hand, referred to 'the other in which he may belong to a more refined social class, but is affected by a deep degree of degeneration'.

Unlike bestiality, zoophilia now no longer refers only to the practices, but also to those who engage in them ('zoophiles'). 'Perversion' and 'immorality' are displaced from the act to the person, in a process that not only occurs in this type of behaviour, but also in other non-reproductive sexualities (same-sex relations, masturbation, fetishism etc. See Foucault, 1976; Rubin, 1984; Weeks, 1985).

The distinction between zoophilia and bestiality has been maintained within psychology and psychiatry as a paraphilia. Therefore, it comes as no surprise that a medical/psychiatric approach dominates the scientific literature. Some studies address this sexuality from a clinical-therapeutic perspective (Alvarez and Freinhar, 1991; Beetz, 2002; Cerrone, 1991; Earls and Lalumiere, 2009; Miletski, 2001; Peretti and Rowan, 1982); whereas others used a forensic-criminological

perspective, relating these practices with crimes of violence (Aggrawal, 2011; Ascione, 2005; Duffield et al., 1998; Flynn, 1999; Hensley et al., 2006).

This medicalized vision, together with the methodological difficulty of accessing people who engage in sexual relations with animals are the main reasons that explain the lack of interest shown by social sciences in this subject.³ However, this has begun to change with the increasing visibility and resignification of these sexual practices on the internet (Kavanaugh and Maratea, 2016; Williams and Weinberg, 2003). The internet has facilitated the creation of a ‘zoo community’ (Durkin et al., 2006), thus making it easier for researchers to access this reality (Jenkins and Thomas, 2004; Kavanaugh and Maratea, 2016; Maratea, 2011; Williams and Weinberg, 2003). In this context, some authors are beginning to talk about zoophilia as a sexual orientation (Miletski, 2017).

Anthropological research in this arena is also scarce (Davis and Whitten, 1987). References in ethnographic research to human–animal sexual practices are hard to find, and when they appear they are simply anecdotal (Beidelman, 1961; Chaplin, 1963; Delaney, 1991; Evans-Pritchard, 1956; Malinowski, 1975; Williams, 1966). Studies that approach bestiality more specifically include those by Devereux (1948) about the Mojave people in North America, and by LeVine (1959) about the Kisii in Kenya. More recently, the research of Anest (1994) explores zoophilia in Cyprus and Crete.

In recent decades, this subject has sparked renewed interest for scientific and social reasons, with the emergence of new arguments that reject these practices, but also, with the appearance of the first timidly positive readings of them. The discussion about the frontier between human and animal acquires progressive development in an age that some authors are beginning to define as post-humanist (Wolfe, 2010). This generates scientific debates that are also moral and ethical reconceptualizations, which are summarized through two opposing stances. The first understands sexual practices with animals as an aggression, since there can never be consent (Beirne, 1997, 2001). The second view considers that sexual relations with animals do not always imply cruelty (Singer, 2001). This debate is translating into an increase in regulations aimed at protecting other non-human species and regulating relations between animals and humans. There are an increasing number of laws that prohibit sexual relations with animals (Holoyda and Newman, 2014), considering animals, to all intents and purposes, as underage social beings that need to be protected.

However, beyond the past and current consideration of sexual relations with animals as being immoral and illegal, this is not an uncontrolled and individual form of canalization of desire. In numerous social contexts these sexual practices are regulated by cultural norms that define with which animals people can and cannot engage in sexual relations, as well as when and how. Hence, for example, whereas in certain cultures it was permissible to engage in sexual contact with female dogs (Dundes et al., 1970; Laugrand and Oosten, 2002), in other contexts it is a taboo (Anest, 1994). In the majority of cases, there is a direct correlation between sexuality permitted with other species and age. Sexual relations with

animals are usually viewed as part of a learning process of sexuality for males.⁴ Local research highlights that many of the practices labelled as zoophilia and bestiality have significances and meanings mediated by belief systems. The next section focuses precisely on the significance and meaning of these relations in the context of Andalusia's countryside.

Methodology and research context

The idea of carrying out a research on human–animal sexual practices is based on the information gathered indirectly from 1990 to 2006, in research related to socio-economic transformations in the Andalusian agricultural and livestock sector between 1950 and 1980, in which the authors of this text participated. The anthropological fieldwork enables us to know aspects of daily life, inaccessible through other methodologies. Our continued presence in the field, and our participation in contexts of sociability and male work made it easier to address issues that can only be approached through continuous coexistence with informants. Stories of sexual practices with animals were common among them. At that time, we simply recorded them as one more aspect of the social reality we were investigating. Years later, when we began to work on sexualities, in a context in which the social sciences were rethinking human–animal relations, we became aware of the importance that the analysis of sexual relations could have. To complement the information gathered during those years of research, 12 interviews were conducted between 2013 and 2016 with men between the ages of 49 and 82 who had made it explicit that they had engaged in this type of practice at some point in their lives. They were informed of the reason for the interviews and all consented to the use of the information provided that anonymity was respected. For this reason, any reference that may identify them is excluded (name, county, village etc.).⁵

Livestock has historically played a central role as a source of traction and manure in large agricultural estates (Bernal Rodríguez, 1988; García Sanz, 1994). Animals used in diverse tasks such as oil milling, sowing, transport of grain, driving mill wheels and so on, were fundamentally female (mares, female donkeys, cows, mules), owing to their reproductive possibilities.

In mountainous areas that are less suited to agriculture, livestock was used extensively according to the possibilities of the terrain (Acosta Naranjo et al., 2001). Livestock farmers were hired to care for these animals, and, with their families, they occupied a house and kept a few pigs, goats, sheep, poultry, and a small vegetable garden for domestic consumption (Coca, 2008; Maestre, 1968).

In these family groups, productive specialization, in terms of gender and age, implied that children would take care of the poultry, whereas adolescents would take care of the other animal species. Dogs were used in multiple tasks, and some farm labourers owned a female donkey to carry out a host of independent activities.

From the 1950s onwards, livestock began to disappear as a consubstantial element in large farming estates in Andalusia.⁶ In mountainous areas, agrarian crisis has

led to the disappearance of the majority of livestock farming activities, and the abandonment, depopulation and marginalization of large parts of the Andalusian mountains (Roux, 1975).

Animals in the learning of sexuality

Animals were part of the everyday lives of children in rural Andalusia during the period analysed. During childhood, the most direct relationship is established with poultry, fundamentally hens and turkeys, which are reared in the domestic sphere. Later on, as they joined the working population, and depending on their job (shepherd, mule driver, pig farmer), they came into contact with larger animals: female donkeys, sows, ewes, nanny goats, cows... Children learned to take care of and protect animals, but also to punish them when necessary and even to kill them. To guide them in these tasks, they followed the advice and directives of their elders, firstly women, and then older boys and men who interacted with different animal species outside of the domestic sphere:

As children we used to carry a knife in our pocket. Because sometimes the turkeys would stuff themselves with snails. And so we had to slit their craw and sew it up, so they wouldn't die. All children knew how to do this. (Small livestock farmer, 71 years old, 2004)

Farmyard animals, used mainly for domestic consumption, were the responsibility of women, who taught children how to take care of them:

The most tiresome job was when I had to keep watch on the turkey to see where she was laying her eggs... Sometimes I couldn't find them even after I'd searched for ages. So when I got tired of that, I went to find my mother and told her I'd had enough. Then she would say to me: 'bring the turkey here'... And I would take it to my mother and she would put salt on its backside. The turkey would feel a strange sensation and would go to the nest, and I would follow her. (Small Farm Owner, 71 years old, 2005)

Progressively, children would come into contact with the world of men:

I used to tag along with the goatherd, and I really liked going to see the nanny goats giving birth, and we would help get the kids out. We used to milk them, and gradually do more and more jobs. In summer we would herd the cows on the farm. (Small Farm Owner, 71 years old, 2005)

Children learned to experience the life and death of animals as a natural phenomenon. In this direct contact, they learned about the sexuality of animals and their own sexuality as well. The mating of donkeys, mares, cows, goats, hens,

turkeys... was part of their everyday life. On many occasions, mating required human intervention to guarantee the most appropriate crossbreeding or to resolve all kinds of different problems:

The bull wouldn't do it with the cows, the ox would. The thing was that although the bull could take the ox, it wouldn't dare to fight it. It was afraid of it. So they had to trick the bull, by painting the ox white, using lime. When the bull saw the ox painted white, it didn't know it was an ox, and so it started to fight and it won, taking its place. (Small Farm Owner, 71 years old, 2004)⁷

There was a sexuality that was considered 'natural', and which was part of everyday life and experiences, and another form of sexuality where the presence of children was avoided:

Cows would mate with bulls, and that was that, and billy goats with nanny goats... but then maybe the intention would be to get the mare to tease the stallion to get it turned on, and then put the stallion with the she-donkey... and that was forced. I don't know why but they wouldn't let children watch that. We wouldn't be punished if we went, but the aim was for us not to be present. I don't know why it wasn't the same as with other animals. (Small Farm Owner, 88 years old, 2012)

These types of mating procedures that were mediated by human action, in species such as donkeys, horses and mares, sometimes involved the intervention of outsiders from the domestic groups. Hence, in certain villages, farmers would ask the army to provide stallions to improve their livestock (Salafranca, 2013). Stallions were taken from farm to farm to cross them with mares, by members of the army from outside the villages, and in these cases parents emphatically prohibited their children from witnessing the mating procedure. Children were prevented from seeing the intervention of the 'mamporrero'⁸ who would speed up the process so that the stallions would ejaculate quicker. Hence, modesty would be displayed in the presence of an outsider, who was also a figure of military authority.

In spite of the restrictions imposed by adults, in their everyday lives children would learn the meaning of sexuality in two ways: First, by watching animals, which they would imitate, regularly playing with other children:

My uncle had goats and sheep, and I was a wild one, and I would play all kinds of tricks on the goats... Occasionally, as children we would get naked and pretend to be animals, although there was never any penetration. (Farm Labourer, 70 years old, 2016)

When we were kids we would pretend to mount one another, like the animals did out in the fields, when we were five or six years old, and we would laugh when we saw them. (Small Farm Owner, 75 years old, 2015)

Second, by interacting with the animals themselves:

That afternoon we went to see Uncle Manolo, and when we collected the goats my cousin and I would do it with them ... well, what we actually did was rub our willies up against the goat and say we had done it with ten or twelve goats between us, but we never even took our pants off! (Grandson of small farm owner, 25 years old, 1990)

It was most common for children to start interacting sexually with small domestic animals, mainly poultry. As children grew up, they would come into contact with larger animals. Moving from one species onto another defined the different stages of male sexuality. In the liminal period between childhood and adulthood, they explored their sexuality and competed with other children to prove their manliness, associated with the possibility of having 'complete' sexual intercourse. Their sexual contact with animals other than poultry would intensify when they began getting crushes on girls. Collective masturbatory practices would also become recurrent spaces in which virility was demonstrated to others, and where, at times, homoerotic games would occur.⁹ These were furtive practices that take on meaning within a group of peers. They helped to forge emotional and identity bonds in the group of friends. Bonds that would generally endure over time, and which would strengthen the union and complicity necessary to maintain common strategies in social and working spheres (looking for work, helping one another etc.)

There is one fact that differentiates the sexual practices of children and adolescents with animals: the power of virility. In certain contexts, a younger boy would say to 'do it' with a turkey, but a teenager would 'burst her wide open',¹⁰ defining the penis as the protagonist of this act. Thus, displaying the capability of *doing it* with certain animals constitutes a central act in the reaffirmation of adulthood and virility. As Javier Salvago (2007: 129–130), originally from a village in the area studied, tells in his memoirs:

I remember one night, a classmate from school told us that one day he was coming back from the fields with his mule, and suddenly he felt uncontrollably horny. He climbed down from the powerful animal, stood by her rump, put a big stone on the floor so he could comfortably reach his target, and then he stood on it and gave into the bestial pleasures of the flesh. He told us this with pride, as if it was proof of his manliness. When he was in the middle of the deed, he told us that he saw people coming towards him, but he wasn't prepared to stop what he had started. So he carried on going at it hammer and tongs, not caring about the jokes they were making next to him.

The ability to *do it* with a female donkey became central in the collective childhood imagination. It was a collective ritual event that, up until the 1980s at

any rate, was linked to the sexual awakening of teenagers and adolescents in agrarian contexts:

When we went to the village, our friends would ask us if we wanted to go and do it with the hens, and on one occasion I remember one of our friends was boasting because he'd done it with a donkey. (Son of an emigrant, 50 years old, 2016)

Courtship and marriage theoretically marked the end of sexual relations with animals. In some cases they continued, but the experience would become individual, not collective. Sexual practices with animals, which were normalized at certain ages, began to be seen as strange among adults. The same is true with collective masturbation practices:

If you stopped looking after goats and you started doing other jobs aged 16 or 17, and as a teenager you had relationships with women, you're not going to do it with a donkey anymore. (Farm Labourer, 60 years old, 2011)

Spaces of masculine sociability were experienced outside of the domestic sphere, and in some cases became linked with paid sex. Sexuality with prostitutes was associated precisely with farming spheres. 'Going with hookers' was an act that took place with friends, usually workmates. It is not normally an individual action.¹¹ These kinds of relations were once again protected by secrecy, and they were never made explicit in the presence of women who were part of the 'reproductive' sphere. Desire, pleasure, 'liberation' from the everyday, became understood from accessible consumption to paid sex:

(Sex with animals) was no joking matter ... because these things were discussed in an atmosphere of great loyalty. These people did not do these kinds of things with just anyone. They shared it with their friends, in an atmosphere of complicity ... like when we would toss off together to see who came first. And they were spaces of complicity like when later on you would go and pick up hookers. Complicity is maintained, just the same. (Worker, 65 years old, 2016)

Furthermore, sexual practices with their official partner were not verbalized. This relationship was stripped of any element related with sexuality and desire, linking it with marital duty. 'I'm a real one for the ladies, I even like my old lady', was a popular saying, underscoring masculinity and the duality between a man's official partners and desired sexuality, which was linked, in male conversations, to other women.

Normativity of sexual relations with animals and deviations from the norm

As we can see, sexual practices with animals in Andalusian agrarian contexts was regulated socially. Sexual relations with animals were not considered appropriate at

any age, and furthermore all species did not have the same significance. There are certain key aspects that should be highlighted at this point:

1. The majority of sexual contacts with animals reproduce the logic of heteronormative sexuality. In fact, the sexual practices of males occur fundamentally with female animals. Only one of the informants referred to sexual practices with a male donkey, and justified it not only on the grounds that his father did not have any female donkeys, but also as proof of his virility, given the difficulty of copulating with a male:

I did it with a male donkey when I was a kid ... a female donkey would have been lighter! ... I used to ride a donkey down to the river to go to work, and you would spend the entire journey aroused. Because you've got your legs open and you're getting all rubbed up. It's terrible! Even when you're riding a donkey! So you would grab hold and do it with donkey, and that was the end of it! (Farm Labourer, 76 years old, 2016)

2. Sexual relations with animals, at a certain age, have a collective character. This does not imply that these practices are always carried out in a group, but they must be socialized with the group of friends, although never in spheres where women are present, and if possible never outside of the group itself.¹²
3. The choice of animals for sexual relations is defined by several factors. The first of these is linked with unequal access to different animals:

I didn't go with goats because I was in the village ... But friends who were pig farmers would do it with the sows, the goatherd would do it with nanny goats, and the shepherd would do it with the ewes ... and with female donkeys, which were more comfortable. (Worker, 66 years old, 2015)

Some of us in the village would do it with the donkeys that were always on the cattle routes. (Worker, 67 years old, 2011)

The second element is related with the physiological characteristics of each species and their attitude to penetration. At a discursive level, the characteristics and qualities that make a species more or less desirable are defined:

Apparently, a sow's vagina is very peculiar, because well you've seen what a pig's penis is like: it's kind of spindly. (Farm Labourer, 60 years old, 2015)

A cow is pert, a donkey is good and calm, and the best one is a ewe because they are nice and warm. (Tenant Farmer, 52 years old, 1987)

These factors are important insofar as they facilitate sexual relations with animals, but they are not decisive. In fact, there are certain species that are in regular contact

with people, and yet no sexual relations are maintained. For example, dogs do not feature in the sexual imagination. To a certain extent, there is a taboo surrounding sex with dogs among people who have, however, had sex with other animals. At most they might ‘rub up against’ dogs, but never engage in coitus:

You could rub up against dogs but never penetrate them. (Farm Labourer, 60 years old, 2013)

When you were around thirteen or fourteen, and a dog came up to you, you would stroke it but you wouldn’t try anything . . . because that was disgusting. Although you might get close to the dog, you would never penetrate her, because we found the idea of doing it with dogs disgusting. (Farm Labourer, 45 years old, 2000)

4. In general, sexual contact with animals starts to be seen as anomalous once young lads start to court and then subsequently get married. However, we find reasons that justify the continuity of this sexuality beyond adolescence; fundamentally it’s the case of single men who, because of their work, spend long periods of time among animals. The proximity to animals, living in the countryside, and fundamentally bachelorhood could prolong these types of practices, even developing other types of feelings such as affection, which does not appear in collective practices; in this case, they talk about *attachment*: ‘You give the goat a little sweet treat and she becomes more “attached” to me. And she’s more affectionate and docile!’ (Farm Labourer, 50 years old, 2001)

When affective relationships that go beyond instrumental socialized group practices occur, they cross the border of what is considered permissible, ‘normal’:

He would go from the village down to the river every afternoon. We had started to play the field by this time, but he would go to the donkey that belonged to the milkman, and he would spend all afternoon there from after lunch until he would come back and play cards with us. One afternoon he arrived looking sad, almost crying, and he said that she wasn’t there any more, that the donkey had died . . . and he was sad for quite some time. (Farm Labourer, 40 years old, 1999)

There are certain situations that make it difficult to fit in with partner-based heteronormativity, and which limit the development of reproductive sexuality, which is at the core of the traditional family. Although these circumstances can be understood, they become judged as social ‘deviation’. The next testimony is particularly interesting, precisely when it comes to understanding what is permitted and what is relegated to liminal status. The informant, during his childhood, was part of Andalusia’s agrarian rural contexts, and for a time he lived in the city.

He points out the contradictions between the official values imposed in urban society and ‘customs’:

I met a family in the mountains, and the boy, whose name I still remember, had a girlfriend who was his goat. And the family allowed him to sleep with his goat in his bed. And that was a shock for me. And I have been an open man, with my contradictions ... and I thought something should be done to help him ... but who the hell am I?! ... His parents had been shepherds their whole lives and they couldn't even talk. The father and the two sons had always slept in the countryside, while the daughters lived in the village with their mother. And the lads would have relations with the goats. At weekends, when they were older, they might slip away and get some action if they could (with prostitutes). But that boy had a disability, and he had a permanent and stable emotional relationship with the goat. (Farm Worker, 68 years old, 2016)

As we have seen, the sexual practices with animals are not an exception, a perversion, or something that is marginal, outside of the norm. These sexual practices can be understood from the perspective of heteronormativity, linked to the construction of masculinity, protected by ‘secrecy’, which strengthens bonds of solidarity and trust between men. Men who seek sexual pleasure outside of their homes, and who learn even as boys the social significance of the penis as a symbol of power (Sabuco and Valcuende, 2003).¹³

Today, relations with animals are the subject of mockery, and this makes it increasingly difficult to find testimonies to a kind of practice that was widespread and which could have been maintained in a relatively concealed reality, protected by groups of men.

Conclusions

Animals have played an important role in terms of learning about sexuality among many children and teenagers in rural environments in Andalusia. Children interacted with animals, they played at ‘being animals’, and they also played at ‘being men’. Teenage boys assimilated that they were destined to hold public power, a power that would also be exercised in sexual relations interpreted through a masculine lens. This leads to a negative model that is constructed in opposition to ‘others’: women, lesser men, children (Gilmore, 1990; Kimmel, 1997) and also animals.

In Andalusia, and indeed throughout the Mediterranean, there has been a strong segregation between feminine and masculine spaces (Gilmore, 1990). The world of men was linked to working contexts outside the home and public spaces of sociability. The *feminine* and the *masculine* were spaces that existed in parallel with one another, two forms of sociability that marked two ways of understanding sexuality. This strong separation allowed for a series of practices to take place, protected by male solidarity, which was reinforced through the ‘secrecy’ of

non-productive sexuality. It is in this context that sexuality with animals acquires significance.

As we have seen in this article, the sexual relations with animals analysed here could not be understood (1) through a pathologizing and individual logic (zoophilia) since the practices had a collective and shared character; (2) from perspectives that focus exclusively on its brutality, which presuppose an absence of social regulation (bestiality), since there are a series of norms and rules through which it is defined when, and with which animals sexual relations can be maintained; (3) from the burgeoning logics of identity through which essentialist discourses are reinforced (zoosexuality) since human–animal sexuality did not necessarily imply a singular identity.

Nowadays, identitarian and pathological logics in relation to human–animal sexual relations have become widespread. This supposes a resignification of human–animal sexuality, which translates into a progressive concealment of practices that today are viewed from a particularly negative perspective. Global models of sexuality should not prevent us from seeing the contextual singularities of sexualities (Cáceres Fera, 2013). Beyond the dominant logics, we cannot forget that what has been termed zoophilia, bestiality, and zoosexuality are not the only ways of understanding sexual practices with animals.

Notes

1. Sodomy was a term used in the Christian world to refer to sexual relations between people of the same sex and to sexual relations between people and animals (Rydström, 2003: 7–8).
2. The term *zoerasty* is reserved for pathological acts with animals, and *erotic* zoophilia is used for fetishism with animal skins, which does not necessarily imply ‘carnal relations’.
3. The study conducted by Dekkers (1994) is particularly important on account of its repercussions. It analyses sexual relations with animals in psychology, legislation, literature, art, and advertising. Some research has also dealt with bestiality, particularly through the analysis of court cases brought against those accused of such practices (Liliequist, 1991; Rydström, 2003; Salisbury, 1991).
4. As pointed out by Liliequist (1991) and Rydström (2003) in the case of Sweden; LeVine (1959) in Kenya; Delgado (1987) and García Robayo (2009) in Colombia; Núñez Noriega (2007) in Mexico; Anest (1994) in Cyprus; Çaya (2014) and Gurkas (2008) in Turkey; and Westermarck in Morocco (2014).
5. For this reason, we avoid giving more information regarding the research from which our field notes come.
6. From a political point of view, it is important to highlight that the period analysed is marked by the Franco dictatorship (1936–1975). The Franco regime, based on national-catholicism, imposed a highly repressive moral system, which considered the marriage institution as the only adequate framework for the development of a normative sexuality (Miret y Sádaba, 1998; Pérez, 1994).
7. The ox is a castrated bull, who therefore has no reproductive capacity. On this occasion, this large animal prevented the young bull from fertilizing the cows of this small owner. From the point of view of the informant, this was because from the time he was a calf this

bull had grown up with the ox, who was older than himself and therefore had to be treated with respect. This prevented him from facing the ox and fulfilling his reproductive functions. This problem was solved with the ingenious idea of the owner of these animals who devised an effective deception: that consisted of painting the ox with white, with lime, to prevent the bull from recognizing him. A ruse that took effect as he confronted the ox and defeated it and, from then on, won his place as the breeding male of the herd.

8. The 'mamporrero' was responsible for inserting the stallion's penis into the mare's vagina.
9. Collective masturbation appears as an experience that later, and only later, could be viewed as homosexual. Practices in relation to which an uncomfortable silence descends when someone in the group remembers them in adult life.
10. Childish teenagers are labelled 'turkey screwers' underlying their late anchorage in childhood. And in Andalusia, this liminal stage of adolescence is still referred to 'the turkey years'.
11. Neither is drinking alcohol normally an individual action; these two elements are closely related and they both form part of contexts and forms of masculine sociability.
12. The same occurs during adulthood when sexuality is linked with prostitution houses. 'Secrecy' is a fundamental element to strengthen group cohesion.
13. As we have pointed out in the introduction, the issue of animal consent is a fundamental aspect from which a moral assessment is given to human-animal sexual practices. However, in the testimonies collected, consent or not, is a secondary aspect, insofar as it is based on the instrumental character of the animals. The problem derives from crossing the border between human and animal, which becomes apparent when affective relationships occur, which can only occur between humans.

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Agustín Coca-Pérez (PhD, Social Anthropology) is an Associate Professor at the Department of Social Anthropology, Experimental Psychology and Public Health (Academic Area of Social Anthropology), of the University of Pablo de Olavide (Seville, Spain). His research interests include environmental anthropology, tourism and participative methodology. His current research focuses on cultural studies on the Mediterranean area.

Rafael Cáceres-Feria (PhD, Social Anthropology) is an Associate Professor at the University of Pablo de Olavide (Seville, Spain). He has published on the homosexuality in Andalusia (Spain); He has carried out fieldwork in Costa Rica and Nicaragua. He is currently preparing a study of repression of homosexuality during Franco's regime.

José María Valcuende del Río (PhD, Social Anthropology) is an Associate Professor at the University of Pablo de Olavide (Seville, Spain). At present is coordinator of the Latinoamerican Lab for the Sociohistorical Study of Sexualities – LIESS Net – <https://red-liess.org/equipo/>. He has carried out a large amount of research in the field of sexuality and masculinity. Currently he is developing fieldwork in Spain, Ecuador and Peru.