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Human animality

Abstract: For many posthumanist criticisms of the western humanist tradition, the presentation of the human in a human-animal continuum is of central relevance. Through this criticism the human is displaced from its autonomous realm and brought closer to the animal. This paper aims to contribute to the discussion of the place of animality in the human by addressing the place of human voice.

Aristotle's classical distinction between the animal's possession of voice (phone) and human speech (*Logos*) is a key influence in the humanist tradition that establishes a difficult to bridge distance between human and animal.

This presentation will follow Alexandre Kojève's and Giorgio Agamben's dialogue with this Aristotelian distinction. Kojève presents the opposition to animality as the most proper characteristic of humanity, but by the time humanity is fully established this opposition retreats and the consolidation of humanity in a discursive realm opens the human to a return to animality.

Agamben presents voice as what allows for the taking place and experience of language. For both authors it is the voice within language that allows for human experience of its animality. Therefore, it is from most proper human realm (speech) that these authors present a opening of humanity to the most proper form of animal expression (voice).