

| https://doi.org/10.24035/ijit.28.2025.345 | | | |
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| Received: | 11 May 2025 | Accepted: | 1 September 2025 |
| Revised: | 23 June 2025 | Published: | 15 December 2025 |
| Volume: | 28 (December) | Pages: | 193-202 |
| To cite: Walid Reda Ali, Dina Helmy Shalaby & Hoda Soliman Mohamed. 2025. Islamic perspectives on trans-species zoochosis: reflections in Bear Boy Autobiography. <i>International Journal of Islamic Thought</i> . Vol. 28 (Dec.): 193-202. | | | |

Islamic Perspectives on Trans-species Zoochosis: Reflections in Bear Boy Autobiography

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ABSTRACT

The Quran and Hadith consider the purpose of the creation of nonhuman animals to guarantee humanity the enjoyment of life on earth, they are described as full individuals with full rights, enjoying a sense of similarity to humans and sometimes having abilities that exceed and surpass humans' capabilities. The current paper discusses the Islamic origin of trans-species zoochosis in Bear Boy, an autobiography by Justin Barker. This paper also aims to illustrate how Islam has influenced modern science and psychology. In particular, it aims to establish a link between Islam and trans-species psychology, a psychological theory innovated by the American psychologist and ecologist Gay Bradshaw. In addition, this paper elucidates that trans-species psychology retells and confirms what Islam has mentioned long time ago. Plainly, this paper states that there is a psychological similarity between humans and animals. Trans-species psychology has proven that animals, like humans, can suffer from trauma, stress and zoochosis. Clearly, Justin Barker was influenced by Islam which copes with trans-species psychology zoochosis. Barker portrays zoochosis as a psychological disorder that inflicts animals and humans. His vision of human animal similarity is already treated in surah al An'am of the Holy al-Quran.

Keywords: Bear Boy, Islamic perspectives, psychology, trans-species zoochoises.

Islam is related to science. Before the modern development of science, the Quran mentioned scientific facts, recently discovered about the creation of the embryo, the rotation of the earth around the sun and the creation of the universe (Dadach 2015). The Quranic verses and Hadith also reveal many facts about the nonhuman animals, not only that Islam has laid down a code for their welfare, but also considered them "like" us. We are similar not only in having consciousness and souls that praise God, but also in having a psyche. This is a phenomenon that trans-species psychology studies, proves, and gets along with Islam. Although, zoochosis, has recently been

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considered as a psychological disorder that inflicts zoo animals, it later appears that it can also inflict humans. Knowing that it is a common disorder in all living creatures brings us back to Islam, the origin of trans-species zoonosis.

In fact, some people may think that Islam does not clearly state this commonality. There are some verses in Quran that give this impression. In these verses, animals are objectified, interiorized and described as being created for the sole purpose of serving the superior being, man: “the cattle, He has created them for you” (al-Quran, al-Nahl 16:5), “See you not (O men) that God has subjected for you whatsoever is in the earth” (al-Quran, Luqman 31:20), “And has subjected to you all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth” (al-Quran, al-Jathiyah 45:13). Absolutely, “everything that God has created is for humankind” (al-Quran, al-Baqarah 2: 29). That is why animals are supposed to be controlled and tamed, so some of them, human should ride and eat. And for them, there are other benefits.

Although, some verses of the Quran seem to elevate humanity above other creatures, this is not the full picture of Islam, because even though animals are created for the benefit of humanity, they are still equal beings with full rights. Like human beings, nonhuman animals are also created to have life and enjoy it. This is why the earth was created by God. It is a “delight for you and your grazing cattle” (al-Quran, `Abasa 80:32).

How can the earth be created for the enjoyment of animals and humans, if animals are just objects, not equal and similar to humans? In fact, nonhuman animals are similar to humans. They share outward, subtle, and controversial traits with humans (Tlili 2012: 157). Like humans, they eat, drink, and sleep. They also have consciousness, which is similar to that of humans. This is what makes an ant in one of the verses of the Quran, who noticed the closeness of the Prophet Solomon and his soldiers warn the other ants and say: “Ants! Go into your homes, in case Solomon and his hosts unwittingly crush you” (al-Quran, al-Naml 27:18). The Quran states that animals have souls (Waldau 2013: 159), that praise God: “And to Allah prostrates whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth of creatures” (al-Quran, al-Nahl 16: 49), “Do you not see that to Allah prostrates whoever is in the heavens and whoever is on the earth and the sun, the moon, the stars, the mountains, the trees, the moving creatures and many of the people?” (al-Quran, Al-Hajj 22:18).

Furthermore, nonhuman animals feel and suffer in the same way as humans. The sparrow in the Hadith seems to feel the same heartbreaking pain as a human mother who suddenly loses her children. That is why the prophet Mohammed ordered his friends who had taken the chicks of this grieving mother sparrow to give her back her children. Abdullah Ibn Mas`ud reported: We were on a journey, and we saw a red sparrow that had two chicks with her. We took her chicks, so the sparrow started to flap her wings. The prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, came to us and he said: Who has upset her by taking her children? Give her children back to her (Bin Ash`ath 2008: 298).

Plainly, all these similarities mentioned in the Hadith and the Qur`anic verses did not show any psychological similarity between animals and humans. The truth is that they did it. There is a logical premise here. How can animals have consciousness and feelings without sharing having psyche with human beings? How can they be resurrected, rewarded and punished without having a similar soul and psyche? In particular being resurrected after death “attributes to animals a certain degree of psychological complexity” (Tlili 2012:159).

It is worth noting that there is a remarkable and comprehensive verse in Surah Al- An`am that confirms that animals have all of humans` traits including the psyche: “all the creatures that crawl on the earth and those that fly with their wings are communities like yourselves” (al-Quran al- An`am 6:38). According to this verse, animals and human beings are completely similar. There is no limit to this similarity. To tell the truth, most of exegetes of this verse tended to make a kind of minimization of the extent of similarity between humans and animals. Al-Razi and Al- Qurtubi interpreted this verse from the surface. For Al-Razi, this verse is “hardly informative.” It is only evidence that all creatures “have a share in God`s attention . . . God manages their lives and guarantees their sustenance” (Al-Razi 1981: 222). Al-Qurtubi said that the explanation of this this verse is that nonhuman animals “are created beings that point to, need, and are sustained by, their

creator" (Al-Qurtubi 2006: 370). Unlike Al-Razi and Al-Qurtubi, Ibn Abbas and Al-Tabari delved deeply into the interpretation of this verse. Ibn Abbas is reported to have said that animals share with humans "spirituality, praising and glorifying God" (Al-Razi 1981: 224). Al-Tabari also said that animals "have knowledge, and all their deeds and misdeeds are recorded for them" (Al-Tabari 1994: 344) like humans.

Only the Meccan Hadith scholar Sufyan Ibn Uyayna had a significantly comprehensive and broad interpretation of this verse. He believed that it indicates that "any characteristic that exists among animals is reflected in human society" (Al-Razi 1981: 225). Probably Ibn Uyayna's interpretation is the most logical one, because it is clear that in this verse, God did not determine or "specify in what way humans and other animals are alike" (Tlili 2012: 155). That is to say we cannot translate this likeness as a specific behavior or feature. Therefore, we have to accept that this similarity can be in any area that can be realized in the real world (Tavakkoli 2013: 11).

Surprisingly, the Quran sometimes says that some "animals are better than most humans" (Tlili 2012: 86). They have unique, distinctive and extraordinary potentials compared to humans. This fact is narrated and repeated several times in the Qur'an. For example, some animals can fly and therefore have more knowledge than humans. The hoopoe in the story of Solomon in the Quran had more knowledge than Solomon, who is a messenger of God. The Quran says that one day Solomon could not find the hoopoe who disappeared and when he returned, he told Solomon who was angry because of his absence that: "I have learned something you did not know: I come to you from Sheba with firm news... I found a woman ruling over the people... I found that she and her people worshipped the sun instead of God" (al-Quran, al-Naml 27: 20).

The Quran used the hoopoe to make the unknown, known to Solomon and used the raven, which seems to have more knowledge than man, to make Qabeel learn how to bury the body of his murdered brother Habeel. When Qabeel murdered Habeel, he was completely confused and did not know what to do with Habeel's body until he saw a raven digging in the ground and covering his dead brother's body. Al-Quran states that: "God sent a raven to scratch up the ground to show him how to cover his brother's corpse and he said, 'woe is me! Could I not have been like this raven and covered up my brother's body?' He became remorseful" (al-Quran, al-Ma'idah 5: 31).

Obviously, these similar human and superior traits qualify animals to be resurrected on the Day of Judgment, which has great signs, including bringing all animals back to life and gathering them to be judged fairly. This is an oath of God "And when the wild beasts are gathered" (al-Quran, al-Takwir, 81:5). Like humans, on that day, Allah will weigh the deeds of animals to determine whether they deserve to be rewarded or punished. Even the goat with horns that hurts the other one without horns will be punished. Abu Hurairah reported that prophet said: "On the day of resurrection, rights of all holders of rights shall be vindicated, to the limit that a hornless goat shall be vindicated against the horned one" (Al-Naysaburi 1991: 1998).

Trans-species Zoochosis

In fact, the complete similarity between humans and animals implied by Ibn Uyayna's interpretation of Surah Al-Anam's verse 38 is later proven by modern science. The scientific experiments of modern biology concluded that "we share 98 percent of our genes with chimpanzees" (DeMello 2012: 65). We also have "Similarities in physiological responses as, variations in blood pressure, and heart rate with animals (Andrianova 2020: 182). Moreover, we share similar social characteristics and cognitive abilities with some animals, such as apes, whales, and snakes (Bradshaw & Marino 2007: 2).

Modern psychology has also succeeded by moving beyond its old "centrism" which viewed psychology as a discipline devoted only to the examination of human thought and behavior (Lambert 2015: 23) to prove that humans and animals are psychologically similar. Specifically, trans-species psychology, a theory founded by psychologist/ecologist Gay Bradshaw, succeeded in making this incredible shift in psychology. It succeeded in making psychology a broad and bi-directional discipline (Amiot & Bastian 2014: 34) which includes the study and examination of the behavior of animals as well as humans. According to trans-species psychology, animals are

subjects who have similar psyches and sometimes may suffer from similar psychological disorders of humans (Bradshaw & Watkins 2006: 5).

Amazingly, the trans-species theory also allows a flexible psychological two-way crossover (Orning 2017: 90) from human psychological disorders to animals and vice versa. According to this theory, animals can suffer from “the same types of psychological disorders as humans” (Bradshaw & Marino 2007: 2). They may suffer from trauma, stress (Bradshaw 2015 and 2004: 1, 144), and post-traumatic stress disorder (Bradshaw et al. 2005: 807). Likewise, this theory suggests that humans can suffer from animal psychological disorders. For example, “Zoochosis,” which is said to only inflict animals, is also observed in humans. This term, zoochosis, was coined by Bill Travers in 1992 when he observed some “abnormal behavior of in captive animals like rocking, circling, swaying, twisting of the neck, etc.” (Subudhiray 2020: 1). In fact, these strange physical symptoms are usually accompanied by psychological symptoms that alter the animals’ behavior (Yasmeen, Roheela & Ali Shah 2023: 9). The captive animals show a common feeling of distress, frustration (PETA n.d: 1), and sometimes according to the ecopsychologist Vaughan Wilkins some animals are inflicted with traumatic stress (Bradshaw 2021: 1). To tell the truth, these symptoms, either physical or psychological, are observed because usually when these animals are captured, taken from their habitat and then caged, they become deprived of their freedom (Malamud 2017:102), and unable to engage in their instinctive behavior that they used to have in the wild (Aspinall 2013). In addition, these caged animals become usually exposed to human harassment in the different zoos (Best 2002: 3).

Like animals in captivity, so are humans in captivity. In an interview with ecopsychologist Vaughan Wilkins, he said that humans who are imprisoned not only in a “physical captivity like prison camps” but also in a “psychological captivity” (Bradshaw 2021: 1) similarly suffer from zoochosis. “Psychological captivity” is a term coined by Wilkins, who believes that the “ecological disconnection” of humans from their environment and their involvement in modern techno-industrial societies, and forgetting “their shared kinship with nonhuman animals,” makes them prey to the psychological captivity that causes zoochosis” (Wilkins 2020:1). It can be said that not only the disconnection from nature that causes zoochosis because according to Vaughan Wilkins: “domestic violence and poorly attuned parenting” (Bradshaw 2021: 1) are other forms of psychological captivity that cause zoochosis or captive humans’ “anger, stress, anxiety and depression” (Revolts 2023:1).

Bear Boy: A Model of Islamic Trans-Species Correspondence

Probably Justin Barker did not know that Islam in particular (Ibn Uayayna’s interpretation of Surah al- An’am) laid the foundation of unrestricted and comprehensive similarity between animals and humans, a fact that has been proven by modern science and trans-species psychology. Bear Boy reflects the psychological similarity between humans and animals that has long been hinted in Islam and later reformulated in trans-species psychology. It narrates a real, exciting and successful journey of thirteen-year-old teenager Justin Barker to free two sibling black bears from their oppressive and traumatizing cage at the Sacramento Zoo in California. Through this journey Barker realized that “everything is connected, human prisoners and zoo animals” (Barker 2021:155). As a teenager, he realized that, although he was not imprisoned behind iron bars like the sibling bears, he suffered from the psychological captivity and symptoms of zoochosis that most of the animals in the novel suffer from. Because of his parents’ inability to understand his natural hormonal changes, which can cause emotional ups and downs, and mood swings, Barker suffered from punishment and restriction. He was locked down in a psychological captivity and inflicted with zoochosis that only liberating the bears cured from.

The novel is set in the summer of 1995 in Sacramento California, in the United States. The author, Barker begins the narration by giving the reader a complete history of his life as a teenager disturbed by his parents. He was always in a bad mood and stressed because of his parents’ inability to understand that he was naturally suffering from a hormonal storm that made him no longer their old little child. He is now close to full maturity and naturally needs to gain more

control over his life and to stop submitting to his parents' authority. Certainly, his mother did not recognize this fact, and so Barker and his mother "were often angry at each other over everything and nothing" (Barker 2021:10). Moreover, she used to burden him with a daily, never-ending list of chores (he has to clean the bathroom, vacuum the downstairs, wash the dishes), and when he protests, or does something that his mother does not like, "she calls him disrespectful and he calls her many rude things and slam many doors" (Barker 2021:12), and eventually "gets restricted for talking back" (Barker 2021:11). On the other hand, Barker's father seems to fully trust the mother's strategy of education and does not plan to interfere. That is why he usually "goes along" with everything that Barker's mother says (Barker 2021:12). In fact, Barker had no idea about the reason for this uncomfortable and conflicted relationship with his parents which often turned sour every day, until he happened to read this book, *Kids Can Save the Animals: 101 Easy Things to Do*. This book, which deals with the issue of zoochosis in zoo animals, allowed Barker to understand the reason for the constant turmoil between him and his parents. Quite simply, he found out that he suffered from zoochosis like the zoo animals. The book made him realize the fact of the closeness and similarity between animals and humans that Islam had long ago uncovered in Surah al-An'am: "all the creatures are communities like ourselves" (6:38).

Ibn Uayayna's interpretation of the likeness between animals and humans mentioned in this verse was impressively boundless. He considered that: "any characteristic that exists in human society" already exists in animals (Al- Razi 1981: 225). This means that a psychological disorder like zoochosis can affect humans as well as animals. Therefore, like the traumatized zoo animals, forced to inhabit cages or real "physical captivity" (Bradshaw 2021: 1) and suffering from zoochosis, like Barker. His being deprived of his freedom (Malamud 2017:102) because of his "poorly attuned parenting" that traps him in "psychological captivity" (Bradshaw 2021: 1) made him a zoochosis patient.

Probably Justin's being finally aware of what is happening to him makes the horrible memory of Penny, the female black-footed cat at the Sacramento Zoo came flooding back. He became certain that, like him, this cat, whose adoption fee Justin's class paid when he was in the second grade, suffered from zoochosis. Like Justin who showed symptoms of zoochosis (stress, anger, and depression) because of his being trapped in his parents' "psychological captivity" (Bradshaw 2021: 1) like the traumatized Penny. This female cat made "repetitive circles over and over" (Barker 2021:26) - a clear symptom of zoochosis in animals -because she was "spotted in a metal cage that was only a little bigger than Barker's closet" (Barker 2021:21). According to Ibn Uayayna's inspiring and limitless interpretation of this verse: "all the creatures are communities like ourselves" (Al-Anam 6:38) Penny is like Barker. She has a psyche disturbed by zoochosis.

In fact, like most caged animals at the Sacramento Zoo, Barker did not want to remain shackled by zoochosis. He wanted to escape his small, oppressive psychological cage. Barker believed that by freeing these animals, not only would they be cured from zoochosis, but he would also be cured from zoochosis. This is probably why he dared for the first time to break the restrictive code imposed by his parents and to try one of the feelings that he missed so much. Justin tasted adults' freedom and independence when, without his parents' permission, he contacted the world's largest animal rights organization, PETA, in Washington, DC and other activists who live in Sacramento. These people "treated him like an adult and a friend" (Barker 2021:30) and listened to his complaint about the Sacramento Zoo. Their response was different from his mother's reaction to Barker's project. She remained committed to her unchanging and inflexible parental authority. She refused to give up. Therefore, instead of supporting her son's new project, which was widely publicized in the media, she was interested in the cost of his long-distance phone calls to Washington and Sacramento. Such a reaction from his mother along with the threat of a lawsuit from the director of the Sacramento Zoo, who accused him of defaming the zoo, forced Barker to stop talking about the animals of the Sacramento Zoo. Although Barker was forced to stop his project, he did not surrender to the psychological captivity of his parents that causes him zoochosis. He decided to have another project that may look different, but in reality, it is similar to the Sacramento Zoo project. So, he established a society he called "Citizens Lobbying for Animals in Zoos" or CLAZ. He made a propaganda for his CLAZ and made his room his office and the headquarters for CLAZ and began to receive letters and phone calls about animal

abuse all over the United States. In fact, CLAZ's mission is identical to Islam's ethical mission of humans toward animals. In Islam, humans are clearly commanded to take care of animals and not to torture them. It has been narrated by Sahl bin Al-Hanzaliyyah that the Prophet Mohammed passed by a camel whose back had fallen on its belly. He said, "Fear God in regard to these animals. Ride them when they are in a good condition" (Bin Ash'ath 2008:232-33). It was reported from Abdullah bin Ja'far who said that the Prophet Mohammed once entered the garden of a man from Ansar where he found a camel. When the camel saw the Prophet, it began to cry, and its tears flowed. The Prophet came to it and stroked the back of its head, and it became quiet. Then he said [to a young boy who owned this camel]: "Do you not fear God because of this animal which God has put in your possession? . . . this camel complained to the Prophet that the young boy was keeping it hungry and overburden" (Bin Ash'ath 2008:232-33).

Islam also rewards the people who take care of animal. It was reported from Abu Hurariah that Prophet Mohammed said: "Once while an extremely thirsty man found a well and went down into it. He drank and came out. He saw a dog panting heavily and eating soil because of its thirst. The man went down into the well, and filled his Khuff with water . . . He gave the water to the dog to drink. God accepted his deed and forgave him (Bin Ash'ath 2008:234). Abu Hurariah narrated that Prophet Mohammed said: "A prostitute was forgiven by God because when she passed by a thirsty dog, she took off her shoe and tied it with her veil to draw up some water for the dog" (Al-Naysaburi 1991: 1762).

The great Islamic ethical mission of humans toward animals was also implied in Surah Al-An'am. When God said in this Surah that animals are "like ourselves" (6:38), this meant, according to Ibn Uayyana, that they share us "any characteristic that exists in human society" (Al-Razi 1981: 225). It is a logical conclusion that if they share everything with us, we should treat them as equal subjects. Everything that humans need such as food, drink, and even psychological care, should be available to the nonhuman animals and this is what Barker's CLAZ endeavored to give to all animals.

One day, Barker, the director of CLAZ, received a call from the chimpanzee keepers at Marine World Africa USA. They told Baker that the chimpanzee babies are going to be separated from their parents and sent to Florida. In fact, Justin felt pain for these chimpanzee babies. They are like the chicks in Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud's Hadith who were separated from their mother sparrow (Bin Ash'ath 2008: 298). Prophet Mohammed knew that nonhuman animals feel and suffer in the same way as human beings. He knew that the mother sparrow feels the same pain as the human mother and so is the case for her chicks who must feel the same terrible feeling as the human babies who are forced to be separated from their parents. So, he ordered his friends to give the mother sparrow her chicks back.

This Hadith copes with Surah al-An'am. The nonhuman animals are "like us" (al-Quran, al-An'am 6:38), and this means, according to Ibn Uayyana, that they share us "any characteristic that exists in human society" (Al-Razi 1981: 225). Just as Islam had made it clear in the sparrow Hadith and Surah Al-Anam that animals and humans are equal, Barker believes that chimpanzee babies and their parents are certainly not "commodities" (Barker 2021:56) or objects. Rather, they are equal to human beings. If Baby chimpanzees are forced to leave their parents, they will certainly experience a similar intense feeling of grief and misery as human babies. Likewise, their parents are like human parents, who will feel similar human grief and loss if they lose their babies. Barker, who probably believes that what is happening to the baby chimpanzees and their parents is a kind of oppression that will one day lead to their being inflicted with zoonosis, encouraged the chimpanzee keepers to react quickly and to contact the media to expose this problem and force the zoo to stop this decision.

Although this immediate and advisable reaction of Barker is similar to the reasonable, immediate, and swift reaction of the Prophet Mohammed when his friends took the sparrow's chicks, Barker is still unable to make such reactions towards his parents. He is unable to make them understand that he is not a commodity. Barker's parents are unable to understand that he is no longer their baby child and that he is moving toward full maturity. Therefore, they cannot treat him as a full person with full rights. They do not bother to convince him that they cannot

pay the bills for the phone calls he makes to the various zoos or even activists. This act, which Baker considered the culmination of his torturous zoochosis, led him to violently and clearly reject his parents' orders. Accompanied by the natural waves of his hormonal storm, his rejection turned into a kind of insanity that made him lock his father out of the house. Indeed, this leads Barker's mother to punish him and insist that he sees a therapist. After seeing a therapist named Sybil Newton, Barker felt some relief. She seemed to be able to really understand his problem because she believes that his parents are responsible for his uncontrolled storms or zoochosis. The "poorly attuned parenting" (Bradshaw 2021: 1) makes Barker feel that he is trapped in a psychological captivity, and feels "anger, stress, anxiety and depression" (Revolts 2023:1) or zoochosis. In fact, zoochosis which accompanies his natural hormonal ups and downs, makes his reactions become strange and unacceptable. Sybil advised Barker's parents to try to understand his brain as a teenager who needs a space of freedom, so they gave Barker phone privileges to make only long-distance calls of less than five minutes.

Although the fights with his parents did not stop, they became less intense after consulting Newton. It seems that her advice helped to improve Barker's relationship with his parents. For the first time, they showed interest and supported him in his new bear's story. His CLAZ received a letter asking him to help two sibling black bears named Brutus and Ursula who were living in poor conditions in a zoo that the floods had washed away most of its animals in Roseville, California. Not only do these bears suffer from the terrible California weather conditions that threaten their lives, and the poor food, but they are also forced to live in a cage "not much bigger than a shipping container, with a single tire swing that Ursula bats and a pool too small for Brutus to fit in" (Barker 2021:62). They are literally "sentenced to a life in prison" (Barker 2021:74), and they have "nowhere to go. Nothing to do" (Barker 2021:65). They are like the captive cat in the Hadith. Abu Hurariah reported Prophet Mohammed said: A woman was punished because of a cat. She had not given it food or water, nor she had set it free so that it might eat the vermin of the earth (Ibn Al-Hajjaji 176). Like this captive cat, these captive bears were not given good food or drink or even freedom.

In fact, the imprisoned cat in the Hadith and the two sibling bears in this novel are completely "like ourselves" (al-Quran, al-An'am 6:38). If a person is locked up in a prison and forbidden to have a natural life, he or she must feel desperate, tormented, and helpless. The sibling bears are unable to live in their natural habitat and therefore feel distress, frustration (PETA n.d:1), and sometimes traumatic stress (Bradshaw 2021: 1). Simply, the torture they feel in their physical cage that causes zoochosis is like what Barker - a human prisoner- sees in his parents' psychological cage (Bradshaw 2021: 1).

The boundless and extreme similarity between animals and humans, already mentioned in Surah Al-An'am and of which Barker seems to be convinced, made him consider the bears the project of his life. He believed that by saving them, he would save himself from zoochosis. That is why he went to unprecedented procedures. Barker, who was unable to get the bears another larger cage at the Roseville, California zoo due to lack of funds, believed it would be better to find another home for the bears. Surprisingly, the only zoo that accepts to receive the two bears, Folsom Zoo, a sanctuary, told him that they need \$250,000 to build a new home and they did not have the money. Barker was thrilled with the idea of asking for donations for the bears' home. So, he opened an account at a bank and called many national channels to highlight the problem of the bears and encourage people to donate. In fact, Barker's project was interrupted by his father's job requirement that he should move to Costa Rica to learn Spanish. Sybil and his parents quietly told him that he "is thirteen [and that] He still has to do what they say" (Barker 2021:98). Surprisingly, Barker, who had previously hated being treated like a child and not being allowed to say yes or no to anything, agreed to accompany his family to Costa Rica. Although, he did not get the full amount of money he was seeking for the bears, "bear boy" as his friends at school called him, seems to begin to appreciate his parents' effort to provide him with a good life.

Someone in Cost Rica introduced Justin to the director of an animal sanctuary in San Jose called "Zoo Ave" where he wanted to spend the weekends. Although it took two hours to get there, Justin never got bored going to this thrilling paradise like zoo. Zoo Ave was a real turning point in Barker's life, helping to continue what Sybil Newton had started. Its strategy in treating animals

follows the Islamic code of ethics towards animal implied in Surah Al-An`am. When it is stated that “all the creatures that crawl on the earth and those that fly with their wings are communities like yourselves” (6:38), God wanted human beings to treat animals, like themselves, as free and equal subjects because, according to Ibn Uayyna, “any characteristic among human society” certainly exists in animals (Al- Razi 1981: 225). Indeed, this is what Zoo Ave did. It did not want the animals to feel like prisoners, so its construction was like an open jungle that worked to “replicate animals` natural habitats” (Barker 2021:113,4).

Zoo Ave was also like a real human hospital, treating and releasing injured and sick animals. It simply played the role that Prophet Mohammed had played in the old Islamic society to teach people how to treat animals kindly and fairly. This is proved by the previous sayings of prophet Mohammed about taking care of animals.

Seeing the free animals in this zoo, who were probably not suffering from zoochosis, inspired Barker to do what he likes to do. So, he decided to completely break out of his psychological captivity and defeat zoochosis, and with the approval of his now newly supportive parents, he spent days happily and freely cleaning, feeding and caring for the animals. In this wonderful and exciting free jungle zoo, Barker felt full equality with the nonhuman animals. When he knew about Monday, a howler monkey whose mother had died, he thought that this monkey must be “like us” (al-Quran, al-An`am 6:38). According to Ibn Uayyna: “any characteristic among human society” certainly exists in animals (Al- Razi 1981: 225). Thus, Monday must feel grief and loss over the death of his mother and Barker must support him, as humans usually do with each other. This logical and mostly Islamic conclusion leads Barker to start hanging out with Monday. Supporting this desperate monkey was truly appreciated by the monkey who had a true friendship with Barker. In fact, Barker, who never saw any animal less than a full and equal subject, considered this relationship with Monday his first and truest friendship. He said about his affectionate friendship with Monday:

“Me and Monday built a bond that I had never experienced with an animal before. I could feel his warmth, his little hands that fit around my finger, and his tail that he would wrap tightly around my arm. I experienced his range of emotions and my own” (Barker 2021:120).

Clearly, Zoo Ave changed Baker forever. His relationship with his parents improved. He became “closer, not fighting with them” (Barker 2021:127) and they continue to support him on the bear’s issue. Unfortunately, on his way back to California, he knew that the sibling black bears are sadder than ever. They cannot move to Folsom Zoo because his donation campaign has not yet raised enough money. So, Barker with the support of his parents, began to make interviews and make calls to members of the Roseville city council to vote to help funding the project of building a new home for Brutus and Ursula. Eventually, thousands of dollars flowed into the bank from people from all over the country, and Ursula and Brutus were moved to Folsom Zoo. Justin’s success in getting the sibling bears moved meant a lot to him, “they represented an important reminder that all animals, “like all humans, deserve kindness and to be free” because they are “those with whom we walk” (Barker 2021:147). This last message of Justin Barker is absolutely consistent with Ibn Uayyna’s interpretation of verse 38 in Surah Al-Anam. It simply copes with Islam’s boundless vision of the similarity between animals and humans, a vision that has been represented in modern science and trans-species psychology.

To conclude, the readers of the Quran may misinterpret the verses of this Holy Book concerning the position of nonhuman animals in relation to humans. By reading the Quran, the readers may get the impression that animals are not similar subjects to humans and that they were created only for the benefit of humans. Probably that is why, humans are allowed to tame, control, and eat animals. To tell the truth, the Quran acknowledges that the earth was created for the enjoyment of by animals and humans, and that privilege certainly places animals on an equal footing with the humans. In fact, the purpose of creating the earth is not the only reason for the equality of humans and animals. There are other reasons mentioned in the Quran and Hadith. Animals have similar abilities. They eat, drink, sleep, have consciousness, souls, and they can

praise God. Animals can also feel pain and sorrow, and they will be resurrected, rewarded, and punished on the Day of Judgment.

The truth is that the resurrection of animals not only proves that they are similar to humans in some physical characteristics, but it also proves that animals are psychologically similar to humans. In Surah al-An`am animals are “like ourselves” (6:38). Although most exegetes of this verse interpreted it from the surface, Sufyan Ibn Uyayna’s interpretation was more comprehensive and logical. His interpretation gave animals broad, unlimited and unspecified similarity to humans. In fact, Ibn Uyayna’s interpretation gave the human mind a vast and boundless space for imagining the multiple and diverse faces of similarity that can exist between humans and animals.

Actually, if we try to link Ibn Uyayna’s interpretation with what Quran says about the extraordinary potentials of animals that exceed human capabilities, the matter of animals’ having similar human psyches and psychological disorders does not become strange. Modern psychology has clearly confirmed this fact, already mentioned in the Quran. Trans-species psychology considered animals similar to humans. Therefore, they can suffer from the same psychological disorders as humans. Likewise, humans can suffer from the psychological disorders of animals. That is why humans can suffer from zoochosis, a psychological disorder that was thought to only affect animals.

Zoochosis inflicts both humans and animals who are exposed to the traumatic experience of prison life, either psychologically or physically. In *Bear Boy*, Justin Barker uses zoochosis to show the similarity between animals and humans mentioned in Surah Al-Anam. It becomes clear to the reader that every animal that Barker sees is afflicted with zoochosis. Penny, the cat, the baby chimpanzees, and the two black bears all suffer from zoochosis like Barker. At the end of the novel especially with the appearance of Zoo Ave as the present embodiment of the Prophet Mohammed’s sayings about the kind treatment of animals that Islam aspires to, Barker learns and succeeds in defeating animal and human zoochosis. In the end, it also becomes clear that Islam provided the basis for trans-species psychology and human or animal zoochosis.

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