

the ancient Sumerians over four thousand years ago, but was rendered obsolete by the introduction of a more easily controlled species, the horse. The elephant, although still employed as a working animal, has always offered too big a challenge to the stock-breeder and has never been submitted to the pressures of selective breeding.

A further category concerns the domestication of a variety of species as sources of produce. The animals are not killed, so that in this role they cannot be considered as prey. Only certain parts are taken from them: milk from cattle and goats, wool from sheep and alpaca, eggs from chickens and ducks, honey from bees and silk from silk-moths.

In addition to these major categories of hunting companions, pest-destroyers, beasts of burden, and sources of produce, certain animals have entered a symbiotic relationship with our species on a more unusual and specialised basis. The pigeon has been domesticated as a message-carrier. The astonishing homing abilities of this bird have been exploited for thousands of years. This relationship became so valuable in times of war that, during recent epochs, a counter-symbiosis was developed in the form of falcons trained to intercept the message-carriers. In a very different context, Siamese fighting fish and fighting cocks have been selectively bred over a long period as gambling devices. In the realm of medicine, the guinea-pig and the white rat have been widely employed as living test-beds' for laboratory experiments.

These, then, are the major symbionts, animals that have been forced into some form of partnership with our ingenious species. The advantage to them is that they cease to be our enemies. Their numbers are dramatically increased. In terms of world populations they are tremendously successful. But it is a qualified success. The price they have paid is their evolutionary freedom. They have lost their genetic independence and, although well fed and cared for, are now subject to our breeding whims and fancies.

The third major category of animal relationships, after prey and symbionts, is that of competitors. Any species which competes with us for food or space, or 194