

HUMAN - NON-HUMAN SOCIALITIES IN THE CITY:
AN EXAMINATION OF ISTANBUL'S MULTISPECIES HISTORIES

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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I, Zeynep Gizem Haspolat, certify that

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ABSTRACT

Human - Non-Human Animal Socialities in the City:

An Examination of Istanbul's Multispecies Histories

This thesis explores the human – non-human relationships in Istanbul through the examination of particular moments of the city's multispecies histories. To this end, my research focuses on both the 1910 Hayırsızada Event, throughout which 80.000 dogs were exiled to death on a small island, and the non-human animal politics of the 2010s. My aim is twofold in this exploration: I would like to both contribute to the emerging literature that discusses the role of non-human animals in the formation of the social and engage with the discussions around the need to develop new multispecies ethical frameworks. Methodologically, I explored the Hayırsızada event through archival work and analyzed the 2010's non-human politics through municipal policies and testimonies of animal volunteers who care for the non-human animals on streets and in the outskirts of the city despite the municipalities policies of exile, confinement, and extermination. In arguing that human histories and socialities cannot be thought independent of the non-human animal histories, the animal volunteers' ethical claims and the care labor they exemplify emerged also as significant examples to think through the larger questions about finding ways to live and flourish together, as they have become more pressing in the Anthropocene.

ÖZET

Şehirde İnsan – İnsan-dışı Hayvan Sosyallikleri:

İstanbul'un Çoktürlü Tarihine Dair Bir İnceleme

Bu tez İstanbul'un çoktürlü tarihinde belirli anları ele alarak, İstanbul'da insan – insandışı hayvan ilişkilerini incelemektedir. Buna yönelik olarak, araştırma 1910'da 80.000 köpeğin küçük bir adaya sürgün edilerek ölüme mahkum edildiği Hayırsızada vakası ve 2010ların insan-dışı hayvan siyasetine odaklanmaktadır. Bu incelemede amacım iki yönlü: Sosyalin inşasında insan-dışı hayvanların rolünü tartışan yeni literature katkıda bulunmayı hedeflerken aynı zamanda yeni, çoktürlü etik çerçeveler geliştirmenin önemine dair olan tartışmalarla ilişkilenebilecek çalıştım. Metodolojik olarak, Hayırsızada vakasını arşiv çalışması üzerinden incelerken, 2010ların insan-dışı hayvan gündemini ise hem belediye düzeyindeki siyasetler hem de belediyelerin sürgün, kapatma ve öldürme siyasetlerine karşıt olarak sokaklarda ve şehrin çeperlerinde insan-dışı hayvanlara bakan hayvan gönüllülerinin ifadeleri ve tanıklıkları ile birlikte ele aldım. İnsanın tarihi ve sosyalliğinin insan-dışı hayvanlardan bağımsız düşünülemediği savında önemli rol oynayan hayvan gönüllülerinin etik savunuları ve bakım emeklerini aynı zamanda Antroposen'de çok daha yakıcı hale gelmiş, bir arada yaşama etiği ve pratiği geliştirmeye yönelik daha geniş kapsamlı sorularla ilişkisi bakımından da ele almaya çalıştım.

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*This thesis is dedicated to Foucault, Tarçın, Lyanna, Monti, Kirkor, Tenar, Turşu,
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

“I was not scared; I could die but I would die for a reason.” In a national newspaper, Şehnaz, a middle-aged Istanbulite woman, narrated being attacked by her neighbor, infuriated that she buried her murdered dog in the apartment’s backyard. The smell of the rotting dog had alerted the neighbor and the quarrel between them escalated quickly, resulting in the neighbor taking her hostage until the municipality workers came to exhume the dead dog. The dog was then transferred to an “animal cemetery,” where animals once loved and cherished become anonymous in the outskirts of the city.

I met Şehnaz in a seminar on animal rights where she elaborated further on her story: As her “other children” –meaning street animals she cared for- caused her a mire of debt to veterinary clinics, she was unable to afford her son’s university education. She was living under constant harassment and in a state of anxious anticipation; her neighbors continually threatened her and her *other children* with death while the municipality worker’s operations to catch animals around dawn cost her nights of sleeplessness. Overcome by fatigue, her body, more than her complaining words, testified to the fact that her life had become unbearable, and unlivable.

She was one of the animal volunteers (*hayvan gönüllüleri*) whose daily lives and concerns are woven mostly around the practices of care for the non-human animals of Istanbul. In the face of the municipalities’ lethal policies against street animals, the volunteers claim the animals as their own kin and defend a life of coexistence with them through their draining care labor. This form of caring relations

with stray animals on the streets is not a historically new phenomenon: The stories about Istanbul's streets narrate a multispecies coexistence with non-human counterparts, primarily dogs, cats, and birds despite certain ruptures in its history, like Hayırsızada event in 1910 throughout which 80.000 street animals were dumped to a rocky, deserted island in the Marmara Sea. The acceleration of the spatial contestations and thus attempts at eradicating street animals after the establishment of Turkish Republic could not eliminate the four-legged counterparts of the city; Istanbul's animals found their ways to survive and to populate almost every neighborhood to this day. As another moment that I argue is key in the human – non-human relationships in Istanbul, the 2010s introduced a new paradigm that legally deems municipalities responsible for the well-being of the street animals. This new legal framework found its resonances on street and reworked the policies regarding exile, confinement, and extermination. With every change in administrative protocols for governing the city and in the related political projections, the encounters between street animals, municipalities and animal volunteers have taken different forms. The presence of the non-human has been either a source of hope for multispecies flourishing or a cause of failure -primarily through the calamitous events enacted by the violence municipalities inflicted on animals. Attending to the particular moments in the multispecies histories, this thesis explores the human – non-human relationships in Istanbul to examine the shifting dynamics which inform that relationship. In this regard, the guiding questions for this research are: How do the coexistence of humans and non-human animals manifest itself in Istanbul, particularly on streets, with the street animals? What are the specifics of that coexistence and the relations between humans and non-human animals as they materialize through the centuries-old presence of street animals and the care labor

performed to keep them alive? How can we conceptualize the main continuities and ruptures in this relationship; how can we address the relationship between spatial and legal governance and non-human politics? How and why certain groups of people have historically attended to the non-human animals, primarily the ones on streets? What are the infrastructures of the care labor performed to keep street animals alive? How can we trace the temporal, spatial and institutional forms through which care for the non-human populations on Istanbul's streets transform into ways of imagining and claiming a different city, a different lived-space? Is it possible to see this as an opening to think about the ethics of living together?

In my endeavors to attend to the shifting dynamics of human – non-human animal relationships in Istanbul, two main premises have been informative. First, I had to delve into the social theories that account not only for human beings but also the non-humans in their analyses of the social. In order to emphasize the importance of relational ethics and of rethinking history through the lens of the non-humans, I built my narratives around the theories that argue for the multispecies retake on the nature of the social. My second guiding idea has been related to the question of ethics and the possibility of an ethical endeavor that is derived not from normative frameworks but from the everyday relations with the lived world around. In both, reversing the order of things and making the starting point the end has been the main theme: Rather than starting with a conception of social and related social structures that inform the molded socialities, I tried to follow the associations formed in the act of relating. Instead of searching for the overarching ethical principles that guide the animal volunteers' caring relationships with the non-human animals, I tried to emphasize the ever-shifting nature of the ethical endeavors and the changing strategies employed to sustain those endeavors. Socially prescribed, and enforced,

limits shape the workings of the relations between all sorts, and neither social science nor the ethics of care for the non-human on streets are not exempt from the pressure those limits place on them. However, understanding how people act with and against those limits have been a guiding question for this research.

1.1 Multispecies socialities

Building on the premise that “species of all kinds, living and not, are consequent on a subject- and object- shaping dance of encounters,” (Haraway, 2008, p. 4) I tried to follow the relations that both humans and non-human animals of Istanbul find themselves entangled in. This emphasis on following stems from Latour’s insistence on rethinking what social (science) means. The term social, according to Latour, have long been used to account for every residue that other domains, like psychology, economics, physics, could not account for (2005, pp. 5-6). This common approach, named as the sociology of the social, explains phenomena through “the same social aggregates behind all of them;” it requires the invention of the social for explaining it (Latour, 2005, p. 8). For the alternative approach Latour defends, the sociology of associations, there is nothing behind the activities, like law, religion, science, politics, etc., even though the links between them might end up producing a society. This *critical sociology* he would like to propose “replaces the object to be studied by another matter made of social relations” (Latour, 2005, p. 9). For Latour, the meaning of the word social has been an ever-shrinking one:

‘Social’ as in the social contract is Rousseau’s invention. ‘Social’ as in social problems, the social question, is a nineteenth-century innovation ... As one can see from the drifting of the word, the meaning of social shrinks as time passes. Starting with a definition which is coextensive with all associations, we now have, in common parlance, a usage that is limited to what is left after politics, biology, economics, law, psychology, management, technology, etc., have taken their own parts of the associations. (2005, p. 6)

To reverse this lessening, and to go back to the roots of the word, *sequi* meaning to follow and *socius* denoting a companion, an associate, Latour argues that social scientists have to reverse the background and foreground of social analyses to first, extend what we mean by social actors and include non-humans in it, and second, to “follow the actors themselves” to make sense of what “the collective has become in their hands” (Latour, 2005, p. 12). This, for Latour, is not a refutation of the sociology of the social that “limits actors to the role of informers offering cases of some well-known types;” this approach is still reasonable and indispensable for providing all the ingredients that are already widely accepted in the social realm (Latour, 2005, p. 11). However, in cases “where group boundaries are uncertain, when the range of entities to be taken into account fluctuates,” rethinking how subjects, as well as objects, get remade in every association formed emerges as a necessity to be taken into consideration. (Latour, 2005, p. 247) Although my primary moving point in searching for an understanding of the social that includes non-humans is Latour’s urge to reverse the background and foreground of social analyses, I do not follow his subsequent contention that the ontology of the things that are a part of the assemblages have to be flattened. As discussed more in detail in the following chapter, for destabilizing the essentialist perspectives on human as well as non-human socialities, taking the ontological differences as unique degrees of power that are assembled on a horizontal, immanent plane of existence emerges as the affirmative way of reimagining the social in a multispecies way. These assemblages place humans and non-humans in

situated histories, situated naturecultures¹, in which all the actors become who they are *in the dance of relating*, not from scratch, not ex-nihilo, but full

¹ For Bruno Latour and Donna Haraway, as well as for many other Science and Technology scholars, the arbitrary lines drawn between nature and culture through the modernist narratives do not necessarily eliminate the hybrids; on the contrary, it is that separation that enables those formations to emerge as hybrids. (See Latour 1991) Thus, to point at the continuities between (scientific) fact and

of the patterns of their sometimes-joined, sometimes-separate heritages both before and lateral to *this* encounter. (Haraway, 2008, p. 25)

For studying those situated histories, the smallest possible patterns for analysis emerge as the relationships between the beings involved in those assemblages: “The partners and actors are their still ongoing products” (Haraway, 2008, p. 26).

Rethinking the socialities that non-human animals have been a part of and reimagining social analysis by taking the non-human animal presences into account is a relatively new attempt within social sciences. Throughout the thesis, I tried to rethink both historical events and today’s non-human agendas around the contested presence of the non-human animals on streets of Istanbul to emphasize the relevance of the non-human animals in the formation of the social life, as well as the political organizations. The cohabitation, a form of living together that is not necessarily voluntary (Butler, 2012), of humans and non-human animals within Istanbul can be an opening to rethink how spatial distribution, political organization, as well as ethical endeavors, have always been a multispecies matter. Despite the human exceptionalism that blinds our analyses which makes the social formation appear as the human endeavor that determines the non-humans’ lives, the alterities provided by the messy relationships between humans and other animals provide an opening to question that premise.

1.2 Nurturing ethics

In addition to the search for a sociality that decenters the human and exemplifies multispecies, relational histories, this thesis also engages with the question of a relational ethics that enables the flourishing of some, at the cost of others. One of the

(speculative) fabulation, and to highlight the hybridity of each social formation, they use naturecultures, or nature-cultures instead of addressing those two terms separately.

most often heard questions that are directed to animal volunteers is the question of “why?” Why care for the non-human, sometimes at the expense of your own well-being? I took up this question and reflected on possible answers through not only my informants’ and collaborators’ reflections but also my own unease about this question. In our endeavors to care for, protect, speak up for the non-human inhabitants of our neighborhoods, I see an ethical orientation to the world that refuses to “denounce the world in the name of an ideal world” (Haraway, 2008, p. 82). The question of “why” carries with it a set of normative assumptions with regards to the bodies the care is owed to. The animal volunteers get into messy relationships with their relatives, neighbors, municipality workers, lawyers; their social lives get rearranged, often becomes less populated by humans and more with non-humans; they often embrace the stigma placed on them through psychologizing their “obsession” with non-human animals. Another main moving point for this research has been to challenge all those psychologizing narratives in explaining the care for the non-human. The animal volunteers nurture ethical ideas about the world that change their orientation to the world in significant ways. This orientation is fed by often conflicting ideas and hopes about justice, and sustained through certain strategies that include kinship claims. As will be discussed in more detail in chapter four, this is a disruptive response to the normalizing assumptions about ethics and care. The care for the non-human and the events witnessed as a result of that labor is a form of contamination for the volunteers that rework their priorities, sense of the world, sense of responsibility, kinship, and ethics in a way that creates tensions with the norms about living a good life, living in a city, and forming relationships.

1.3 The outline

As I argue throughout the thesis, the non-human populations within urban areas and the relations between those animals and the human beings, have always been an important dynamic that plays a role in the spatial arrangements and the distribution of inclusions and exclusions. Istanbul, with its histories full of non-human inhabitants for several hundred years provides an exemplary case; The texture of the city could never be imagined independent of its non-human inhabitants. For elaborating the infrastructures that sustain the multispecies texture of the everyday life in Istanbul, this thesis focuses on two main historical moments that have been key in human – non-human socialities in Istanbul. By attending to those two particular moments in its history, namely the Hayırsızada Event of 1910 and the construction of Kısırkaya Animal Rehabilitation Center in 2015, I tried to conceptualize the main continuities and ruptures in human-non-human socialities in Istanbul and engage with the relationship between spatial and legal governance and non-human politics. I attended to the specifics of that relationship as they materialized through the centuries-old presence of street animals and the care labor performed to keep them alive. The first of these key moments was the 1910 Hayırsızada Event throughout which 80.000 dogs of Istanbul was exiled to a rocky island in Marmara Sea. The second was the opening of Kısırkaya Animal Rehabilitation Center in 2016 with 5300 capacity, which seemed curious after the law no. 5199 had been accepted in 2004 and the non-human animals of Istanbul have been legally deemed the inhabitants of the streets. The choice of the moments was deliberate: I argue that they are two key developments that created a rupture in the human – non-human socialities in Istanbul as they both emerge as the culmination of a set of social and legal arrangements that affect the spatial redistributions. In this

regard, I take up the question of “why?” in my engagement with both events and I tried to outline the conditions, if not the reasons, that made Hayırsızada possible only in 1910, and K1sirkaya only in 2015.

Analyzing two different historical periods necessitated two different methodologies. While I did an archival research on the Hayırsızada incident and relied mainly on the historians’ accounts as well as memoirs from early 20th Century, for the K1sirkaya and non-human politics of 2010s, I conducted in-depth interviews with the animal volunteers of Istanbul as well as following all the legal procedures and municipal policies governing the non-human animals. The main purpose of attending to the particular moments in Istanbul’s multispecies histories was both to emphasize how today’s non-human politics had some of its roots in the historical formation of values and how changing orders and normative values have affected human – non-human socialities. I acknowledge that the archival work on the Hayırsızada Event and the related legal arrangements necessitated a more mediated engagement with the event; the use of in-depth interviews as well as my own witnessing for analyzing the 2010s non-human politics might seem like a more direct way of analysis. Although the two moments are elaborated through different methodologies, I acknowledge the key roles they both played in Istanbul’s multispecies histories as a common thread and trace it by bringing those two moments together not to form a coherent narrative but to map those histories.

My central proposition have been that the human-non-human socialities are analytically relevant in our analyses of the society and history. And I had the contention that an embodied, relational ethics was one of the key factors shaping those multispecies socialities in Istanbul. In the light of these two main positionings, a multispecies social and an embodied, relational ethics, this thesis explores the

tensions that bring together the care for the non-human animals, legal and ethical status of the street animals and the ethics of cohabitation as they unfold through the particular moments of the human – non-human socialities in Istanbul.

Following this introductory chapter, I start the thesis with an outline of Western philosophical theories on non-human animals. The attempt to decenter the human in the social sciences and rethink the question of ontology in a less anthropocentric way has recently become one of the important endeavors in the social sciences. The critiques on the normative assumptions of humanism that feed the ways non-human animals have historically been regarded and it called for rethinking the significance of non-humans in social relations and ethical endeavors. Accumulating around certain bodies of thought that include but are not exclusive to the non-human turn (Grusin, 2015) and posthumanism (Wolfe, 2010), this new momentum is fundamental in the attempts at reworking the subject, object and the tools of the social sciences. By surveying the key moments and theories in the Western philosophical tradition that engages with the question of the non-human animals, the first chapter argues for an embodied and affective take on multispecies socialities in order to rework the non-human ontology and to imagine a worldly ethics that enables politics of living together. I conclude the chapter by arguing that the ethics of living together, or the ethics of cohabitation, is not necessarily built around willed adjacencies; reimagining Butler’s claim in a way that will include the non-human populations, I argue for the preservation of the “open-ended plurality” our nonchosen cohabitation with non-human animals enables (2012, p. 144).

In the third chapter, I tried to rethink the histories of non-human animals on Istanbul’s streets, focusing primarily on the most calamitous moment, the Hayırsızada event, throughout which 80.000 dogs living on Istanbul’s streets have

been exiled to an island in the Marmara Sea, only to die from hunger and thirst. The non-human animals' stories throughout the 20th Century Istanbul are key in both understanding today's spatial contestations and the contentious boundaries that are always shifting around the human – non-human animal divide. Instead of analyzing how certain structural changes shaped the non-human presences on streets, I engaged with the tensions between the newly emerging order and the histories of care for the street animals. Arguing against the purely culturalist or functionalist accounts that explain the relatively peaceful coexistence of dogs and humans prior to Jacobinist era, I emphasize the importance of the spatial distributions that have taken place throughout the late 19th and 20th Centuries in effecting the shifting dynamics of human-dog relationships in Istanbul. Neither the role of the Islamic values nor the street animals' functions in everyday life totally capture the complex relationalities between Istanbul's street animals and the humans: It is through the changes in the ideas that hold together an order through certain institutions, and through the spatial implications of those changes, the street animals of Istanbul became the dirt on streets and politics of cohabitation have experienced a key rupture.

As another key moment in the history of human – non-human animal relationships in Istanbul, the fourth chapter focuses on the dynamics that unraveled throughout the 2010s. In order to examine the new tensions around the care for the non-human, I explored the changing legal and spatial politics with regards to the non-human animals on a municipal level. In addition to addressing the continuities and ruptures in the politics of exile, confinement, and extermination on a political level, I explored the main strategies animal volunteers employ in the face of both these historical events and today's municipal-level policies. By engaging with the animal volunteers' care labor, I explore these tensions through feminist care ethics

and kinship claims in today's Istanbul. Through the opening feminist care ethics provides, I also engage with the possible futurities kin-making with non-humans calls for, in contexts that are different than pet-owner relations.

Between 2016 and 2018, in addition to the archival work on Hayırsızada event and subsequent eradication attempts, I conducted interviews with ten people that care for the street animals in seven different municipalities within Istanbul. I followed social media accounts of fifteen animal volunteers that included five of the people I conducted interviews with. Between February and April 2016, I attended a seminar series organized by the Animal Rights Subcommittee of Istanbul Bar Association to inform animal volunteers on the possible use of Turkish Criminal Law and Misdemeanor Law for the cases of cruelty against street animals. Even though they are not directly quoted within the thesis, all the narratives that I had been exposed to throughout the seminars have been the most inspiring source for this research. Being one of the animal volunteers myself, I used my experiences on streets, in veterinary clinics, and on social media as sources of data as well.

CHAPTER 2

THEORIES FOR AND BEYOND THE NON-HUMAN

The question of the animal and its pressing relevance for social studies today has generated discussions around and reevaluations of concepts like subject, ethics, modernity, sociality, and politics. A wide array of disciplines and many leading theorists have engaged with the question as part of their work, creating a momentum that culminated in the strengthening of subfields such as animal studies, critical animal studies or animal ethics within main disciplines including political science, sociology, philosophy, and history. Although the animal's, or the non-human's, presence has been key in almost all critical studies within humanities and social sciences, the preoccupation with the development of new conceptual tools and theoretical frameworks that will engage with what lies beyond the human in novel ways is a relatively recent phenomenon. From being mere chapters or short passages within large books of critical theorists, non-human animals have slowly been moving to be the sole subject of the social science books and larger scientific endeavors. John Berger's famous question "Why look at animals?", the title of his first essay in *About Looking* (1980) which later became a book itself (2009), can now be rephrased as "Why study animals?" How can we engage with this both quantitative and qualitative shift with regards to the animal question within social sciences today?

The animal in its singularity and its otherness have historically been useful in the formation and sustenance of long-held dichotomy between nature and society, as well as being fundamental in the configurations of humanism and of the human as the fundamental explanatory mechanism of the social and the political. Even in critical philosophical endeavors that unsettle the essentialisms that inform the human

subjectivity do maintain the border between the human and the non-human and keep human subject's privileged position. That singular or universal other have been deployed in a Janus-faced, double sense. The species anonymity of the animal, in some accounts, is used to signal their transparency, predictability, immediacy of existence and thus used as a symbol of innocence that has been lost in the formations of the more complicated human socialities. In some others, the affinity between animality and human-ness is a fact to be suppressed and animal otherness is a difference to be contained and tamed in order for human social order to continue its existence peacefully. In both accounts, the animal is a socially and politically restrained source of difference; an "Other" of the logos, subjectivity, and identity. This chapter will highlight the philosophical footprints of this double deployment, then will move on to the theories that paved the way for more critical animal studies today. Following Matthew Calarco (2015), those critical theories will be divided into three, based on their relations with the human-animal continuum: the theories that emphasize the continuities between human and non-human living beings will be followed by the theories that highlight the difference distributed along species lines. Instead of Calarco's third category, that is, indistinction, the third group of work that will be elaborated here will consist of the discussions around posthumanism and anthropology of ontologies as an opening that paves the way for the development of new ethical and analytical tools to rework the animal question.

2.1 Philosophy, boundaries and animals

One of the most relevant reasons why rethinking the question of the animal with rigor has become more pressing is related to the radically changed place of the animal within areas outside social sciences. An increasing number of scientific, as

well as anecdotal, accounts have been documenting that many non-human species are exemplifying capacities or behaviors that have been used in strengthening the human-animal divide in favor of the former. Qualities such as the inheritance of cultural behaviors, language use and the ability to develop highly complex systems of communication, having long-term memories, having the capacity to mourn, deceive or act altruistically have been observed in different non-human animal species; the studies in cognitive ethology and animal behavior have called into question the anthropocentric, capacity-based divisions between the human and the non-human (Aureli, de Waal, and Waal 2000; Bekoff 2002, 2010; De Waal 2010; Griffin 2013). Although it is possible to question these studies' tendencies to interpret animal behaviors unavoidably through an anthropomorphized lens, they still powerfully challenge the exclusivity humans claim over possession of some particular traits. Thus, those studies have been influential in emphasizing the ontological continuity between humans and non-human animals as well as challenging the mainstream Western philosophical conceptions regarding what non-humans lack when compared to human beings.

2.1.1 Boundary constructions

For outlining the philosophical ideas that emphasize the lack of non-human animals, it is possible to start with Aristotle's hierarchical schema with regards to the living beings. Despite seeing the continuities in humans and some non-human species such as ants and bees in forming collectives, Aristotle in *Politics* (1998) still distinguishes human species as superior in relation to its capacity for producing rational discourse:

Nature makes nothing pointlessly, as we say, and no animal has speech except a human being. A voice is a signifier of what is pleasant or painful, which is why it is also possessed by the other animals (for their nature goes this far: they not only perceive what is pleasant or painful but signify it to

each other). But speech is for making clear what is beneficial or harmful, and hence also what is just or unjust. For it is peculiar to human beings, in comparison to the other animals, that they alone have perception of what is good or bad, just or unjust, and the rest. (p. 4)

The advantage of rational discourse is further elaborated by Aristotle's belief in the nature that "makes nothing incomplete or pointless"; the properties nature gives to all living beings right from the beginning and the hierarchical order between those properties reveal the fact "that plants are for the sake of animals, and that the other animals are for the sake of human beings" (1998, p. 14). Possessing their nature from birth, plants' life activity is growth and nutrition, most animals "live under the guidance of nature alone" with the characteristics of life and perception but human beings "live under the guidance of reason as well" (Aristotle, 1998, p. 214). Despite its dated resonances from a contemporary perspective, Aristotle's philosophy that emphasized the rationality and created ascending schemas based on capabilities have informed subsequent philosophical works; in its most critical form, capabilities approach have been used even in today's animal ethics scholarship primarily through the work of Martha Nussbaum (1998, 2004, 2011).

Another important philosopher who has influenced the modern Western philosophical tradition on many subjects including the human/animal distinction is Rene Descartes. Despite granting animals a "corporeal imagination", Descartes distinguishes human beings from animals and machines in their capacity of having a mind and self-awareness (1985, p. 42). Following his detailed description of how body systems work and how there are many significant similarities between the functioning of the animal body and the humans', he argues that we still have "two very certain means of recognizing that they were not real men" (1985, pp. 139-140). The first of these means is related to the ability to express thoughts: Although there are animals and machines that can utter words, "it is not conceivable that such a

machine should produce different arrangements of words so as to give an appropriately meaningful answer to whatever is said in its presence, as the dullest of men can do” (Descartes, 1985, p. 140). The second is about the ability to act according to life’s contingencies. The animal’s or machine’s action can only be understood through the disposition of their organs and even though those organs can be responsive to the stimuli, “it is for all practical purposes impossible for a machine to have enough different organs to make it act in all the contingencies of life in the way in which our reason makes us act” (Descartes, 1985, p. 140). Thus, Descartes argues that even though some animals may excel in certain actions and show better skills than human beings, it is only because “nature acts in them”, signifying only a mechanic capacity that is devoid of wisdom and improvisation. Human beings’ reflective self-consciousness is what differentiates them from the rest of the animal and machine worlds. With the developments in ethology as a field, it is possible to argue now that animal cognition and capabilities are way more complicated than Descartes’ descriptions about it. Still, Descartes’ emphasis on the significance of mind and rationality as a marker that deems human being superior to any other form of life, or even machine, has been used for both justifying animal-use and excluding animals from ethical consideration.

The emphasis on rationality and self-consciousness in ranking humans and other animal species has also been fundamental in Immanuel Kant’s philosophy. Kant focuses less on the inferiority of the animals but more on the superiority of human beings in his justification of animal use. Since humans are ranked differently in dignity from other animal beings, it is not justifiable to treat human beings as mere instruments. The animals for Kant, on the other hand, has “lack of autonomy and moral agency” and thus “they can be justifiably used as mere instruments, as mere

means to human ends, whether in the form of food or as subjects of painful experiments.” (Calarco, 2015, p. 10) Although Kantian ethics is based on duties, in his chapter titled “Of Duties to Animals and Spirits”, he argues that “we cultivate our duties to humanity” since “inanimate things are totally subject to our will, and the duties to animals are duties only insofar as they have reference to ourselves” (Kant, 1997, p. 177). Thus, Kant argues, shooting a dog that is no longer capable of serving his master is “by no means in breach of any duty to the dog, since the latter is incapable of judgment,” but the act “damages the kindly and humane qualities” in the shooter, “which he ought to exercise in virtue of his duties to mankind” (Kant, 1997, p. 212). Kant’s focus is primarily on the virtues of being human and his philosophy provides yet another framework for justifying the exclusion of animals from our moral systems and ethical communities.

Through this brief survey of three leading theorists of Western philosophy, it is possible to argue that the justification of even the most brute of actions humans impose on animal beings has been tenable partly through these theories. Although there are novel attempts to incorporate these thinker’s frameworks into more critical endeavors that might rethink the human-animal divide, the mainstream theories have generally been an obstacle to, rather than being a medium for, the proliferation of animal ethics in general. Instead of emphasizing continuities in the human and non-human life forms, as had later been theorized through Darwin’s groundbreaking insights (1871, 1872), they have generally underlined the human uniqueness.

2.1.2 Boundary extensions

With evolutionary paradigms becoming more prevalent in the ways humans think about political and ethical subjects, the differences between humans and non-human

animals that have always been analyzed as differences of kind, started to be seen as differences of degree. Thus, from the emphasis on human uniqueness, a shift has happened towards emphasizing the continuities between human and animal worlds. With the help of this paradigm shift, ethical theories that deploys the ethical consideration of interests have become more plausible. As touched upon before, one of the theories that resulted from this shift is the capabilities approach as exemplified by the work of Martha Nussbaum. Nussbaum's approach moves beyond the species boundaries and emphasizes the opportunity to enhance one's capabilities in life as a ground for justice (2011). According to this perspective, "humans are just one species in a whole web of diverse creatures, and we cannot possibly hold that only where other animals resemble us, they can be significant" (Nussbaum, 2009). As the outcasts of both social organizations and moral considerations, people with disabilities, non-citizens, and non-human animals are the central figures that Nussbaum develops her ethical theory around. She emphasizes the need to take into account the agents who cannot be a part of the social contract in shaping our moral convictions. Overriding the interests of non-human animals, in this regard, becomes as unjust as overriding the interests of people based on prejudices like racism or classism. Following Aristotelian tradition, Nussbaum argues that all living beings should be respected. This approach is a direct contrast to Kantian notions of dignity that deem it relevant to only human beings. Since her capabilities approach includes values such as bodily integrity, play, the ability to have affiliation and engage in social interactions, it is not only human beings, but the entire world of the living is ethically relevant in our discussions of rights. The capabilities approach is critical of not only Kantianism but also utilitarianism since it is primarily concerned with the individual qualities rather than aggravated interests. With these powerful challenges

to mainstream political and ethical theories, the capabilities approach has become one of the most cited and discussed ethical theory when it comes to the consideration of non-human animals.

Utilitarian perspectives on animal ethics formed another influential philosophical tradition in time. With his groundbreaking book “Animal Liberation” (2011 [1975]), Peter Singer is the most famous figure in this tradition. Following Jeremy Bentham, Peter Singer argued for the primacy of sentience in ethical considerations. Singer defines the main premise of utilitarianism as “the interests of every being affected by an action are to be taken into account and given the same weight as the like interests of any other being” (Singer, 2011, p. 5). The equal consideration of interests, according to Singer, has been a theme in many ethical theories but Bentham’s utilitarianism has been the first one that included the animals into its framework. Since the utilitarian norm is about the sum total of utility, those who have been tangentially affected by our acts must also be considered as part of our ethical deliberations. In addition to this, Singer argues that there is no justification for not taking into account the suffering of a sentient being. Based on this capacity that Singer believes to be pertinent to most of the animal beings, animals’ interests must be considered in the calculation regarding the aggravated happiness or utility resulting from an action.

One of the most influential arguments in the animal rights or animal liberation movement has been based on Singer’ refusal to base the claims for equal treatment of interests on the actual, scientifically proven equality of different life forms. Deliberating on the cases of sexism and racism, he argues that “the existence of individual variations that cut across the lines of race or sex provides us with no defense at all against a more sophisticated opponent of equality” (Singer, 2011, p. 6).

Even if we may prove the actual equality among living beings or talk about the meaningful distribution of highly-valued qualities among some groups, the moral relevance of that living being cannot be based on those contingencies; “instead, we should make it quite clear that the claim to equality does not depend on intelligence, moral capacity, physical strength, or similar matters of fact. Equality is a moral idea, not an assertion of fact” (Singer, 2011, p. 4). Based on this moral idea, speciesism, “a prejudice or attitude of bias in favor of the interests of members of one's own species and against those of members of other species,” is as morally objectionable as sexism or racism (Singer, 2011, p. 6). Any prejudice based on membership in a group, as in most cases of racism and sexism, or on any capacity a being has, as mostly used against the case for animal rights, cannot be the ground for justifying unequal treatment to living beings, let alone vindicating inflicting unnecessary pain on them.

When it comes to killing animals, the utilitarian view, as exemplified by Singer at least, does not offer ready-made answers. Cautioning against the pitfalls of defending the sanctity of life in any circumstance since that might also feed conservative, anti-abortionist viewpoints, Singer addresses the complexities of the case against killing animals through the evaluation of the worth of one's life. This completely arbitrary standard of the worth of life is, in accordance with the utilitarian norms, calculated by measuring one's capabilities that, according to Singer, is always irrelevant when it comes to the question of inflicting pain. “A rejection of speciesism does not imply that all lives are of equal worth” and in this regard, it is not illogical “to hold that the life of a self-aware being, capable of abstract thought, of planning for the future, of complex acts of communication, and so on, is more valuable than the life of a being without these capacities” (Singer, 2011, p. 20). Although Singer openly opposes the factory farming, repeated animal experiments and

institutionalized forms of speciesist norms, his partialities when it comes to killing an animal has always been criticized and utilitarian animal ethics has been disparaged for its shaky normative framework.

Another ethical paradigm that highlights the continuities between humans and non-human animals is informed by Kantian deontology, as exemplified in the works of Tom Regan (1983, 2001, 2004). Although being as significant as Peter Singer in the field of animal ethics and having a publication with him (1989), Regan departs from Singer's views in his emphasis on the value of the subjects regardless of their interests. For Regan, being *a-subject-of-a-life* is the ethically most relevant category (Regan, 1989, p. 112). According to this perspective, the capacity to feel pleasure and pain is not the only relevant criteria for having interests. Being *a-subject-of-a-life* means having an inherent value stemming not from the fact of being alive but from having

beliefs and desires; perception, memory, and a sense of the future, including their own future; an emotional life together with feelings of pleasure and pain; preference and welfare interests; the ability to initiate action in the pursuit of their desires and goals; a psychosocial identity over time; and an individual welfare in the sense that their experiential life fares well or ill for them, logically independently of their utility for others and logically independently of their being the object of anyone else's interests.
(Regan 1983, p. 243)

Despite listing a broad range of categories one can have in order to be considered as a subject of a life, Regan is fully aware that this attempt at drawing boundaries is inevitably doomed to fail for certain species (Regan 2004, pp. 18-21). Beyond mammals and birds, the worlds of many non-human animal species do not show signs for the kinds of behaviors that Regan lists, at least not through the tools available for human beings to come to such conclusions. In arguing for the ultimate abolition of treating non-humans as resources and for the recognition of their

inherent value regardless the species boundaries, Regan thinks that it is possible to extend Kant's ethical theory for human beings with similar premises to non-human animals. Reading the *Case for Animal Rights* it is impossible to find single predilection regarding the abuse of the non-human animals, in any scenario (2004). However, this argument on the abstract level does not eliminate the complications real-life scenarios cause.

In all the paradigms mentioned above, as exemplified by Nussbaum, Singer and Regan, it is possible to find rigorous criticisms against the arbitrary boundaries that divide human and non-human worlds. Through their emphasis on capability, sentience or consciousness, they highlight the continuities between the humans and the non-humans using scientific, evolutionary paradigms. Thus, they challenge the "humanist" ethical paradigms. No matter how progressive some of those paradigms might seem, in all three philosophers' works it becomes obvious that the need to establish a more comprehensive ethical framework, we have to include non-human beings. Through this call to inclusion, the theories highlighted above also challenge the normative comfort zone of humanism and invite individuals to reflect on their habitual behaviors that seriously harm the living beings all around the world.

2.1.3 Feminist critiques

Despite their power in challenging the norms and deeming the non-humans worthy of ethical consideration, the theories outlined above have a significant limitation. As argued by many scholars in the feminist care tradition of animal ethics, these theories are grounded in the rule-based sameness logic, the privileging of reason and disavowal of care and affect (Adams and Donovan 1996, 2007). Their reason-based arguments "hinge primarily on the premises of correspondence and consistency for

their persuasiveness” (Deckha 2012, p. 528). Although Regan admits the role of emotions in driving his ethical endeavors for the non-human animals, they both always based their theories on reason alone, with the fear of being charged with sentimentalism. The feminist critiques on these works made visible the relations between the male-centered perspectives and certain humanistic norms. Feeding speciesist hierarchies, the praise of logos and the contempt for the affect or emotions have resonated in these ethical theories that argued for animal rights or animal liberation. The strong parallels between anthropocentric and androcentric worldviews and their dominance especially in the Western philosophical tradition have been highlighted by the feminist scholars. Through the feminist critique on these theories, the continuities between the logic and the affect, the significance of the body and relationality, and the importance of care and emotions in shaping our relations with the non-human world have become more tenable (Bailey 2005).

Feminist critique of these works is crucial also in thinking about the complexities of lived experiences. Most of the challenges with regard to establishing an ethical framework for our relations with non-human animals today go beyond the individual choices and deliberations. Anthropocentrism, as a set of relations and systems of power that are in service of those who are considered by the dominant culture to be fully and properly human is fundamental in various cultural formations as well as being an institutionalized form of thinking about the world in general. With the theories mentioned above, anthropocentrism is utilized in a way to extend its boundaries based on certain continuities between humans and non-human animals. The continuities that have been emphasized by abovementioned theories do generally lean on certain abilities or capacities like the ability to suffer, to reason, or to communicate. Sentience, being the subject-of-a-life or having a right to live

emerge as the grounds to argue for the relevance of non-humans in their similarities to human beings. The less a non-human life form is like a human, harder for them to be included in the ethical imaginaries. Thus, even though it would be overly critical to call these theories speciesist, they definitely reproduce some of the humanistic biases with the aim of including non-humans into our ethical horizons. The perceived divide between humans and non-humans in their ethical value is left unchallenged in those theories that recognize the similarities between humans and non-humans.

Feminist theories on the question of the non-human animals challenged the underlying humanistic assumptions behind these animal ethics theories by highlighting the continuities between the human-centric perspectives and the male-centric ones. This challenge takes its power both from the importance of a relational ethics with an emphasis on the body and the affects, and from the importance of recognizing institutional forms of subordination, like anthropocentrism, in informing ethical theories.

2.2 Ethics, difference, and animals

Normative infrastructures of animal ethics are not only formed through theories based on the continuities on the human - non-human animal continuum. Theories highlighted above do primarily emphasize the rational capacity of the human beings in bringing forth the ethical transformations. Through a different lens that questions the source of the critical thought, not the rational self but the radical other might emerge as the source for both the critique of humanism and the construction of alternative ethics. This emphasis on otherness is primarily elaborated through the notion of difference and is as much about decentering the human as challenging the essentialist notions regarding ontology. It entails “refiguring the individual as a

unique node in a network of relations, an irreplaceable being-in-becoming – a *singular Other*” (Calarco 2015, p. 31, emphasis original). This singularity is translated into categories that ease perception through the repetitions that make recognition easier. Grouping the similar forms of being into generalizable categories, this translation blurs the particularities that are figured through the relational webs one is embedded in and thus, turns a certain degree of strangeness into a kind of familiarity. The violence embedded in this translation is what keeps the boundaries between self and other rigid, as well as sustaining them. However, life’s contingencies allow for a particular “other” to haunt those boundaries, sometimes even challenge them in significant ways.

Emmanuel Levinas, one of the most important philosophers in animal ethics, writes extensively on the capacity of the Other to challenge one’s ethical position. Regardless of one’s choice, the ‘face’ of the other acts upon us, challenges our preconceived notions and affects us. Levinas argues that the face has a significance that exceeds the sum of the organs on it, “the face is an irreducible mode in which being can present itself in its identity” (1990, p. 8). Things, since they do not have a face, can only give but not present an identity thus “violence is applied to the thing, it seizes and disposes of the thing” (Levinas, 1990, p. 8). The face, in its ways of presenting the identity it has, demands a form of recognition, it is the medium through which “others act upon us, without our will” and “constitute the occasion of an ethical appeal or solicitation.” (Butler 2012, p. 139) In his book *Difficult Freedom*, he describes the situation the conditions of Jewish prisoners of war in Nazi Germany where “the other men, called free, ... stripped *them of their* human skin” (Levinas 1990, pp. 151-52, emphasis added). Halfway through their captivity, a dog enters their lives and “for him, there was no doubt that *they* were men ... This dog

was the last Kantian in Nazi Germany, without the brain needed to universalize maxims and drives” (Levinas 1990, p. 153). Despite recognizing the capacity of the dog to recognize their face and affirm their humanity even when they were treated as subhuman, Levinas emphasizes the dog’s incapacity to institute an ethical relation because of their incapacity to think and develop maxims. Judith Butler attempts at reading Levinas against himself in order to articulate a global ethics and question the possibility of “an ethical relation to those who cannot appear within the horizon of ethics, who are not persons or are not considered to be the kinds of beings with whom one can or must enter into an ethical relation” (2012, p. 140). When it comes to the possibility of developing an animal ethics through a similar attempt is not as easy since Levinas also distinguishes human beings from the rest of the animals as “the biological species of reasoning animal” (Levinas, 1990, p.140). This emphasis on reasoning is also the ground where non-human animals become disqualified for ethical relevance. Despite having a face, the non-human animals’ inability to reason and make claims, expels them from the ethical realm. Thus, as in the case of Kant, we meet an opening with regards to the relevance of non-human animals in social worlds in Levinas’ works, but the anthropocentric generalizations based on rational capacities get in the way of deeming them as an ethically relevant Other.

Jacques Derrida criticizes this emphasis on otherness as “for the other to be other, it must already be less than other” and “Levinas's theory of alterity does not think the 'economy of violence' in which any other is caught if it is to be recognized *as other*” (Beardsworth 2013, p. 134). Focusing on the articulation of the differences that constitute both self and the other, Derrida emphasizes the necessity to rework both traditional conceptions regarding humans and humanism and hegemonic notions about animals and animality since the construction of both ends of that dichotomy

“represents the limit upon which all the great questions are formed and determined, as well as all the concepts that attempt to delimit what is ‘proper to man’” (Derrida and Roudinesco 2004, p. 63). Derrida’s criticism is both about the singularity of “the animal” that is reductive of the singularity of each animal being as in the case of humans and on the supposed incapacity of the non-human beings in making ethical claims.

The most famous example Derrida uses in challenging the singularity of the animal is his encounter with his cat: “the cat I am talking about is a real cat, truly, believe me, *a little cat*. It isn’t the *figure* of a cat. It doesn’t silently enter the bedroom as an allegory for all the cats on the earth, the felines that traverse our myths and religions, literature and fables” (2008, p. 6, emphasis original). After recognizing the cat’s existence that exceeds the humanistic conceptualizations and symbolizations that have so far tried to capture the cat’s essence and singularity, Derrida also challenges the tradition that treats the non-human beings as mere automata. He tackles with the non-human animals’ ability to respond and to call into question through this encounter with the cat where he felt ashamed of his nakedness. The cat was there, to see his naked body, watching prior to being watched: “What does it ‘say’ to me, demonstrating quite simply the naked truth of every gaze, when that truth *allows me to see and be seen* through the eyes of the other, in the *seeing* and not just *seen* eyes of the other? (Derrida, 2008, p. 12, emphasis original). The seeing eyes Derrida follows gives him a reflective space to critique both literary and philosophical traditions that have disregarded the significance of non-human animals’ gaze:

As with every bottomless gaze, as with the eyes of the other, the gaze called “animal” offers to my sight the abyssal limit of the human: the inhuman or the ahuman, the ends of man, that is to say, the border crossing from which

vantage man dares to announce himself to himself, thereby calling himself by the name that he believes he gives himself. (2008, p. 12)

His attentive look and openness to acknowledge the call non-human animals make, brand Derrida's discussion of the animal an ethical one for "interpretive decisions (in all their metaphysical, ethical, juridical, and political consequences) thus depend upon what is presupposed by the general singular of this word *the Animal*" (Ibid., p. 41, emphasis original). Derrida's elaboration on the distinction between the human and the non-human is not for eliminating both categories, on the contrary, he "insists on positing a "radical discontinuity" between animals and human beings while underscoring that his work should not be read as renouncing the task of identifying a "proper of man"" (Calarco 2015, p. 47). Rather than flattening the differences between humans and non-human animals, he argues for the multiplication and thickening of them. Thus, Derridean thinking is beyond both the overly emphasized biological continuities and incommensurable dichotomies. Whereas the emphasis on difference is for the recognition of the other that demands an ethical relation in Levinasian framework, Derrida's focus on difference is for forming ground for those differences to flourish.

Taking the difference not as the endpoint of social analysis but as a starting point for imagining ways of relating despite those differences has made Derrida's thinking an inspirational source for many theories that try to decenter the human and reflect on the question of the non-human in the making of the social. Although Derrida does not frame his theoretical approach as an ethical one, his emphasis on the embodied reality of the animal and the possibility of communicating across differences have emerged as important grounds for imagining new relational ethical frameworks. Derrida, as the philosopher who engaged with the non-human question

extensively, not merely as a chapter of his larger endeavors, is read with and against himself in today's critical theories on the question of the non-human.

2.3 The posthuman

Through the recognition of the importance of difference in critiquing the singularity of certain categories such as non-human, or the animal, theories of difference within the field of animal ethics have paved the way for the appreciation of "the richly differentiated modes of existence found among animals" (Ibid., p. 50). Although the conceptual work on those categories both in the form of boundary extensions and as the attempt at undoing them is still an important endeavor, studies on the effects of those boundaries and the richness of the relations between the human and non-human worlds have become relatively more prominent in the field of animal ethics.

2.3.1 Foucault and posthumanism

The animal question within the realm of social sciences necessitates an elaboration of the question of the subject. Based on the premise that animals are a constitutive part of the social and they construct their own reality, they represent the world as well (Kohn, 2015), the animals alter the conception of the subject per se. This ultimately means overturning what has been thoroughly used as mostly scientific tools for boundary making between the humans and the non-human animals. As Donna Haraway asserts, there is a need for "the power of modern critical theories of how meanings and bodies get made, not in order to deny meanings and bodies, but in order to build meanings and bodies that have a chance for life" (1988, p. 580). Science and Technology Studies scholars have quite insistently tried to undo those boundaries by both pointing at the facts regarding animals that transgress the limits

humans have traditionally assigned to them (about language use, tool use, sentience, etc.) and laying out the structural historical dynamics that made such assignments possible. As Haraway puts it:

By the late twentieth century in the United States scientific culture, the boundary between human and animal is thoroughly breached. The last beachheads of uniqueness have been polluted, if not turned into amusement parks—language, tool use, social behavior, mental events. Nothing really convincingly settles the separation of human and animal ... Movements for animal rights are not irrational denials of human uniqueness; they are clear-sighted recognition of connection across the discredited breach of nature and culture. (2013 [1991], pp. 151 - 152)

Science and Technology Studies scholars are not the single source for such criticisms. Two leading critical social theorists, Foucault and Derrida, have undeniable effects on the disparagement on the “uniqueness of human” ideal. Differing from Derrida, Foucault does not directly engage with the concept or the presence of the non-human animals but still uses them as a way to elaborate certain disciplinary mechanisms.

In Foucault’s oeuvre animals are present as strong examples he uses to elaborate the discourses about the natural on the issue of sexuality (1990), the birth of genetics as a science and its relation to animals that ultimately gave way to a system(at)ic biopolitics (Rabinow, 2000), public executions that remind one of the slaughterhouses; the rise of the psychological and psychiatric knowledge based on animals and plants that imbued the power nodes in favor of racist discourses (Foucault 1995). Through these metaphors, examples it is possible to draw parallel lines with what those discourses, disciplining practices imply for the very bodies of the non-human animals. But Foucault himself never addresses animals as subjects of those power relations. In very few sentences we hear some instances of killing of animals but never an analytical elaboration of such incidents. In this manner as

Cavalieri puts it, Carol Adams's notion of the "absent referent" (2015) is good to think with: as the linguistic use of certain words hide away the animals, women and other subordinated groups and their suffering embedded, appropriating the literal treatment of a group as a metaphor for another, absent referent can be seen as what Foucault does with regard to the animals (Cavalieri, 2008). The imprisonment, torture, regulation of bodies through disciplinary practices can thoroughly be examined over animal bodies even by solely looking at animal slaughterhouses –as well as practices on streets as he mentions in the case of plagues (Foucault, 1995)- ; animals can be regarded as subordinated subjects, dominated through various institutions and regulated through their bodies. But Foucault never attempts at such an analysis, never deconstructs the notion of the animal the way he did with the concept of the "(hu)man". Still, as his emphasis is generally on "an ethical practice rather than an ethical norm, an ethical problematization rather than an ethical normalization" thus a possible future rather than the past, the absence of animals within Foucault's works as subjects might serve not as a closure but rather as a shift to be carried out through critical examination, taking its strength mostly from his belief in the "insurrection of the subjugated knowledges" (Povinelli, 2012). Not only the focus on subjugated knowledges but also his deconstruction of the concept of man allows Foucault's work to form the basis for today's antihumanist and posthumanist debates primarily focusing on non-humans. For Foucault

the historical appearance of this thing called "man" was not the transition into luminous consciousness of an age-old concern, the entry into objectivity of something that had long remained trapped within beliefs and philosophies: it was the effect of a change in the fundamental arrangements of knowledge. As the archaeology of our thought easily shows, man is an invention of recent date. And one perhaps nearing its end. (1994 [1971], p. 387)

Contemplating on this near end has allowed many thinkers, especially the ones dealing with posthumanism to decenter the human. Posthumanism, building upon Foucault's criticism on humanism as its own dogma (Foucault in Rabinow, 1994, pp. 43-4), deals with the very material and embedded presence of the human, that has traditionally been suspended for the elaboration of human by escaping its origins in nature, animals, and evolution. In this regard, posthumanism's post- is quite in accordance with the postmodern's post- as Lyotard conceptualizes it:

Posthumanism comes both before and after humanism: Before in the sense that it names the embodiment and embeddedness of the human being in not just its biological but also its technological world, the prosthetic coevolution of the human animal with the technicity of tools and external archival mechanisms (such as language and culture) ...and all of which comes before that historically specific thing called "the human" that Foucault's archaeology excavates. But it comes after in the sense that posthumanism names a historical moment in which the decentering of the human by its imbrication in technical, medical, informatic, and economic networks is increasingly impossible to ignore, a historical development that points toward the necessity of new theoretical paradigms (but also thrusts them on us), a new mode of thought that comes after the cultural repressions and fantasies, the philosophical protocols and evasions, of humanism as a historically specific phenomenon. (Wolfe, 2010, p. xv)

Being one of the most prominent theoretical paradigms, posthuman marks a moment in which the need to rethink the meaning of human has gained a multispecies momentum. It requires being attentive to the ways "animals fuse, refuse and confuse" nature-culture categories and ontologies" (Kirksey & Helmreich, 2010) not as a basis for new boundary- making or a new taxonomy but for a reconfiguration both of spatial and ethical relations. This makes the social sciences not solely a human domain but rather a realm in which "animals matter individually and collectively, metaphorically and politically, rationally and affectively" through connectivities that are not always pre-structured by normative human orderings/otherings (Buller, 2014).

This necessitates a methodological opening as well: “Studying contact zones where lines separating nature from culture have broken down, where encounters between Homo Sapiens and other beings generate mutual ecologies and coproduced niches” can be thought as the primal aim of a multispecies understanding of the social that both destabilize the human but at the same time argues for a conviviality (Kirksey and Helmreich, 2010, p. 546).

2.3.2 Anthropology of Ontologies

Undercutting the prevailing assumptions about what it means to be human is not only accomplished through anti-humanist stances. As a quite recent anthropological debate, discussions regarding multiplying the concept of ontology and nature do also contribute to a critical evaluation of being. Eduardo Kohn is one of the names that contribute to such an evaluation who in his words is interested in an anthropology that is

metaphysical, interested in exploring and developing concepts; ontological, attentive to the kinds of realities such concepts can amplify; poetic, attuned to the unexpected ways we can be made over by those not necessarily human realities; humanistic, concerned with how such realities make their ways into historically contingent human moral worlds; political, concerned with how this kind of inquiry can contribute to an ethical practice that can include and be transformed by the other kinds of beings with whom we share our lives and futures. (2015, p. 324)

His conceptualization of being, as is stated his quote above, both of humans and non-humans is informed by everyday engagements with the world and thus undoes the usual boundaries surrounding both humans and non-human animals. This engagement is primarily metaphysical for Kohn; deriving from Peirce’s semiotics which is communicative but not symbolic, at least for the living. Delving into Peircian semiotics is what he accomplishes his book *How Forests Think* (Kohn,

2013) and is beyond the scope of this thesis. However, the idea of a communication that is not symbolic is worth elaborating in terms of its implications regarding the capacities of the bodies. In this regard, another important anthropologist Viveiros de Castro's work as Kohn uses it is telling. Viveiros de Castro's perspectivism and the emphasis on the multiple ways a being conceives the world lynchpins the importance of both engagements, relationality, and comparison. In Kohn's words, in de Castro's metaphysics every being has its own perspective and see things in the same way "but crucially, what they see in this same way, is a different world and yet this can only be known comparatively by grasping how those on the outside see us" (2015, p. 319). Through this narrative, perspectivism challenges "nature/culture divide that posits nature as universal, unitary and existent ground and culture as the infinitely variable form of representing it" (Kohn, 2015, p. 320). Multinaturalism becomes the way to claim that nature is more plural than has generally been assumed:

There are many natures, each made up of set of affects particular to a given kind of body, but only one culture. Multinaturalism takes the comparison inherent to perspectivism - for a characteristic of perspectival thinking is that one perspective can hold together multiple irreducible worlds- and asks what it would be like if we saw everything as potentially generatively comparative. in a multinatural perspectivism, there is no stable ontological ground." (Kohn, 2015, p. 321)

The idea of multinaturalism will be extended in a more Spinozist manner in the following part of this chapter, but from within the anthropology of ontologies perspective, the importance of the concept lies in its ethical and political implications. Multiplying nature and thus ontology means a rejection of essentialism, no being can be undermined to a set of characteristics it has irrespective of the relations it is embedded in. Also, the emphasis on the key role the engagements with the world plays makes ethical endeavors something related to embedded, bodily practices rather than a set of abstract and transcendent rules. Lastly, the politics and

social facts that inform the relations cannot be envisioned as abstract “truth”s to be discovered but rather as continual imagination about how things could be “otherwise” (Povinelli, 2012).

The search for an “otherwise” has been more frequently discussed with the environmental calamities of the Anthropocene. The need to rethink our relations with the world around is inevitably tied to the questions regarding what a human ontology is, or put it in a more plural way, what it means to regard ontology plurally?

Our human way of being is permanently being opened to that which lies beyond it. This is an ontological fact that, if recognized, can allow us to tap these other kinds of reals in order to develop another kind of ethical practice in the Anthropocene, one that could include, in some way or another, those many other kinds of beings that lie beyond us and with whom we make our lives. (Kohn, 2014)

As a possibility with sentences surrendered with “might”s, the outcomes of opening ourselves to things, entities that lie beyond us has been elaborated by Kohn, but the question of “how” still remains. It has been argued that the tiniest parts that make our bodies “human” are non-human companions (Haraway, 2008); that our lives are made through and by non-human elements, by transfigurations but when it comes to the very presence of the non-human beings, of animals in particular, when it is about an encounter lived in an urban setting, with an “anima-urbis” (Wolch, 2002) this claim has to be elaborated for being able to find a resonance. This elaboration, I believe, is inevitably tied to the notion of ethical practice that has been frequently discussed but still needs amplification in the “anthropology of ontologies” discussions. The reason for this claim is related to my contention that a metaphysical elaboration of the (concept of) non-human (animals) does not necessarily translate into a practical realm; the very materiality of our bodies as/with affects needs to be examined in terms of constitutive determinations it has with other bodies in various

settings and contexts. Broad focus on the spiritual realm and Kohn's structuralist interpretation of the ontologies and protection of the division between living and nonliving in terms of representing the world – because of its heavy reliance on Peircian semiotics – appears as obstructions for imagining this perspective within a more urbanized setting where encounters with non-human animals are subject to certain limitations and distortions that need to be addressed.

Despite the vagueness of the applicability of this approach to a wide array of contexts, anthropology of ontologies has certain principles that open grounds for thinking in terms not of sameness but of radical alterity on the issue of non-human animals. The idea of immanence rather than transcendence, advises taking the objects of study as what they are: What the animals signify, represent or stand for is not the questions anthropology of ontologies asks. This, I believe, can contribute to more direct engagements with the very bodily presence of the animal in an encounter. In relation to this fact, the emphasis on non-representation makes it easier to think about the difference in terms of kind, not of degree. This requires taking the life and perspective of the animal for granted, conceiving it not in comparison with human cognitive schemes but rather as a fact in itself and thus claiming the animals' subjectivity. Thought within the framework of anthropology, it means “a turn away from a social constructivist, culture-relativist framework” and is about replacing it “with a ‘radical essentialist’ one, in which worlds are seen not as relative to each other but in which they exist unto themselves, as immanent rather than contingent” (Vigh & Sausdal, 2014, p. 54). However, a difference in kind brings forth a methodological question: “With what register can we anthropologically perceive and describe such difference?” (Vigh & Sausdal, 2014, p. 57). If it is solely for a conceptual insight derived through a field with an encounter with a radical other,

with its own perspective, multiple vision, the questions regarding power might escape the frame and ontology might turn into “just another word for culture” (Carrithers, Michael, et. al, 2010). Thus, it is necessary to examine the power-bound aspects of those encounters, not only because every relation is a power relation but also the object of any study, through the etymology of the word object, is bound to be “thrown against” something: “The object of research is defined not just by ‘what it is’ but by being mirrored against, or refracted through, an implicit idea of what it is alter to” (Laidlaw, 2012 *as quoted in* Vigh & Sausdal, 2014). In addition to the question of ‘what it is altered to?’, the inquiry of ‘what does this alterity bring about for the everyday encounters with the non-humans?’ emerges as another important question to think through everyday relations with the non-human world.

2.3.3 Spinoza and ethics as ethology

On the issue of encounters, I find it helpful to turn to another anti-humanist philosopher whose focus on bodies might fill the gap the anthropology of ontologies leaves open as a result of its focus on metaphysics: Spinoza with his materialist ontology and rejection of human exceptionalism, in his terminology, might enhance a “proactive” relation with the world around including non-humans. For this matter, I rely heavily on Hasana Sharp’s interpretation of Spinoza and his views on nature and beasts (2009a, 2009b, 2011). Sharp’s analysis of Spinoza is intertwined with Deleuze’s claim that Spinoza’s ethics should be understood as an ethology in relation to the search for “an affirmative and joyful politics that navigates between the dangers of supernaturalism that elevates humanity out of nature and a subnaturalism that treats human existence as a defective expression of normative nature” (2011, pp. 3-4). These two premises have both broader applicability in terms of methodology

and larger bodily and affective implications. Spinoza's views, according to Sharp, is critical of both an elevation of nature as something to be higher than humanity and humans imagining themselves to be higher, god-like creatures than others. In other words, a "misanthropocentric zoophile" is as harmful as the "narcissistic anthropocentric imagination" (Sharp, 2011, p. 6). What might drive us towards a robust expression of community with the surrounding environment and living beings is the drive toward self-enhancement and self-affirmation through constitutive, positive affects. It is hard not to feel a resentment towards humanity as a species when the world is witnessing a lot of calamities directly caused by human activities but according to Sharp's interpretation, "disgust with humanity might mutate into a blanket valorization of the non-human" which expresses a kind of hopelessness that is not productive but rather is diminishing (Sharp, 2011, p. 11). What matters more should be the relationships as the constitutive determinations of one's being and power. According to this schema, the reason to care for the relations with non-humans, as well as humans, can be the constitutive power of the affects and emotions derived that "materialize the contours of our bodies" (Sharp, 2011, p. 15). Using the example of a blind man Spinoza uses, Sharp opens the gate for imagining the animal through its perfection. According to Spinoza, a blind man is regarded as imperfect only in comparison with our imagined human ideal. "The more we affirm him as one of the infinitely many expressions of nature, the more we regard him in terms of the singular reality and perfection that he is" (Sharp, 2011, p. 17). Strongly paralleling the multinaturalist view of the anthropology of ontologies literature, what this view provides more is the avoidance from a 'corrosive despair' in relation to one's own species, namely the humankind. The catastrophes humans cause, no matter how inimical to all species living on the earth, should not push one towards a naturalistic ideal but rather towards an ethics

that is proactive. In this regard, imagining the ethics as ethology, as Deleuze argues Spinoza thinks, might be beneficial: Imagining beings as “a singular essence” and “a degree of power” rather than a kind of being, makes the species boundaries irrelevant as well as destabilizing ontological differences (Sharp, 2011, p. 20). Spinoza’s ethics according to Deleuze concerns the question “what a body can do?” rather than the question “what one ought to do?”, marking a sharp distinction from theories of morality. Within this schema what matters is not the universalizable principles as the expression of anthropocentric reasoning but a “flat horizon of action and passion” that names “a horizontal field of powers and counterpowers that can be arranged from within in more or less enabling ways from the perspective of distinct agents, or “degrees of power”, but which cannot be directed from without to reflect an external or higher principle”(Sharp, 2011, p. 24). Thus, ethological ethics or ethics as ethology implies a horizontal relationality rather than a vertical axis of subordination and this relationality is based upon the practice of arranging one’s affective community, with whom one forms relations according to the best conditions in which one can avoid destructive beings and form alliances with those who enhance oneself. This focus on relationality and the ethics based on forming communities and avoiding some others is a great opening for first, thinking ethology as ethics in various settings including industrialized urban ones and second for renaturalizing the concept of the agency without delving into an idealization of nature that cannot be defined singularly. In this perspective, “action becomes a paradoxical endeavor to cultivate a perceptive body, a capacity of sensuous receptivity” and the importance of the environment in forming affections that form one’s subjectivity makes “the development of mutually beneficial affective compositions” significant (Sharp, 2009b, p. 27).

In my endeavors to analyze the key moments in the multispecies histories of Istanbul, these theoretical discussions surveyed above have been formative of my research questions in many respects. In order to argue for the formation of social as a multispecies endeavor, I had to first engage with the possibilities of relating despite ontological differences. In this regard, the theories that emphasize the radical discontinuities or differences as an opening to reflect on the possibilities of relating, have informed my attempts at going beyond the dichotomous construction of the human and the non-human. Moreover, my engagement with the multispecies histories of Istanbul has been a part of a larger attempt at attending to the ways animals fuse the categories of ontologies and politics. To this end, discussions around posthumanism have been central in thinking about the non-human question in a way that will enable a new mode of thought that goes beyond the cultural fantasies of humanism. Humanism is historically situated and informs the ways history have been elaborated and analyzed; a posthumanist analysis opens up a field for reworking the historical analyses in a way that includes the non-human questions. Lastly, as I tried to engage with the care labor of Istanbul's volunteers, the ethics of relating despite ontological differences in addressing the multispecies socialities on Istanbul's streets have emerged as a central theme. In addition to contrasting this ethics of relating to the mainstream ethical theories on the non-human animals, the theoretical survey outlined above provided me with a conceptualization of a relational, embodied and affective ethics.

2.4 Ethics of cohabitation

I would like to conclude the chapter with an ethical framework that adds a dynamic regarding the spatiality through the concept of proximity. As highlighted above, the

construction of the affective compositions from human and non-human socialities is not exempt from the social and political tensions informing the normative order. The attempt to establish an ethical practice that goes beyond the normative questions regarding what ought to be done is almost always challenged by the questions regarding the proximity and responsibility. A Spinozist take on ethics captures the dynamic relationality between humans and non-human animals in Istanbul; it allows one to engage with the non-human animals' presences on streets despite decades-long attempts at eradicating them. As will be discussed in more detail in chapter 4, the animal volunteers who care for the street animals do exemplify the formation of affective communities on streets, that enables the flourishing of the lives of street animals in the face of municipal level policies of exile, confinement, and extermination. However, the presence of non-human animals on the streets has always been a contentious issue, discussed on both political and social terms; those contentions require addressing the problem of unwanted proximities with non-human animals.

In their article on the relevance of distant suffering, signaling either physical distance or non-affiliation with an established community one is a part of, Judith Butler questions the ethical realities that impinge on us, sometimes without our consent (2012). Arguing against an understanding of ethics based on the rule of proximity that will necessarily be "parochial, communitarian, and exclusionary," Butler seeks to establish an ethical framework grounded in precarity (Butler, 2012, p. 138). Challenging both the relevance of physical distance and belonging to a community, the precarity, they claim to be the basis for an ethical obligation, is the ground where we become socially interdependent because of our shared vulnerability to destruction. Using both Levinas and Arendt's concepts to develop an ethics that

will engage with both otherness and the shared conditions of being, they emphasize that shared vulnerability in an affirmative manner. This position is further strengthened by their emphasis on the importance of institutions in distributing the precarity: “Our precarity is to a large extent dependent upon the organization of economic and social relationships, the presence or absence of sustaining infrastructures and social and political institutions” (Butler, 2012, p. 147). The unequal distribution of precarity among bodies and the normative orders distinguish some bodies as not-grievable, less worthy of protection and sustenance. Against these, Butler proposes “not the rehabilitation of humanism” but taking the shared precarity as the “nonfoundation” of our existence. Despite the convoluted histories and unequal distribution of precarity among bodies and groups, ethical obligations still emerge for Butler as they are the main guarantee for our good life together:

It seems to me that even in situations of antagonistic and unchosen modes of cohabitation, certain ethical obligations emerge. First, since we do not choose with whom to cohabit the earth, we have to honor those obligations to preserve the lives of those we may not love, those we may never love, do not know, and did not choose. Second, these obligations emerge from the social conditions of political life, not from any agreement we have made or from any deliberate choice. And yet, these very social conditions of livable life are precisely those that have to be achieved. We cannot rely on them as presuppositions that will guarantee our good life together. (Butler, 2012, p. 150)

Butler’s contribution to the discussion around ethics is twofold: By arguing for an ethics based on shared vulnerability, they turn the question of politics into one that centers on the possibilities creating “the conditions of a livable life” (Butler, 2012, p. 150). Through this, Butler builds an ethical framework that goes beyond the mainstream ethical paradigms that most often start with normative visions, instead of ending with them. We are bound to struggle for the social conditions of a livable life that will help us flourish despite our vulnerabilities; that is also what binds us to one

another. Their second contribution is related to her discussion regarding the relevance of ethical obligations despite the involuntary, unwanted nature of some of our cohabitations. Building on Arendt, Butler argues that cohabiting the earth is prior to any possible community or nation or neighborhood; thus “unwilled proximity and unchosen cohabitation are preconditions of our political existence, the basis of ... the obligation to live on the earth and in a polity that establishes equality for a population necessarily and irreversibly heterogeneous” (Butler, 2012, p. 145).

Butler extends this heterogeneity in a way that includes the non-human life forms. As the vulnerability is taken as the basis for ethical claims, recognizing the same vulnerable condition that stems from having “a bodily life, understood as injurable” in non-human beings is a step that follows:

If we try to understand in concrete terms what it means to commit ourselves to preserving the life of the other, we are invariably confronted with the bodily conditions of life and so, a commitment not only to the other’s corporeal persistence but to all those environmental conditions that make life livable. (Butler, 2012, p. 147)

In this regard, Butler’s use of unwilled proximities and the unwanted cohabitation that does not necessarily eliminate the ethical obligations, emerge as a solid analytical frame for reflecting on the question of the non-human animals on streets. As will be discussed in more detail in chapter four, despite the lethal policies that target animals, the animal volunteers’ care labor to keep the animals on streets alive, and to create conditions that will allow flourishing of them can be regarded as a practice exemplifying an ethics of cohabitation.

CHAPTER 3

THE (HI)STORIES OF STREET ANIMALS IN ISTANBUL

The human - non-human socialities in Istanbul have historically been a key dynamic in the spatial distribution of inclusions and exclusions. To the curiosity of many travelers who visited Istanbul in 19th and 20th Centuries, Istanbul's streets have exemplified the cohabitation of street animals with the people, without much contention and through the care labor the public exemplified. The attention and care the non-human animals have received from the Ottomans have been a topic that many traveling accounts touched upon and tried to grasp. However, the early 20th Century has witnessed a turn of events where this curious cohabitation have experienced a rupture through an unprecedented calamitous event in 1910. Even in the contexts where non-human animals have been an internal part of the organization of daily life, the contestation over the boundaries that separate the human from the animal started to be utilized to sustain the policies that deem the street animals as vice to be eliminated. The boundaries between home and the public place, the discussions around what is order and what is dirt to be defiled have affected the relations between the Istanbul's human inhabitants and street dogs, irrevocably.

In 1910, one year after the dethronement of Abdulhamid II (1876 – 1909) and the takeover of the progressive Jacobinist Young Turks, the extermination of the street dogs of Istanbul had become one of the most important agendas of the city's new administration. In an era of accelerated spatial conflicts due to the changes in both the conceptualizations of the ideal city and governance of it as a social space, and the roles the animals played in the organization of daily life, nearly 80.000 dogs living on Istanbul's streets have been exiled to death on a small rocky island in the

Marmara Sea. Known generally as the “Hayırsızada incident,” this event had been a radical rupture regarding the human-dog relationships in Istanbul. Throughout the chapter, I will try to contextualize this event by looking at the late Ottoman and early Republican era, and two failed attempts at exiling dogs before Hayırsızada through different analyses by historians who trace the everyday lives of both humans and non-humans. Classifying these analyses under two branches, functionalist explanations and culturalist accounts, I will argue that neither can capture the complexity of the lived-world within that particular period. The dogs of Istanbul, to the curiosity of many travelers and historians who have been to Ottoman Istanbul have been an important part of the cosmology of the Istanbulite. Only after the radical alteration in the organization of daily life and a significant change in the institutional organizations, it became possible for the administrators to exile them without causing an upheaval from the public that would result in the revocation of the decision as has been experienced twice before Hayırsızada. In this regard, the histories of street dogs of Istanbul exemplify a process through which they became dirt “which must not be included if a pattern is to be maintained” (Douglas 1966, p. 50) in the new political order that has emerged with the new Jacobinist regime. The new regime, by virtue of calling for a new grounding for their existence that rests on reason justified through a conferred sameness with European state and city models, challenged the Ottoman institutions and created a shift in the naturalizing analogies that supported the cohabitation of street animals with human beings for hundreds of years. (Douglas 1986). As public memory gets rearranged with every change in the political order, Hayırsızada has been an event that has rarely been recounted for many years. Only after the construction of an “animal rehabilitation center” with over 5000 capacity in 2015, Hayırsızada event has been conjured up by the animal

rights activists to call attention to the circularity of the history with regards to the contestation of animals' presences on streets with the effect of changes in the debates regarding the ideal society and ideal physical and social order of the city which shape and refer back to pollution ideas. (Douglas and Wildavsky 1982) Since Istanbul's streets are still populated by dogs in almost all neighborhoods, the mismatch between those ideas of purity and associated order stands as a ground to further speculate about the disparity between those ideas and the principles of justice.

3.1 Contestations over defilement, risk, and justice

Each historical account that tries to address the human-animal relationships in the 20th Century Istanbul inevitably starts from an event that can be labeled as the trial of the 1915 Armenian genocide²: the Hayırsızada event.³ Soon after the takeover by the Young Turks⁴, the extermination of the street dogs of Istanbul had become one of the most important agendas of the new administration. Targeting first the puppies and continuing with adult dogs, the days of extermination have continued until nearly 80.000 dogs have been exiled to the island. For this arduous task, the administration made use of some other "value-less" social elements, namely the vagrant people and the lunatics, and turned their labor into a product by paying them for catching animals.

² The Armenian Genocide is the systematized attempt at exiling and murdering the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire with the conspiracy that Armenians did ally with Russian forces in the World War I. April 24, 1915 is marked as the start of the Armenian genocide. According to the Minnesota Newspapers Reportage About the Armenian Genocide, 1915-22, the number of Armenians living in Ottoman Empire was 2,133,190 in 1924; by 1922, it was 387,800.

³ Before the event, the official name of the island was 'Sivriada' (which connotes its pointy shape). After 1910 the island's name has been changed into Hayırsızada which means "wicked-island" in the most literal sense.

⁴ The group of discontented, junior army officers who seized power in 1908 from Abdulhamid II and have led the reformation of the administration of Ottoman Empire. They were against the absolutist rule of the Sultan and established second constitutional era in 1908.

One witness of the incident, French caricaturist Georges Goursat Sam, followed the events closely and made inquiries about the conditions of the animals. He was told that 30.000 franks were spared for the care of the dogs in the island: Two boatmen were assigned to regularly provide bread and water to the dogs on the island, but with the outbreak of the war in the Balkan Peninsula in 1912, the wages of the boatmen could not be paid, and the dogs were left to their own fate. Even before that incident, it was not clear whether these commissioned people were able to step on the island. Through the writings of many travelers passing through Istanbul in a sailing boat, and the testimony of Sam who visited the island, it is not hard to conclude that people have long quit feeding the dogs. The conditions in the island reminded Sam of the “Stromboli volcano”:

Most of them were jostling on the shore, squeezing themselves up; they were trying to reach the sea by treading on each other for refreshing their feet which have been burnt by the sun, scorched. Most of them were swimming, fighting in the sea, snatching for the carcasses swimming nearby. Half dead from drought, some were trying to drink salty sea water. On the land, there was nothing but a rabble scrambling for the remains. [...] There were some groups hopelessly swimming through us. Soon, the boat was besieged. They were near enough to touch us, trying to hold on to the boat’s slippery surface. Most of them had ears half eaten, with full of hideous scars which leave blood trails on the water. One English lady who could not stand this scene had begged the sailors to kill them. [...] From a distance, we saw a small steamer full of cages. From Istanbul, some “fresh dogs” were brought to the hungry dogs of the island. Maybe this was what feeding the dogs meant to Turks.” (Pinguet, 2009, pp. 12-14, own translation)

Thousands of dogs have died of hunger and thirst, eating each other, going mad, drowning. The Young Turks have never repeated the same act on the same species; the Armenian people would be the subject of the next massacre. For killing street animals, particularly the cats and dogs, some other ways of slaying would be invented by the following municipality mayors of Istanbul.

The idea of clearing the city of its four-legged counterparts was not something untested; Hayırsızada was not the first attempt. A very similar undertaking had happened at the beginning of the 1800s by II. Mahmut after an Englishman was found dead, bitten by dogs according to the memoirs of Paul de Regla, but the public outrage had caused him to revoke his decision to exile the dogs (1828). Abdulaziz (1861-1876), having the same ambition, followed a similar route; soon after, a fire that swept three important commercial neighborhoods, Cemberlitas, Kumkapi, and Gedikpasa, was associated with the wrath of God for exiling the dogs to death and caused the dogs to be returned to the city.

Even in the years throughout which the streets were dogs' land, certain districts were places not of coexistence but antagonism. Dorina L. Leave's memoir "Twenty-Six Years on the Bosphorus" narrates cases in which the boatmen were paid to collect the dogs of certain quarters and to take them to the other side of the Bosphorus (Gundogdu, 2010, pp. 379-380). Soon, people from the other side of Bosphorus had become aware of the deal and doubled the fee they paid to make him take the dogs back to where they live. Istanbul as a space of multispecies contestation with the constantly changing city dynamics, tells the stories of species once used to live together and benefit from each other that in time become rivals for a shared and contested space (Zeybek in Candan and Özbay (eds.), 2014).

Despite their contested presences, the animals have been an essential part of the organization of life in the Ottoman society. The attempts at keeping them safe and healthy can be traced through the documents that lay out the efforts to feed and protect certain animals. The court rulings discovered through *Mühimme Defteri*⁵ on 17 February 1587, the Kadı was asked to remind porters using horses for carrying the

⁵ They are the books to which imperial council's decrees were registered.

weight that it is forbidden to make weak, bareback, sick horses to carry heavy loads and the ones who fail to abide by the rule will be punished. On another document of 1856, the porters were again reminded of the rule that on Fridays the horses had to be let rest and, on the workdays, when they were not busy, it was banned to sit on them (Albayrak 2016). In addition to court rulings, there were numerous foundations that helped nurture the animals. One of the foundations was established by I. Ahmed, working to ensure the leftovers in many households was to be used for feeding birds and wild animals. Another foundation established by an Istanbulite artisan to protect the mosque, bathhouse and the fountain made built for him had in its list of condition a necessity to feed the cats living near the fountain to be fed every day with liver hung on two yokes.

Istanbul's four-legged rhythm and the lives of animals, primarily the dogs, on streets are a curious subject on many of the travelers' memoirs. The prevalent themes on those memoirs range from awe to contempt with regards to the relations the people have with those animals. The general tendency to associate their presence with the exotic Eastern city texture and Islamic conventions is undergirded by the idea of backwardness that had its resonances in the Ottoman elite in time. The statements of Lady Elizabeth Craven in her letters later she published in her book *A Journey through the Crimea to Constantinople* (1789), is telling in many regards:

The streets are full of dogs that belong not to a person but all Turks. These dogs, when lying down under the sun on streets, are so accustomed to the horses going around them that our butlers had to stop the carriages quite often to hurl them out of the way[...] There can be nothing scarier than these dogs, they are all the same breed and are aggressive. Can you think of anything more absurd than them protecting those dogs? The food that is given to these dogs with a warped sense of compassion is not enough for all of them and most die of hunger. None of the Turks have their own dogs, but the community does not demur at them lying and feeding on streets. (as quoted in Pinguet, 2009, p. 29, own translation)

The streets full of master-less dogs that have been fed, not eliminated despite some of the nuisances they might have caused, was both an exciting theme and a scary thing for the travelers. The “faulty” compassion Lady Craven touched upon was addressed by many travelers in their memoirs: Some associated it with the exotic East and its Islamic conventions that affect the ways the city is experienced and governed, some others searched for causalities with more pragmatic motives and practical reasoning behind. As an event that cut a notch in both culturalist and functionalist narratives, Hayırsızada incident stands out as a curious case that might pave the way for conceptualizing the years of cohabitating the city with the four-legged counterparts despite the spatial conflicts and possible threats they partake in.

3.1.1 The eventuality of 1910

The difference between the former failed attempts and the notorious Hayırsızada event is addressed by different historians. The researcher and the writer of one of the primary sources on the dogs of Istanbul, Catherine Pinguet explains the Hayırsızada’s difference from the former two failed attempts with the modernist aims attached as a legitimizing force (2009). Pinguet confronts overly cultural(ized) explanations explicit in the memoirs of mostly European travelers. She points at the discrepancies of the essentialist perspectives which undermine the relations between humans and non-human animals of Istanbul to the point of being overly determined by the Islamic conventions. In addition to emphasizing the modernist aspirations for a different municipal organization, she complicates the analysis by pointing at more pragmatic dynamics behind the human-non-human animal relations in the Ottoman Istanbul. The dogs were providing security for the neighborhoods they were living in, and they were functioning as garbage collectors before such services were put

into practice by the municipalities. An excerpt from a Prussian officer's letter-
Captain Helmuth von Moltke, who made observations about particularly the dogs
living in Istanbul-, is instructive in terms of showing the share of pragmatist
accounts:

You never see dogs within households. However, on the streets, there are
thousands of these master-less animals relying on the gifts of bakers,
butchers, and other shopkeepers, but also their own work; for the dogs in this
city have almost completely taken over the job of cleaners and garbage
collectors.” (as cited in Gündoğdu, 2010, p. 378)

There were foundations working primarily to ensure that these master-less animals,
and particularly the birds, live in healthy conditions through both feeding practices
and small-scale health clinics, shelters for wounded animals. In sharp contrast to this
vivid interrelationship, the modernist aims and ways of governing the city by the
progressive Jacobinist Young Turks made it possible to make regulations against the
conviviality of the streets through ideals derived from “European cities” and their
order and cleanliness. The new order required a new spatial organization that had to
be rational, clean and organized; a model that was radically different from the
hexagonal neighborhoods with narrow streets, dead ends and a vibrant canine
population lying under the sun during the day. The new ideas found their expressions
not only on ideological grounds but also spatial manifestations.

The role spatial distribution plays in the engagement with dogs can be
analyzed through the preparations of the Hayırsızada incident. According to the
municipal governor's meeting on 3rd of April 1910, the dogs of Istanbul were to be
collected and relocated in a relatively isolated place in big cages. A couple of weeks
later, when the hunting of dogs has begun, the first neighborhood the operation took
place was Beyoğlu where the first modern urban city planning attempts, such as
street lights and municipal services like garbage collecting, was initiated starting

from mid-19th Century. It was also the neighborhood most frequented by the foreign visitors for both touristic and trade-related purposes. The destination point, Topkapı, is also telling as it is the neighborhood where the Sultan's palace is, and the relatively more modest population dwells. Even today, Topkapı and its surrounding region are referred to as the old Istanbul.

Using the spatial problematization as a ground for addressing the change in the attitudes towards non-human animals, another prominent historian Ekrem İşin focuses more on cultural accounts (1995). Islam's conceptualization of the house as a sacred place which always meant having a loose relationship with the 'streets' which were left to outcasts of the social life: the dogs and the orphaned. For İşin, the idea of public space actively used by the citizens, an understanding the Young Turks was pioneering parallel to the positivist morals of everyday texture, was the process through which the permeability between the streets, land of dogs, and houses were established. Emphasizing the conflictual relationships between the non-human animals and humans in the commercial neighborhoods even before 1910, İşin's analysis focuses more on the cultural norms that prevailed and the question of moral weight given either to the Islamic conventions regarding compassion towards the 'weak' or to the commercial world of profit or loss.

Paralleling this analysis, the explanations for the dense dog population on the streets of Istanbul before the 1910s were discussed through the dogs' political connotations. For many commentators of this issue, the dogs were a symbol for the 'old order' the İttihat ve Terakki was trying to take over, as visible in the words of historian Palmira Brummett who analyzes the unionist 'revolution' through cartoons:

In cartoons, the dog packs came to symbolize the dilemma of how the new constitutional regime would control and order the social space. They became a measure of its efficiency. The dogs were a nuisance, and the task of the regime was to get rid of them. Although the revolutionary government could

not, perhaps, hold off the dogs of Europe maneuvering for territorial spoils, it could demonstrate its effectiveness by removing the dogs from Istanbul a manageable domestic task in an unmanageable world. (1995, p. 440)

As a nuisance and something to gain control over, for the unionists, the dogs of Istanbul were symbolically equated with the old regime “whose eradication was demanded in the name of progress” and “whose resourcefulness in attempting to survive evoked a sympathy” (Brummett, 1995, p. 443). As the oral historical narratives do generally associate the coming of the dogs to Istanbul together with the Ottoman ruling, the erasure of dogs from streets was also symbolizing the eradication of Ottoman-ness from the city (Pinguet 2009, p. 23).

Irvin Cemil Schick, addressing the same puzzle, tells this story in relation to the public space becoming more ‘actively used’ by people from 17th century on: Driving inspiration from Mary Douglas’s *Purity and Danger* (1966) he narrates the era as another example of what was once ‘useful’ in the garden, becoming a dirt in the ‘house’ (2010). According to Schick, the new organization of city space was centered more around the human beings’ needs and street animals, particularly the dogs who used to be like the guardians of streets before the streetlights have become common, have lost their values in time.

Moreover, he argues that the difference of Hayırsızada incident from other attempts at the mass killing of stray animals lies in the fact that the government for that period was structurally different. Schick argues:

Generally, the sultans are thought of as absolute despots, but their acts were limited by political necessities, religious surveillance and the public ... [The unionists, on the other hand] had an earthly, secular legitimacy, not a divine one. They were not subject to a moral contract with the public. As they came to power with military power, they had to render an account only to themselves.” (2010, p. 31, own translation).

Departing from Pinguet, Schick analyzes this change in the attitudes towards animals not through a rupture happened in 1910 but rather through an analysis of the increase in the use of public space and changing conceptualization of space-making starting from the 1700s on.

Thinking along Mary Douglas's conceptualization of pollution allows one to capture the Hayırsızada incident and significantly increasing preoccupation with the canine population on streets without falling prey to overly deterministic cultural and symbolic interpretations. It is possible to find records of killing dogs in large numbers before 1910 as well, but with the new worldly order and the more secular cosmology the Young Turks and the following Turkish Republic tried to establish, the ideas about street dogs have radically been altered. In Douglas's own words: "In chasing dirt, in papering, decorating, tidying, we are not governed by anxiety to escape disease, but are positively re-ordering our environment, making it conform to an idea" (1966, p. 3). The new regime's treatment of dogs as the dirt of the streets, the matter out of place, reveals how dogs are "the by-product of a systematic ordering and classification of matter, insofar as ordering involves rejecting inappropriate elements" (Douglas, 1966, p. 44). The new order presents itself not only on instrumental levels through attempts at eradicating animals from streets but also on expressive levels through which the newly emerging cherished classifications prevail and "condemn any object or idea likely to confuse or contradict" them (Douglas, 1966, p. 45).

These classifications cannot be grasped only through 1910, and the previous meetings that resulted in the incident "for the only way in which pollution ideas makes sense are in reference to a total structure of thought whose keystone, boundaries, margins, and internal lines are held in relation by rituals of separation"

(Douglas, 1966, p. 51). For coming to a better understanding of the Hayırsızada event and the conditions and ideas that made it possible in comparison to the prior two attempts, the new systematic ordering of ideas and the conditions that paved the way for such an order have to be taken into account. In this regard, 1839 *Tanzimat Fermanı* (the Imperial Edict of Reorganization or The Gulhane Edict) and its implications with regards to the city order stands out as the most important factor that affected the new cosmology that redefined the human-canine relationships on streets epitome of which can be regarded as the Hayırsızada incident.

3.1.2 *Tanzimat* and its discontents

1839 *Tanzimat Fermanı* was a proclamation that promised a wide range of reforms on issues ranging from salaries, military services and public trials to property rights; overall it can be said that it was an edict that rearranged the relations between the public and the sultan, as well as the relationships among the people. The internal reasoning behind the edict has generally been assumed to be reassuring the central authority of the state while adapting to a bureaucratic mechanism that would be more in line with the Western order, (Yerasimos, 2006, p. 350)

The spatial projections of the edict can be seen as reverberating these ambitions to create a more Westernized outlook; they are at the same time responses to the pressing problems of Istanbul that have been addressed but left unresolved by previous regulations. Between 17th and 19th Centuries, Istanbul as the city that the ruling elites could hardly establish order in, had been at unease due to continually increasing population density and poverty running rampant; been affected by numerous epidemics and recurrently swept by massive -intentional or accidental- fires (Tekeli, 2006). Many regulations prior to *Tanzimat* document that these issues

have already been addressed before: Banning the wooden structures within the city walls(1719), establishing doors for neighborhoods in order to protect the lootings after fires(1578) and banning the bachelor pads and shanty settlements for preventing people to migrate to Istanbul (1731-1732) have been themes that have been taken up by the Ottoman authorities prior to Tanzimat (Yerasimos, 2006). In this regard, the edict does not represent a radical challenge to the order of the city, it is instead an attempt at establishing an authority that would help address the pressing issues through a centralized, bureaucratized power that derived its tools and models from West.

Starting from 1855, a new bureaucratic order for the governance of the cities, the establishment of the local municipal authorities have become an agenda for the rulers. In 1856, *Intizam-ı Şehir Komisyonu* (Commission for the Order of the City) has been established with members mostly from affluent banker families. The members of the commission focused on reordering and fixing the streets and main roads in addition to starting the garbage collecting services and providing streetlights to the busiest street of the Pera district, Istanbul's most vibrant area to this day (Çelik 1993; Rosenthal, 1980). In 1857, in accordance with the propositions by the commission, a public directory, *Nizamname-i Umumiye*, went into effect and divided Istanbul into fourteen municipal districts that were to be governed by the municipal authorities. Due to the high costs of maintaining a municipal order, only three municipalities were established in the following five years; but the 6th District in Beyoğlu, that had historically been the most famous and the avant-garde one as that district was functioning as a trade center, had worked for widening the roads, making road slabs suitable for cars, organizing garbage collecting services and street lighting, drawing the cadastral map of the district for the first time in the history of the empire

(Tekeli, 2006, p. 365). The changes in the order of the city have not happened on a large scale but emerged through the sum of the partial attempts at different parts of the city: Two central train stations have been built in the following years, one in Sirkeci in 1889 and the other in Haydarpasa in 1909; the commuter trains have encouraged the building of summer resorts in nearby districts on the routes of those trains; in 1880s apartment buildings and row houses have emerged; as the city expanded, cemeteries that have formerly been at the outskirts of the city became central areas and been cleared out to turn into gardens and parks that resemble their European counterparts (Tekeli, 2006, pp. 370-71).

All these partial changes altered the outlook of the city in a significant way and created changes in the institutional organization of the city. The former organization of the neighborhoods did not distinguish between the private and the public in the Western sense; the physical areas near the private properties of people and foundations could be regarded as grey zones. The open-ended roads between the houses have been considered as the common property of the *cemaat* (community) whereas the dead-ends were the shared property of the residents that live on that street (Yerasimos, 2006, p. 356). The organization of areas beyond private properties was not determined by the rigid concept of borders; more fluid conceptualizations such as the concept of *finâ* that grades one's rights on a definite area according to the closeness of the area to their private properties were prevalent and the borders were fluid, determined on a daily basis, according to needs and shifting associations (Tekeli, 2006, p. 364). Dead ends, tiny streets and wide roads were providing gradual transitivity from the private lives to the common areas; that transitivity was an essential part of intimacy developed within the smaller areas that included the four-legged counterparts of the city.

The new institutional order grounded its legitimacy in the power of not nature per se but the “nature” of the world order: Weakening central authority and political order was to be reasserted only through the model that has been prevalent in the West. The necessary cognitive convention in order for the Young Turk administrations’ conventions to emerge as stable ones, or to become institutions, has prevailed through the new ideas about the city order that presented themselves in the gradual change in the physical structure of the city. The grey zones the tiny streets within neighborhoods can be regarded as the spaces that the changing order deemed ambiguous; for the sustenance of order, those ambiguous presences were fit into categories that have been derived from and grounded in the Western models. As these categories were not emerging through the people themselves “constructing a machine for thinking and decision-making on their own behalf”, the formation and the working of the social epistemology the Young Turks wanted to establish have instead been violent and emerged as the accumulative effects of decisions that have been put into action in a relatively long period of time (Douglas, 1986, p. 63).

In objecting to the idea of associating taboo and its symbolic power only with the ‘primitive’ cultures, Douglas highlights how European ideas of defilement do also express symbolic systems. The main reason why those systems do appear non-taboo like is related to the medical materialist explanations used to categorize dirt. European ideas of defilement or dirt are “a matter of aesthetics” and are “dominated by the knowledge of pathogenic organisms” (Douglas, 1966, p. 44). With the Young Turks and the following Republican regime, the reason why dogs were seen as a source of defilement was rooted in hygienic concerns that have been instituted through Western city models: The threat of rabies was a subject for medical interrogation, and the scale of the danger was now measured not through the

foreigners who might have become bitten on streets but through the scientific explorations of rabies as a deadly disease. The following decades would result in the death of street animals in even larger numbers than Hayırsızada caused; the threat of rabies would be the paradigm through which the street animals' and people's relations would be taking shape.

3.2 The longest century for animals

After the Hayırsızada event and as the new technologies of governing cities were being established, the 20th Century had introduced new ideas and terminologies regarding the relations with animals on streets. New chemical tools and biological discourses prevailed that projected health-related threats onto animals as well as conceiving of their presence as a revocation of the old order. The Turkish Republic that succeeded the Young Turk regime maintained the order their predecessors established and added it to a material scientific grounding that further legitimized the recurring decimation of the street animals. The ongoing killings exemplified their way of controlling the society through pollution ideas as stated by Douglas and Wildavsky: "When the central establishment is strong, it holds the monopoly of explaining the natural order. Its explanations of misfortune make social outcasts carry the stigma of vice and disease" (1982, p. 47). The dogs, being associated with the backwardness the Ottoman was symbolizing and no longer being an important part of the organization of cityscape, were now the outcasts of the new Republic. The killing of animals in large numbers was to be justified through a risk that the threat of rabies sustained. "The first issue in any argument about risk is to agree on which risks are most worrisome ... the choice is never made directly but is settled by a preference among kinds of favored social institutions" (Douglas & Wildavsky, 1982,

p. 187). The new Republican regime and its institutional arrangements were sustaining the distribution of risk through the new forms of knowledge.

The 1912 *şehremini* (mayor) of Istanbul, unionist Cemil Topuzlu would in his memoirs write that 30.000 dogs were living in the city even after the Hayırsızada incident when he was appointed to the position in 1912. In his memoir *80 Yıllık Hatıralarım* (1951) he published around forty years after Hayırsızada, expressing his ideas for a cleaner city, he states: “When I was appointed to the position, there were around 30.000 dogs in the city. I gradually annihilated them. I loaded the beggars into the trucks and sent them to the Darülaceze (the poorhouse)” (1994, p. 121, own translation). Topuzlu’s narrative is revealing with regards to the ideas of purity becoming the medium through which the spatial distribution and sustenance of an order and a system exerted itself. Not only the dogs but also the beggars were cleared from the streets and were confined to certain places that would help clear the public spaces from its outcasts.

In the year Topuzlu was appointed as mayor, a community consisting of civil and military bureaucrats founded the first animal rights association of the Ottoman Empire and continued their practices throughout the Republican era. *Istanbul Himaye-i Hayvanat Cemiyeti* (Society for the Protection of Animals) had two main goals. One was to prevent the animal abuse and improving animals’ living conditions and the other, being more ideological, was to encourage justice, benevolence, and kind-heartedness towards animals (Gündoğdu, 2010). Two years after the association was founded, the First World War had erupted, and the activities of the association had left limited to specific news articles promoting better treatment of animals. The association had started its operations once more, around 1924, only after the establishment of the Turkish Republic.

The 1920s were an unfortunate era for the street animals as was the 1910: The threat of rabies had been prevalent, and the stray animals, cats and dogs alike, were killed by poisons or guns in huge numbers. What the association had argued was to import of necessary equipment for being able to put the animals to death in a more ‘humane’ and less painful way. They imported the necessary equipment and started their activities in July 1927. In the absence of the possibility of castrating and the vaccination to prevent such viral illnesses, this ‘solution’ had never been objected to. There were only a few people, especially the author Ahmet Rasim, opposing the practice of killing animals. Rasim was asking for the ways to stop Istanbul’s mayor who, being one of the founding figures and an honorary member of the association had claimed to be protecting animals: “This kind of a protection is no different than how the westerners are ‘protecting’ the natives in Asia and Africa” he claimed, trying to remind the public of the days when sharing lives with animals meant other things (1983, p. 240). But these claims were not reciprocated, the threat of rabies in tandem with the rising theme of ‘modernization’ had been enough for the association to continue their activities. According to their own yearly reports 3309 dogs, 807 cats and 47 horses were ‘humanely,’ meaning using carbonic gas machines, killed in 1929. In 1930 the numbers changed into 1309 dogs, 982 cats, and 27 horses.

The Society for the Protection of Animals not only took steps to kill animals humanely; they also offered shelter to unwanted pets, offering prizes for the owners of the horses used in transportation who have the best conditions and working for an animal rights law to be legislated. Throughout the years, their membership profile has changed significantly. Around mid-1930s half of the members were women, and there were some foreigner members as well. Still, the close connection with the state endured and the governor of Istanbul in that era was also an honorary president of the

association. Although these political figures were not active counterparts, the close tie between the politicians and the association had probably limited their activities and arguments (Gündoğdu, 2010, p. 387). Despite their presence, in 1937 with the promotion of the fear of rabies, the municipality offered monetary awards for cat hunters; 2100 cats have been killed in 4 days. The *cemiyet* has sustained their activities during the 2nd World War too. In 1939 and 1940, 9.500 dogs, and 15.000 cats were killed in the society's "hospital" which mainly worked as a gas chamber. With the outbreak of war, the pack animals were subject to rationing for bread. But in 1942 this was canceled, and many animals have died of hunger during the war.

Despite their goals, the society killed tens of thousands of animals even in the 1930s. Their efforts to teach people how to treat animals humanely and to prevent certain cruelties stood not as a manifestation of a life of coexistence but as a contradictory "civilizing mission" towards people who had cohabitated with the street animals for decades. The association, mimicking the new regime's ideals, affirmed and took an active role in manifestations of the idea of a modern, clean city in which the hygiene and civility were ensured through active killings of 'useless' animals out of the sight of the public and without much blood being shed.

Regardless of the active killing of tens of thousands of animals throughout the first five decades of the 20th century, on 13 August 1959, the Istanbul Municipality declared that there were around 100.000 cats and dogs that were living within the city. The following years, especially the late 60s and 70s, globally brought a rise in the animal rights activism with the effect of especially 1968. In 1978, the Universal Declaration of Animal Rights had been declared. Still, the impact of the declaration and the wave of rising animal rights/animal liberation discourse had become prevalent in Turkey only around the 2000s. Around the 80s, there was news

of killing animals in massive numbers coming from every city. In 1984, the mayor of Istanbul, Bedrettin Dalan had publicly announced that he was going to “bring men from Korea to make them eat all of Istanbul’s dogs” (Toklucu, 2016).

Moreover, in 1987 through a newspaper, he declared that 25 vehicles for killing dogs were going to be bought. In the same year, the most scandalous news came from the city of Bursa: It was revealed that the municipality had burnt 1747 cats and dogs alive in a furnace in three months. This catastrophe gained public attention, and soon the municipality had given up on its action. The most striking outcry was that of Bilge Karasu’s, through an article he published in the journal of *Şehir*, he asked whether “people would ever understand that killing our collaborators to make themselves comfortable in the cities is a primitive ‘solution’, before it is too late” and questioned if narcotizing before burning (as the governor of Bursa claimed to do so) would really prevent a living being from feeling the suffering of being burnt alive (as quoted in Toklucu, 2016).

The 1990s were no different than the preceding decades. In addition to the theme of rabies still being prevalent, the international HABITAT II conference that was going to take place in Istanbul in 1996 had brought about a new legitimizing argument for the killing of street animals: Many foreign visitors were going to stay in the city and were supposed to be made comfortable by preventing them from having uncanny encounters with street animals. As a recurring theme in every city of the world with animals living on streets, extermination or exile of street animals before an international event⁶ had been the paradigm for the R. Tayyip Erdogan as well, who was the mayor of Istanbul back then. This, of course, meant numerous cats and

⁶ See Sochi Olympics of 2014, Rio Olympics of 2016 for very recent examples.

dogs of Istanbul to be shot, poisoned, filled to sacks and thrown to sea by the municipality workers (Tarak, 2016).

In 2004, the very same political actors who had their share in 1990s killings had passed a law, law number 5199, the Law for the Protection of Animals, in relation to European Union adaptation/harmonization packages. The law, according to many activists who have been engaging with the animal rights/animal liberation both practically and ideologically (both of which inevitably go hand in hand), has been quite strengthening in the field in many respects. For one, the law, not explicitly but still, argued for the animal's 'living area' to where s/he has to be returned after being vaccinated and neutralized by the municipality in charge (according to its boundaries). The law also banned the mistreatment of animals, stating the ban on the rape and torture specifically in a clause.⁷ Still, as only a misdemeanor law, it does not make subject to penal sanction and thus has little deterrence. The activists are working around some other laws like the environmental law (No.2872) in cases of poisoning, and firearms law (No. 2463) in cases of shooting which are both a part of the penal code.

3.3 Redrawing the boundaries

As the cases of rabies as a biological threat becoming rare and the normative implications of creating a modern, clean city taking a neoliberal form of governance, the policies starting from the early 2000s on, have been organized more around subtle ways of eradicating non-human animals from the city: Caught around dawn, non-human animals of Istanbul, mainly cats and dogs, are being "transferred" to urban fringes and animal shelters in control of local municipalities. The accelerated

⁷ 5199 sayılı Hayvanları Koruma Kanunu, 2004: Article no.14, clause j.

urban renewal projects with different scales extended the city towards its forests and resulted in habitat-loss for numerous species; the 2000s emerged as yet another era where the social conceptualizations of an ideal city are recreated, having projections with regards to the spatial “distribution” of the animals’ presences.

Despite the changes in the ways of organizing the city space and changing methods of eradicating dogs from the streets, certain events that conjure up the past atrocities still cite the “unthinkables and unmemorables” (Douglas, 1986, p. 76). For years, Hayırsızada incident and decades of killings have been vaguely remembered only by the animal rights activists and the old inhabitants of the islands close to Hayırsızada that passed the oral narratives of howling dogs and their cries in suffering that have been heard for nights. As public memory necessarily gets rearranged with the changes in the forms of governance and from 1910 to 2010s, Istanbul had witnessed many changes in the institutional order that necessarily erased or did not allow for the circulation of the infamous Hayırsızada incident in public memory. Still in 2015, when the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, run by a mayor from the ruling Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi - AKP), announced the inauguration of the largest rehabilitation shelter of the country with a capacity to home 5300 animals on a 70-hectare area, the possible attempts at eradicating street animals evoked the ghosts of the dogs died on Hayırsızada more than a century ago. The new place, Kısırkaya Animal Rehabilitation Center, was built in the northern shores of Istanbul, neighboring some other mega-projects of the AKP government such as the third bridge connecting Asia and Europe and the third airport on 7650-hectare land, being the world’s biggest in terms of the passenger capacity as Erdogan, then prime minister, now president, proudly announced. As the local municipalities have had the infamy for killing the dogs in shelters/rehabilitation

centers with ten times smaller capacities, the people who care for the street animals knew that the scale “mega” would mean death in large numbers. Since 2015, Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality has been signing protocols with local municipalities and taking the responsibility of street animals within their municipal boundaries to then capture and take the dogs to Kısırkaya, to an unknown end if the volunteers within that area would not try to trace the fates of the ones taken. Another way for the municipalities to get rid of dog populations had been ‘dumping’ either to another municipality’s area or to the forestry areas quite far away from the neighborhoods. Dumping the long-socialized dogs into margins of the city where they cannot find shelter or food is an indirect way of killing them: “Many of them die due to the scarcity of food and water, freezing temperatures during winters, and unbearable heat during summers” (Alkan, 2016, p. 624). Some volunteer groups have been formed to keep feeding the forest dogs of Istanbul, the number of which according to some estimations are at least twenty thousand, scattered in a few forestry areas.

Exiling thousands of dogs to forest areas or confining them into rehabilitation centers which generally work as shelters, devoid of human contact, and leaving them for death by hunger, thirst or madness, appears as a recurrence of Hayırsızada event in a more systematic and continuous way. What has changed is the subtle forms these atrocities have taken, making it impossible deem someone or a single institution responsible. Both today’s Kısırkaya and exiled forest dogs and Hayırsızada event of 1910 is significant for the radical transformations in the spatial organizations and institutions of governance, reinstating what dogs meant for the city, what dwelling is, and how it should be. They appear as the very manifestation of a new way of relating to the lived-world, trying to obscure ages of the conviviality of Istanbul. For instituting these new ways, both the edicts and regulations that altered the

organization of the city and the medicalization of certain risks thus deeming street animals as the outcasts, threats to be taken under control have played significant roles. These changes had altered the organizations of knowledge and public memory, making the systematicity and the ongoingness of the killings harder to grasp. As Douglas suggests, the “defilement is never an isolated event. It cannot occur except in view of a systematic ordering of ideas” (Douglas, 1966, p. 51). Both the Hayırsızada incident of 1910 and the ongoing attempts at eradicating dogs from the streets, must be narrated with reference to that ordering of ideas and related rituals of separation. While the Ottoman rituals of separation allowed for dogs to inhabit streets, keeping them out only of the households, the Republican regime’s treatment of dogs reveals rituals of “cleaning” that take place through constant relocation of the animals “out of sight” throughout the century. Both systems, in their totality, worked to ensure that certain boundaries are placed; the “statements about the home that we are intending to create out of the material house” are made visible (Douglas, 1966, p. 85).

Brushing the history against the grain, Istanbul’s dogs survived decades of defilement, eradication attempts, and exiles. Despite all the atrocities dogs faced and the power of this dreadful history in today’s narratives about them, Istanbul is still a city many travelers find curious with regards to its lively streets that are populated by four-legged habitants in almost all neighborhoods. To make sense of this fact, it is helpful to return to Douglas and Wildawsky’s discussion about the risk: “Acceptable risk is a matter of judgment and nowadays judgments differ. Between private, subjective perception and the public, physical science, there lie culture, a middle area of shared beliefs and values” (1982, p. 194). Despite the medical and aesthetic reasonings that deemed the dogs as vice on streets, there have always been certain

human groups, animal volunteers as today they call themselves, that exemplified an ethics of cohabitation that, to some extent, could escape the grip of the institutional order and keep the animals on streets, hinting at the incomplete match or even mismatch between the social requirements for classification and the institutions' intellectual framings.

As a speculative concluding remark, the relationship between the sacred and the justice can be helpful in further reflecting on this mismatch. Building on Durkheim's conceptualization of sacred, Douglas argues that institutions, in addition to controlling the memory of their members, setting the terms for self-knowledge and fixing identities, must also "secure the social edifice by sacralizing the principles of justice" (1986, p. 112). In this regard, justice is another point that sustains the legitimacy of the institutions with a "second-order naturalness [...] fabricated precisely for the purpose of justifying and stabilizing" them (Douglas, 1986, p. 114). Being founded on conventions, elements of justice have to be in line with the other general principles accepted by the society for justice is an "intellectual system" that is "designed to secure the coordination of a particular set of institutions" (Douglas, 1986, p. 114). Can the failed history of attempts at clearing the streets from dogs be interpreted through a failure in the coordination of the institutions that could not fuse the cultural conventions and the principles of justice with the ideals regarding the city and its changing manifestations on the spatial organization of space? Since the contestation is still ongoing and the legal arrangements regarding animal rights as the secular guarantor of justice have recurrently been a pressing agenda for the governments to this day, the notion of justice still stands as a ground to defend the conviviality of the streets of Istanbul.

CHAPTER 4

FROM STREET ANIMALS TO ODDKIN

Unpacking the various layers of meaning that people have long attached to the various animal bodies requires an attention paid to the social, political, and biological mediums through which animals are categorized, used and related to. Domestication and keeping pets have always been one of the most significant mediums through which the borders between non-human and human, wild and domestic, nature and culture have been mediated. In this regard, the change in the status of the domesticated animals -such as dogs being used for hunting and companionship or cats kept for fighting rodent populations- to a place where their presence, characters are appreciated, and they have been included into the household relations and ethics, has radically altered the formation of those borders. This shift resulting in pet keeping in its today's form is a phenomenon that dates back only to "the nineteenth century when enough people had the disposable resources to keep animals only for companionship" (DeMello, 2012, p. 152). This shift is associated with changes in the agricultural and industrial processes through which the assessment of animals over their use-values in our lives has disappeared and the subsequent gap being filled by pets (Ritvo, 1987); with the Victorian families' desire to teach children kindness and self-control through their relations with pets (Grier, 2006). As pets become a more active part of families and households, powerful pet industries have also emerged: From veterinary needs to the feeding habits, the pets' lives have been incorporated into the market economies. This new set of attitudes towards those particular animals have also meant a move from domestication to domination: Animals' bodies are now subject to specialized breeding, spaying/neutering operations, declawing, tail

docking, microchipping, etc. That does not necessarily mean that the relations with pet animals are totally determined by the anthropocentric concerns, having control over bodies of animals as yet another face of “man’s inherent insecurity and need to display his power to subdue the unruly forces of nature” (Tuan, 1984, p. 5), it rather is the point at which pets have kind of a hybrid status: they are both appreciated as individuals, family or friends and also are treated as possessions to have control over (Fox, 2006; Holmberg, 2015).

The hybrid status becomes even more complicated when it comes to the animals that populate cities. By transgressing spatial, legal and social boundaries through their very presences in unexpected places, the urban animals have quite often been subject to disputes over their living-areas or lives. Ranging from non-domesticated animals like mice, rats, pigeons, crows⁸ who do not commonly cooperate with human beings, to the companion animals like cats and dogs, the animals within places regarded as urban tend to complicate spatial formations in numerous ways. Although the construction of cities and homes are built on serious efforts at continuous exclusion and only tightly controlled inclusion and use of “natural elements”, the non-human populations within urban areas and the relations between those animals and the human beings, have always been an important dynamic that plays a role in the spatial arrangements and the distribution of inclusions and exclusions (Kaika, 2004). Analyzing the ways the house as a material entity is turned into a home, a place imbued with cultural meaning, Maria Kaika shows how natural elements are only selectively allowed into the houses only after

⁸ For many theorists who write on animal rights or human-animal relations, these animals are categorized as “liminal” animals emphasizing their spatial in-betweenness being both within the borders of the cities and even houses but still having little cooperation with humans. However, for I find it important to emphasize how companion street animals like cats and dogs occupy a socially liminal status, I decided not to use that category for the mice, rats crows, pigeons etc..

having gone through certain material and social transformations (2004). As the social construction of homes are built on ostracization of both certain social elements like crime, undesired others and natural elements like weather conditions, dust, sewage, any crisis on domestic networks, such as a dripping tap or a water cut, creates an anxiety produced by uncanny, the unfamiliar, the un-homely. Extending this frame of thinking to the social construction of cities, it is not hard to draw parallels between a home's and a city's uncanny elements. Despite varying ideals that the cities are built on, an appropriation and selective inclusion of natural elements with a premise based on hygiene and order can be seen as a common thread. The street animals, especially the cats and dogs who have been living on Istanbul's streets for many decades have often been regarded as the dirt in relation to shifting ideals regarding the city. They hybridize the cities by their presences that are not urbanite, domestic but not wild either. Although within the last two decades, their bodies have also become subject to series of biological operations including but not limited to neutering, vaccination and being microchipped, their spatial unboundedness gave their presence a new momentum regarding human-non-human relations within an urban setting.

There are few streets in Istanbul that are not populated by cats or dogs. More often than not, one walks passing by a sleeping dog, or a cat searching for food within a container of trash. However, their contested existences within the city do also produce some confined places of living, without human contact. The urban fringes or the municipalities' rehabilitation centers emerge as the spaces of exile for the non-human animal populations of Istanbul. A common way for the municipalities to manage their non-human animal populations is to just collect the animals mostly around dawn and dump them either to neighboring municipalities, or to the open lands (*arazi*) or forestry areas that are mostly next to highways in the urban fringes.

The *arazi çocukları* or *orman çocukları* (kids of the open-lands or forests) are regarded as waste by the municipalities as Sezai Ozan Zeybek emphasized in his article “İstanbul’un Yuttukları ve Kustukları: Köpekler ve Nesnelere Üzerinden bir İstanbul Analizi”:

Those are ‘unowned’ dogs ‘turned out into the street’, wandering here and there and at the edges of İstanbul ... Each and every one of them has become a surplus excluded by conceptions -cities, homes, lives- programmed to be more beautiful, cleaner, and more proper. (2014, p. 267).

In addition to the urban fringes that are used as a dumping ground for the municipalities, rehabilitation centers also emerge as spaces of confinement for the street animals of İstanbul. In this regard, the construction of a central animal rehabilitation center with the largest capacity ever initiated in Turkey is worthy of more elaboration. In this regard, the remaining part of this chapter will first focus on the tensions surrounding the construction of the Kısırkaya Animal Rehabilitation Center in 2015. Through the struggles built around the municipal level policies, I will then move to the animal volunteers and the specific form of care labor they exemplify on İstanbul’s streets.

4.1 Kısırkaya Animal Rehabilitation Center

My archival research on Hayırsızada event coincided with the construction and opening of the Kısırkaya Animal Rehabilitation Center by the İstanbul Metropolitan Municipality (*İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi- İBB*) in 2015, which has a capacity of hosting 5300 animals on a 70-hectare area. Kısırkaya is built on the northern shores of İstanbul in Sarıyer, close to the other mega-projects of the Justice and Development Party (*Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi – AKP*) like İstanbul Airport built on İstanbul’s northern forests and the third bridge on the Bosphorus. The region

Kısırkaya is built in was formerly populated mostly by villagers earning their living through farming and animal husbandry. The land it is built on had been legally defined as pastureland (*mera alanı*); in September 2014, the Law for the Pastures (4342 Sayılı Mera Kanunu, Madde 14, I bendi) changed in a way that enables the legal change in the purpose of the allocation of the areas after being approved by the office of the governor (Özgüner, 2015). Although the area is inappropriate for the construction of an animal rehabilitation center according to the standards stated in the Law for the Protection of Animals (5199 sayılı Hayvanları Koruma Kanunu), and despite the lawsuits against it, Kısırkaya has been operating since early 2016s.

Kısırkaya, in its materiality, appeared as a precursor for yet another large-scale extermination of street animals in a confined place devoid of human contact and thus conjured up the Hayırsızada event, enabled its haunting circulation, primarily among the animal volunteers. The center was claimed to be capacious enough to carry out 20.000 neutering operations a year and to host over five thousand animals. The sheer number was enough for the volunteers to foresee the potential misconducts that are to be expected as almost every municipality within Istanbul have historically been a part of scandalous news with regard to their mistreatment of street animals they host.⁹Moreover, even in the shelters with the capacity of hosting 200 animals, Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality has been unable to follow the neutering procedures and keep track of animals that have been taken for treatment (Özgüner, 2015; Yıldırım 2015).

The situation seems even darker when the profile of the workers in the rehabilitation centers is taken into account. Often, the municipality's shelters are

⁹ For two main examples that found large-scale media coverage see Arıgan, 2011 on Hasdal masscare, and "Sarıyer'de kafası kırılan köpeği hayvan dostları kurtardı"(2016) in T24.

regarded as places of exile for the workers who have repetitiously caused problems in their former cadres. With the fear of the potential bad-fame circulating through certain images taken inside the shelters, most of the rehabilitation centers do not even cooperate with the animal volunteers who would want to enter the center freely. Istanbul had witnessed numerous calamities regarding the animal shelters: Building on those cases that resulted in the death of the animals in large numbers, the animal volunteers and animal rights activists claim that a center with the scale of K1s1rkaya will mean nothing but ‘genocide’ for the street animals. They highlight several factors that will exacerbate the conditions of street animals if they are taken to K1s1rkaya. First, there is the problem regarding the transfer: Even today, in the process of transference to the rehabilitation centers that are relatively central in the city, the injured or ill animals are further traumatized in the process of being caught and transferred. Second, there is the problem regarding the post-operation processes which require a great amount of attention paid to each animal. In a rehabilitation center with that scale, such care labor seems almost impossible to realize. A factor contributing to this last dynamic is related to the location of the K1s1rkaya which makes it hard for any volunteer to be an active part of these processes. In addition to these human-related problems, there is a problem regarding the land on which K1s1rkaya is built. A few meters away from the shore, the land is high in water density and always windy, making the winter conditions unimaginable for both workers and the animals that will stay there.

Another key worrying factor was Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality’s intention to sign agreements with smaller municipalities in order to make K1s1rkaya a central rehabilitation center for Istanbul’s all animals. Carrying injured animals from municipalities located very far from Sarıyer had been worrisome for many animal

volunteers. Against all the informative campaigns animal volunteers created soon after the announcement of Kısırkaya's construction, and against the protests highlighting both the material qualities of Kısırkaya that is against the law and the organizational challenges that will diminish the well-being of the animals, Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality circulated its own claims in media. they claimed that the facility was totally in line with the animal welfare standards; there would be some cages for the mother and the baby dogs which have the underfloor heating technology, there were 'natural living environments' within the facility to host at most 20 dogs in each block and 20 operation tables, 20 veterinary surgeons to castrate 100 dogs a day. The contentions around the concept of shelter have been suspended by the claim that rehabilitation center will only temporarily host the animals for post-operative care and the only animals that will be permanently kept in those natural living environments will be the ones who can no longer live on streets due to illness or old age.

4.1.1 Legal arrangements

In 1987, Council of Europe had signed the European Convention for the Protection of Pet Animals to promote the welfare of pet animals and to ensure minimum standards for their treatment and protection. As of 2014, the treaty has been approved by 23 states, including Turkey. Turkey accepted this treaty which focuses on the quality of lives of pet animals as part of the Universal Declaration on Animal Welfare in 2003. The treaty's emphasis was primarily on the lives of pet animals and it regulated only the methods of killing stray animals.

The signing of this treaty had been followed by the act no 5199, Animal Protection Law which aims at "providing conditions for the welfare of the animals,

the proper and good treatment of them; protecting them from unjust treatment pain, suffering and torture” (law no 5199, clause 1). Formed in line with the European Convention for the Protection of Pet Animals, this law enforces administrative fines for the people who did not treat the animals in appropriate ways defined in the clauses. Another novelty of this law was its proposition for the institution of Provincial Board for the Protection of Animals (İl Hayvanları Koruma Kurulu) to supervise the implementations of the law. For the rules governing the implementation of the law, The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry also issued application regulations (Hayvanların Korunmasına Dair Uygulama Yönetmeliği) in 2006.

One of the most important openings the law provided was related to the animal volunteers: The law enables animal volunteers to apply for official status in protecting animals after going through a training process. With the official ID cards that define them as *Yerel hayvan koruma gönüllüsü* (The local animal protection volunteer,) they become one of the actors that are legally recognized in their care labor for the street animals. According to the *Hayvanların Korunmasına Dair Uygulama Yönetmeliği* (The application regulations of the animal protection law), the municipalities are responsible for cooperating with the *yerel hayvan koruma gönüllüleri* in the organization of the animals’ transference to the rehabilitation centers for neutering operations or treatment processes (Hayvanların Korunmasına Dair Uygulama Yönetmeliği, Madde 11). In addition to the cooperation with the volunteers, the law and its application regulations had secured the habitation of street animals as the neighborhoods they live in. It required from the municipalities to cooperate with animal protection volunteers in catching street animals, to neuter and vaccinate the animals and to return them to their habitation.

Despite what the law necessitates, almost all municipal animal rehabilitation centers already work as shelters that keep most of the animals permanently. Especially prior to local elections, some of the candidates do mobilize people with the promise that they will “solve” the street animal issue which means confining them to the shelters. Moreover, the IDs the Ministry assigned to the animal volunteers that recognize them as the *yerel hayvan koruma gönüllüsü* proved to be inefficient against the municipality workers’ attempts at lawlessly collecting the street animals.

The opening of Kısırkaya and the attempt at centralizing Istanbul’s animal rehabilitation centers signaled a policy change with regards to the animal related policies of the Metropolitan Municipality. The same actors who passed the law for the protection of animals in 2004 that defines the street animal’s habitation as the neighborhoods they live in, and imposes that after neutering and vaccinating animals they have to be returned to their neighborhoods, proposed a change in the law that reworks the definition of animal’s living areas a year prior to the opening of Kısırkaya. According to this proposed change, the living areas that the street animals will be returned to after being neutered and vaccinated could no longer be near mosques, schools, and hospitals (Akşit, 2017). In Istanbul’s composite urban distribution, finding streets that do not have either of those structures on them is nearly impossible. The contentions around this proposed change are still going on and the animal rights activists are working to ensure that the new regulations in this law will be in accordance with the suggestions they provide.

In the time period that this research is conducted, the number of associations that have taken an active role in the protests, the legal processes, and on streets for the care of the non-human animals was not many. Two leading organizations that

have struggled against Kısırkaya were *Yeryüzüne Özgürlük Derneği* (Freedom to Earth Association) that have been found in 2010 to struggle against the relatively unheard forms of discrimination and injustices,¹⁰ and *Dört Ayaklı Şehir* (Four-legged City), a muster of scholars and animal volunteers that tries to map the animal geographies of Istanbul. Another key association that played an important role in the protests against Kısırkaya was *Engelli Hayvanları Koruma ve Hayvan Hakları Derneği* (The Association for the Disabled Animals and Animal Rights.) A group of activists that left Turkey's most encompassing animal rights association, HAYTAP - The Federation for Animal Rights, formed HAYKONFED – The Confederation for the Rights of Animals in 2015 and have since played an important role in the struggle for the animal rights. Another key group that have been significant especially in the legal field have been the Platform for Animal Rights that became the *Hayvanlara Adalet Derneği* (Association for Justice for Animals.) Although there are many other animal rights associations in Istanbul, the key players in this field were mainly the ones listed above, with either larger capacities or more prominent leading figures.

Some of the informants I interviewed throughout the research were members of these associations. However, the claims and the practices of the main group of volunteers I generically refer to as animal volunteers, in accordance with the way they identify themselves, are not necessarily informed by the general frameworks of these associations. Despite being key in the legal struggles, the associations are not definitive in the formation of the ethics and praxis animal volunteers argue for and exemplify.

My research is necessarily informed by the municipal level policies and the legal struggle to improve the life conditions of animals on an institutional level.

¹⁰ See their website: <https://yeryuzuneozgurluk.wordpress.com/biz-kimiz/>

However, as is clear in the Hayırsızada Event and the following decades of extermination, there have always been fleeting moments that go beyond those legal, institutionalized and ordering structures. Those fleeting moments, I argue, are key in keeping the non-human animals on streets as they provide a brief glimpse of the cohabitation, ethics of living together that is not necessarily a result of willed adjacencies. Thus, what initially drove me towards this research was the animal volunteers' ethical endeavors in the face of the disruptive histories of human – non-human animal relationships in Istanbul. In this very convoluted scene of politics regarding the street animals of Istanbul, the animal volunteers try to find ways of living together, to establish the ethics of cohabitation, and to defend the animals against the destructive policies of the municipalities.

4.2 The animal volunteers

Throughout this research and since I have begun to care for the street animals in 2014, I have met and observed people who care about street animals like their own children and claim their presences against all kinds of threats; people who talk to animals without the fear of being stigmatized as insane; people who quit work or university education so as to dedicate their lives to the animals they care for; people who spend all their money on veterinary expenses for street animals; people who almost got prison sentences for committing a violent act against a person inflicting violence on a street animal; people who have been taken hostage, constantly threatened to death. After all, they were people mostly going through burn-out and compassion fatigue, but not giving up.

In addition to these people, my endeavors introduced me to new ways of relating to the space I have been living in. Numbers and locations of veterinaries I

have been to; neighborhoods that I have visited for helping people feed animals; municipalities and shelters in front of which we have protested cruelties regarding animals; feeding points on campus and in my neighborhood; some other feeding points in forestry areas near Sariyer and Beykoz; some others close to Izmit; kilograms of pet food ordered from Izmir; people I met in public transportations either for a quarrel about the smell or voices of the animals I have been carrying or for sharing an experience they have been through in relation to a street animal; and various other “things” have a place in both my mental maps and the way I map the city as a lived-place.

All these people, the places, and the maps are partially connected, conjugating one another, making possible a shared world for both animal volunteers and Istanbul’s street animals. An aspiration to rethink the relations within the city I live in through the non-human animals’ bodily presences, particularly of cats and dogs that populate almost every neighborhood in Istanbul for hundreds of years, drove me initially towards the group of people that make this possible, and the socialities they build around their care for the non-human.

The animal volunteers of Istanbul are a part of a large group that does not have a defining class or status affiliation. Although pet keeping can be regarded as a class-marker and is generally associated with the emergence of the middle-class, (DeMello, 2012; Grier, 2010) the care for the street animals is not necessarily related to one’s class affiliations, especially in Istanbul.¹¹ Although only one out of ten of

¹¹ Although it is beyond the scope of this thesis, a comparative analysis on the street animals’ life conditions and well-being in different neighborhoods that are mostly populated by different income groups is needed to show the relation between the two. Throughout the research and as part of my volunteering activities I visited neighborhoods with radically different outlooks, populated by different income groups. Although the ways street animals are treated do show differences, the frequency of finding animal volunteers that care for the street animals do not necessarily change accordingly.

my informants was a person who identified as male, and despite the classical portrayal of the animal volunteers being built on a female protagonist, the number of male volunteers I followed through social media, and had encounters with on streets was not insignificant. The groups of animal volunteers I observed primarily in the protests had different religious affiliations; next to the groups that were carrying banners with hadiths on the importance of the care for the animals on them, there were groups who evoked solely rationalized, this-worldly moral claims in their arguments against cruelties against animals. Six of my informants were over the age of 50, and it is arguable that it is easier for the middle-aged or retired people to care for the street animals as creating time for this demanding labor is relatively easier for them. All the informants and collaborators I conducted interviews with had at least ten animals that they cared for at home. Most of the animals they decided to look after at home have been either disabled or seriously ill.

For the animal volunteers who were employed at the time of the interview, a typical day would start approximately three hours before their work. After attending to the needs of the animals at home, the most important of these needs are making paralyzed cats urinate, and cleaning their most probably dirtied body parts, they start distributing food for the street animals on their way to work. One of the animal volunteers I follow on social media uses her lunch break for attending to the animals she looks after at home, especially for the paralyzed animals' needs. After their shift, they feed or re-check on the street animals, attend to the needs of the ill or disabled ones at home, and do cleaning at home for being able to deal with their high number of animals and their excrements. Being attentive to the street animals means being alert to the sick and injured ones on streets. Most often, the people who do not want to get their hands dirty with the animal mess but still feel a conscious disturbance

when they see an ill or injured animals do call animal volunteers for them to take care of the animal. If not by the other's calls, the animal volunteers are alerted by their attention to the street animals in detecting illnesses and injuries. Since most of the animal volunteers had been through traumatizing experiences in the municipalities' animal rehabilitation centers, and because the conditions of those centers generally exacerbate the situation of injured animals, most of the animal volunteers try to find some veterinaries that will accept the street animals for a lower cost. However, the sheer number of animals that volunteers care for, makes debts to the veterinary clinics a very burning issue for all of them. In addition to that, the costs of feeding large number of animals makes it almost impossible for all of the volunteers to sustain this care labor without the support of the other people. As a result, a significant part of the volunteers' time is spent on the efforts to raise funds through social media or their acquaintances, or both. All of my informants were also going to the forestry areas, generally on weekends, in the outskirts of the city, to feed the animals that municipalities dumped there. If not for the *arazi çocukları*, the dogs dumped to the open-lands, they were volunteering for the ones in the rehabilitation centers of their own municipalities, if they had good relations with the people in charge.

All of my collaborators in this research have been doing this for many years, despite all the social and material costs. One of the central questions that drove me towards this research was the question of "how come/why?" having witnessed the costs of such a devotion on their lives. To that end, understanding the mechanisms that informed and sustained their care labor emerged as a key concern in time.

4.3 The Weight of Witnessing

In historicizing their commitment to the care for the non-human, all of my informants emphasized the role of a key event, after which they could never feel the same about the animals on streets, in rehabilitation centers and in the forestry areas in urban fringes. They refer to a moment of recognition that made them reckon with a potentiality that often, already resided in them. That moment of recognition is not about understanding that which meets the eye. It is about the mobilization of a prior awareness flashing before one's eyes "effecting an instant change in our understanding that which is beheld" (Ghosh, 2018, p. 7). The situations in the rehabilitation centers and/or in urban fringes is a common moving point for the volunteers; the effects of the scenes they witness create an effect that cannot easily be peeled off. Taking Anna Tsing's conceptualization of the idea of contamination, I argue that the recognition is happening towards a contamination that change the animal volunteers' relations with the world, irrevocably. According to Tsing, "the evolution of our "selves" is already polluted by histories of the encounter; we are mixed up with others before we even begin any new collaboration . . . Contamination makes diversity" (2015, p. 29). Conceptualizing contamination as the transformations through encounters, Tsing emphasizes the role precarity and indeterminacy play in shifting assemblages that in the end, makes and remakes every being involved. The dirt, the horror, the fear and the cruelties witnessed within shelters and urban fringes do leak into the lives of animal volunteers and contaminate them.

The story of Mert, an upper-middle-class man in his thirties, is telling regarding the transformative power of moments of recognition and the contamination that follows in the rehabilitation centers. As a person who has always lived with pets,

and even horses in his childhood, he has always been fond of animals and sharing his life with them. However, when he found a special breed dog that was dumped onto the street and had a severe injury in his head either because of being beaten up or hit by a car, his whole trajectory for life has changed. He started living with that dog, taking full responsibility of a living being by-himself as a young man, for the first time in his life as he had just left his family house for university education. After their encounter, he became keen on fighting for the animals on streets and started volunteering at a shelter¹² nearby, and he soon found himself involved with a struggle that would alter his life from then on:

Then I started volunteering in that shelter. When I first stepped in, I screamed: “I am going to burn myself right here!” Because the governor of the municipality had promised the local people that he would gather all the dogs. Within the shelter that has a capacity of 150, there were 450 dogs and I can never forget that scene: the floor is what we call concrete, screed, the roof is sheet metal and the animals are burning there, between the two in the heat of August. And the scenes were horrible when they distribute food, they all bite each other. And I said I am going to burn myself. I have to get people to see this.

After the first wave of shock, he decided to do what he could for that shelter. It lasted two and a half years, but finally, he could create at least more acceptable conditions for the animals within that municipality. Then he became known around the animal-rights volunteers’ circles, and soon he started working with the most popular animal rights non-governmental organization in Turkey.

Another informant, Efsun, a woman in her thirties, narrates her own life story and her founding of an association for the animals with disabilities, in relation to her encounter with a dog five years ago during an *arazi beslemesi*, the feeding of animals

¹² Until the law no.5199 was passed in 2004, according to which healthy animals should only be caught, vaccinated and returned to their living areas, unless there was a health-related obstacle, the municipalities’ centers for keeping the animals were named and known popularly as shelters. With the law, the names of those centers has been turned into “rehabilitation centers” but little has changed regarding their working.

in the outskirts of the city where there is limited or no human habitation. The dog, later she called Bonnie and has been sharing her life with since then, was hit by a car, had crawled on the roadside for a few days and was about to die when she found him. When taken to a veterinary, Bonnie tried hard to hold on to life, and survived, only losing his right front leg. Despite the hardship dogs go through when they lose their front legs, in Efsun's words

he never pitied himself. He moved on. We (humans) would experience it as if the world has turned upside down; we would act as if we were miserable. He taught me to not to see disabilities as limits; I learned to see differences as worlds to be discovered, as a discovery for steps to take together.

Back then, she was going through a rehabilitation process for her drug addiction. She was feeling like an outcast, a trouble for her family and friends. She felt unwanted; she went through the feeling of disadvantaged, an excess for life, a burden for her environment. When she met Bonnie and witnessed the transformation he went through, her narrative about her six years of addiction has been radically altered. She learned not to pity herself anymore, with Bonnie she holds on to life as tight as him; Bonnie changed her state of mind and her everyday practices.

Then I tried hard to see the animals that people avert their gazes from. I started taking care of animals that people would even hardly look at. My friends kept on doing *arazi beslemesi*; they brought me the animals that have to go through a serious process of treatment. I took care of them at home.

Within a year, she found the association for the disabled animals and since then, she has been helping animals with disabilities from all around Turkey. When I met her for a second interview after three years, in 2017, she was living with numerous disabled cats, Bonnie and another dog she has recently found who was about to become blind within a few months. The number of animals was slightly more than the one in our first meeting. All of the animals were from different parts of Istanbul and Turkey including the eastern provinces like Mardin and Şırnak. Being also a

vegan and a person who wants to be true to the animals' capacity to act upon

humans, she narrated their life together as a shared experience:

When seen from the outside, it is as if I saved Bonnie as he has three legs. However, we have found and chose each other. When you look at the time he came into my life you will see that he found me when I was trying to end my addiction rehabilitation and wanted to belong to something. He got me out of the home. Before anything, he is my health! If I could leave behind the process of addiction, it's not the doctors or the medicine; it is thanks to Bonnie making me feel him saying 'you got me, I am your responsibility, and you have to take care of me.'

This feeling of being responsible for the witnessed events, for the well-being of animals, and speaking for them is a tension that is prevalent in all of the encounters I have been through during my engagement with the animal volunteers and the animal rights movements within Turkey. The moment of recognition they have been through creates an urgency to prevent further cruelties and be as much of help as possible to the animals. It is a moment of contamination where the animal volunteer's self gets entangled with the presence and reality of the non-human animal cared for. However, it is also a moment for the volunteers to evoke, to voice the cruelties witnessed with the hope of preventing them. The very same conditions that make animal volunteers affectively altered by the non-human's presence also make them confined to the tools of humanism; in their attempts at becoming one with the non-human animal, they end up being further humanized as part of the advocacy and the struggle they carry out for the non-human animals.

Criticizing the long tradition of regarding animals as symbols, allegories and figures to think through within religion, literature, and sciences, Derrida famously narrates his experience of being naked in front of the cat he shares the house with, emphasizing the importance of his awareness for being seen that caused an embarrassment in him that was hard to overcome. As highlighted in the first chapter, this recognition of the cat's gaze prior to himself seeing the cat makes Derrida regard

the cat's existence as something beyond the singularity of the category of the animal entails. Going beyond the questions of sentience or the capacity to think or voice ideas, Derrida emphasizes the ability to respond without falling to the trap of making the animal speak through his presence:

It would not be a matter of “giving speech back” to animals but perhaps of acceding to a thinking, however fabulous and chimerical it might be, that thinks the absence of the name and of the word otherwise, and as something other than a privation. (Derrida, 2008, p. 48)

Despite dedicating the entire chapter titled *The Animal That Therefore I am* to the criticism of Western literary and philosophical traditions that exert violence on animals primarily through the singular, abstract categorization of them as *the animal*, Derrida tells little about the cat that he had his encounters with. Aside from the opening incident that makes Derrida ashamed of his nudity, we do not hear about the particularities of that cat at all. This, according to Haraway, is a point where “Derrida failed a simple obligation of companion species; he did not become curious about what the cat might actually be doing, feeling, thinking, or perhaps making available to him in looking back at him that morning.” (2008, p. 20) These unasked queries lead Derrida to Bentham's famous question “to know whether animals can suffer” (Derrida 2008, p. 27) but for Haraway, there is much more promise in the questions “Can animals play? Or work? ... and what if the question of how animals engage *one another's gaze responsively* takes center stage for people?” (2008, p. 22, emphasis original).

Although I agree with Haraway's proposition to engage with non-human animals in all the ways they are capable and willing to engage with humans, her emphasis on the importance of play does not encompass the main framework of the relations between the street animals and humans. The volunteers' engagement with street animals inevitably incorporate elements of play but there are always priorities

that get in the way of having joyful encounters. All the informants I conducted interviews with mentioned how much their organization of daily life has changed in relation to their relations with non-human animals, especially after they started caring for street animals. Not all of those changes are pleasant and desirable ones. Almost all of the informants I spent time with, had to go through a process that significantly altered their life: Half of my informants had to change their jobs after they started for caring street animals; all of them lost some of their friends and family members since they could not find time to spare to socialize, four of them had either ongoing or concluded lawsuits related to their care labor for street animals; all of them talked about their discontent with or hatred towards humanity in general, mostly starting from their neighbors. After they become contaminated with the original experience of becoming alert to the non-human presence and their suffering or their needs in general, some parts of their previous selves get undone by that recognition, only to reconstruct a new self that experiences the world in a radically different way. In a way, a commitment to the care of the non-human becomes one of the mediums one becomes “*subject* to the world, rather than insisting on *being a subject* in it” (Dave, 2014, p. 439). That is not something that one always voluntarily commits to. For some of my informants the first encounters with non-human animals and feeling of concern for them was a familial inheritance; for some others it was a friend or a family member that has devoted a significant of their time and capacity to the well-being of the animals that made them aware about their conditions by drawing them towards that inevitable moment of irreversible witnessing.

With one of my informants whom I met on a bus while carrying a kitten to the veterinary and being harassed by the people who could not stand kitten’s constant cries, the significance of witnessing has gained a double weight. After approaching

me as a way of support against the people on the bus, she told me that she loves the animals to the extent that she even took the risk of going to jail for that. We kept chatting throughout the trip, generally about the challenges one faces when they commit to the care for the street animals. After that brief encounter, we exchanged numbers and later she became one of the informants I conducted an interview with. Her acting on the moment of her witnessing my situation with the cat has doubled through the story she told me about that incident that almost put her in jail. One day she saw a man torturing a street dog by kicking him constantly, that was the moment she “lost it”:

I couldn't tell you the entire story on the bus. Back then I was being beaten by my husband constantly. When I saw that dog being tortured by that man, I was that dog, I felt it. I lost it completely. Found a bottle, hit the man in the head. Everyone around me asked: “Is it worth for a *bitch* to risk your freedom?”¹³ I know I would do it again. But for that reason, I am now trying not to see the animals, trying to stay away. It is not possible though, just a couple of days ago I saw a photo of kids who cut the ears of a puppy. If I had seen them, I could not have possibly hold myself back.¹⁴

The affective experience of having gone through violence has charged Derya with an experience of almost becoming the dog; her unbearable life experience contributed to her intolerance towards the man who tortured the dog. In her witnessing, there is the intimate knowledge of feeling violated, resurfacing in her intolerance towards the violence against that particular dog.

Derrida cautions against the Cartesian emphasis on witnessing as a way both to form an autobiography, a testimony, a claim to truth and to say “I am” because I see by claiming that the animal that is seen does not see. In this case, Derrida argues,

¹³ The pejorative word used in Turkish was “it.”

¹⁴ This photograph of the puppy, bleeding in the head, while two teenagers were posing right next to her, holding the puppy's newly cut ears had been a widely circulating image that gained attention in the larger public. Since the teenagers were not of age to be penalized and harming animals are treated through the misdemeanor law in Turkey, the case had been closed without someone being charged for that crime.

the animal becomes a “spectacle for a specular subject who reflects his essence and who does not find, or does not want to find himself reflected in the image of the animal that he looks at but that doesn’t look at him” (2008, p. 82). In all of my informants’ testimonies, the opposition they pose between themselves and the others, the people who harm the non-human animals, is intimately linked to these moments of witnessing where the narration is mostly about their acts. The inevitability of the human-centered narration is a part of their claim to ethics and their demand for the well-being of the street animals. Despite this and however humanistic their ways of acting on the violence and injustices they witnessed as they construct a narrative around it that sustains the sense of the self as an animal volunteer, they still exemplify a form of care labor that challenges the normative visions of a good life. Through that care labor, the boundaries of possible ways of relating are expanded, in the singularity of the event, the social skin of the volunteer gets exfoliated (Povinelli, 2006). In a sense, volunteers’ witnessing and acting upon that experience becomes a medium for the precarity of the animal to get translated into or even spill over, to the precarity of the volunteers themselves. The witnessed event and volunteers’ act become mediums for the re-inscription of the boundary between the humans and the non-human animals as well as being a source of the contamination that challenges the exclusion of animals from ethical and social realms. In this sense, the aporia the word dispossession leads to can be illuminating.

For Butler and Athanasiou, dispossession “encompasses the constituted, preemptive losses that condition one’s being dispossessed (or letting oneself become dispossessed) by another: one is moved to the other and by the other – exposed to and affected by the other’s vulnerability” (2013, p. 1). For being inside the social norms of intelligibility, the subject submits itself to those norms to become

autonomous, but at the same time, the normalizing powers that define the norms of “cultural intelligibility and that regulate the distribution of vulnerability” disown and abject people (Butler & Athanasiou, 2013, p. 2). Thus, they argue, dispossession is both “a necessary condition of the subject’s survival” through the necessity of “attachment to the law that determines one’s disposition to alterity” and “a condition painfully imposed by the normative and normalizing violence that determines the terms of subjectivity, survival, and livability” (Butler and Athanasiou, 2013, p. 2). In the capacity of the witnessed event to get the volunteers’ certain parts undone, to dispossess them, there is also a chance “to be affected and to be prompted to act” (Butler and Athanasiou, 2013, p. 93). Thus, despite pointing at the limits of challenging the boundary between humans and the non-human animals, the precarity and the dispossession those events inflict upon the volunteers also challenge the anthropocentric basis for what makes a life valuable.

So far, I have focused on the weight of witnessing as one mechanisms that keeps animal volunteers going in their wearing endeavor to care for the non-human animals of Istanbul in different spaces. Rather than picturing this care labor as a set of selfless deeds some people perform, I tried to highlight the tensions this care labor and the witnessed realities bring about with regards to the notions regarding humanism, primarily the ability to speak (for). One of my primary concerns revolved around trying to come to terms with the tensions between the demands witnessing place on volunteers and the inevitable humanism of acting on what is being witnessed. In the remaining part of the chapter, I will focus on kinship as another theme that both highlights the inevitable humanism of the advocacy for the non-human animals and challenges the normative conception of making kin as well.

4.4 Making kin

In addition to witnessing, the claims over kinship is another Janus-faced aspect of the animal volunteers' relations to street animals. In the volunteers' strategic deployment of the kinship ties with regards to the street animals, in other words, in their act of claiming the street animals as their kin, mostly as their own children, they incorporate another humanistic standard by linking value of a life with the degree of connectedness. However, they also challenge the normative standards of making-kin by deploying a different species as their own children and sometimes prioritizing their needs over the needs of their own biological kin. Thus, kinship claims is an important part of the ethics the animal volunteers construct around the care labor they perform.

4.4.1 Ethics of care through non-humans

Throughout the 6-week long seminar series on the possible uses of Turkish Criminal and Misdemeanor law in cases of violence against animals (needless to say, any crime against animals is treated in light of the latter), I met many people, mostly women, going through rough times because of their dedication to the safety and well-being of the street animals. They were aiming to learn more about the Law for the Protection of Animals with the hope of using some clauses to prevent municipal workers from collecting animals when they did not have the right means or reasons to do so. The seminar also introduced ways of learning to use criminal law in cases of street animals being shot -not an unusual case especially in more forestry parts of Istanbul that municipalities use as an animal dumping ground- or poisoned -this can happen on varying scales, sometimes the municipalities do poison them in large numbers, sometimes an inhabitant from a neighborhood target a couple of animals.-

The law's detailed procedures deem municipalities responsible for vaccinating and neutering street animals and returning them to their living areas after providing post-operative care in shelters. As opposed to the pets who have been registered to their owners through a centralized national system, the street animals are legally categorized as "ownerless" and their living areas are defined as the neighborhoods they live in. Despite the law, the municipalities use their shelters as permanent spaces of confinement; understaffed and overpopulated, these facilities turn into what volunteers call "death camps" in their refusal to call those places shelters. Except for a couple, almost every municipality shelter in Istanbul had been a part of "scandalous news" for starving animals to death and causing them to eat each other's flesh or not being able to prevent a viral outbreak decimating almost all animals confined. Another common municipality method is to catch animals on streets, pile their sedated bodies into the trucks and dump them either to the neighboring municipality's streets or the forestry areas in the outskirts of the city.

Against all these methods, animal volunteers regularly feed the animals in their neighborhoods -and often also the ones in the forestry areas-, take them to the veterinary clinics when they are ill or hit by a car, organize vigils against municipality workers when they hear that an "operation" to catch animals will occur and even use their own bodies as shields against municipality workers' sedative needles blown to animals (with blowpipes).¹⁵ In addition to this physical labor they perform, the volunteers also have to carry out a form of animal advocacy against their neighbors who don't want animals on streets. In most cases, their commitment to the well-being of the animals that are not their own pets results in them being

¹⁵ Most of the municipality workers taking part in those operations have no background in veterinary medicine; although the law requires each operation to be guided by an on-site veterinarian, this never happens. For the municipalities, even the process of catching the animals can work as a way of killing them, the dose of the sedative or the ways animals are thrown to those trucks creating "casualties."

regarded as somehow “crazy.” In time, all forms of labor they put into the effort of caring for street animals contributes to their own exclusion from their communities. The costs of the food and the veterinary procedures in clinics result in huge debts; they always try to raise funds for the animals, sometimes selling their own cars and even houses to that end.

The question they face most often is “why?” Why sacrifice? Why not choose your own safety and even sanity over the well-being of those animals? Why even care for the non-human? As one of those animal volunteers myself, I knew from the start that the answer to that question of “why” had little to do with the most prevalent animal ethics theories: the most common two philosophical pathways in animal ethics have been deontologist and utilitarian animal ethics as exemplified by Tom Regan and Peter Singer in their respective orders as discussed in the first chapter. These mainstream approaches take a certain form of similarity with humans, such as the capacity for suffering, sentience, cognition and/or awareness, as a ground to argue for the inclusion of non-humans to our ethical and moral horizons. Their reason-based arguments “hinge primarily on the premises of correspondence and consistency for their persuasiveness” (Deckha, 2012, p. 528). As argued by many scholars in the feminist care tradition of animal ethics, these theories are grounded in the rule-based sameness logic, the privileging of reason and disavowal of care and affect (Adams and Donovan, 2007). As the animal volunteers’ labor of care translates sacrifice to promise, violence to claims of justice and difference to intimacy, I think they exemplify another form of ethical engagement with the world through their affectively charged care labor. To return to the question of “why?”, I would like to first emphasize that that “why” carries with it a set of assumptions about how life should be lived and which bodies care is owed to; and those

assumptions have to be challenged for an alternative, multispecies care ethics. What if, taking up Sara Ahmed's call to place hap (meaning chance), as in the happiness, back into care, we "reorient caring from normative visions of a good life" to haphazard assemblages of multispecies life? (Ahmed, 2017, p. 266). What if we dissociate caring from a being's happiness (including our own) for caring about what happens to that being?

Sara Ahmed argues that especially in the positive psychology and in many of today's narratives about a good life "the narrow scripts of happiness are precisely about the violence of the elimination of the hap" (2017, p. 265). The desire for happiness is realized at the cost of hap; putting hap back into happiness according to Ahmed, might mean many things including undoing ourselves, being fragile, being attuned to the fragility of things; being "willing to let happiness go; to allow anger, rage, or disappointment be how I am affected by a world" and being happy "when happiness happens" (Ahmed, 2017, p. 266) On an interpersonal level, replacing hap back into happiness means caring for somebody's happiness without expecting them to conform to or grow into a normative vision you have of a good life. This according to Ahmed, is to "reorientate caring from caring for someone's happiness to caring what happens to someone or something: caring about what happens, caring whatever happens" (2017, p. 266). This unavoidably means introducing anxiety to the practice of caring: To be care-ful according to Ahmed, means becoming anxious about their persistence in the future. That anxiety stems from the fragility of the beings or objects we care for. That fragility is distributed among bodies; not every being is equally fragile. And we are not equally caring for everything: "In time, we attend. To attend to something that has become more easily breakable is to attend to its history, with love, and with care" (Ahmed, 2017, p. 266).

In the non-pet-ness of street animals, the scripts about caring for non-humans gains a fragility grounded in the hap: the killability of street animals by municipalities if not enraged neighbors is a condition animal volunteers learn to live through. By giving themselves over to non-human animals that are not their “own” - that they do not confine to their homes or train to turn them into better companions or even to protect them from the imminent dangers of living on streets, the volunteers refuse to conform to the normative narratives about caring for an animal which are mostly defined through the pet-owner relationship. Thus, we can argue, they exemplify a form of hap care that is “not about letting an object go but holding on to an object by letting oneself go, giving oneself over to something that is not one’s own” (Ahmed, 2017, p. 266). And that object can be the stray animals they care for as their own children. In the precariousness of their stray lives, the stray animals’ “more breakable” state can lead volunteers to care for them sometimes over their own biological kinship ties, and over their own well-being. This is not a practice in search of a happy life; it contains many undoings within it. Their care labor, I argue, is an enactment of a two-fold ethical claim: first, through hap care that is anxious but still not regulatory/controlling, the volunteers create a ground on which animals can become their own advocates for their survival on streets through their relationships with the volunteers; and second, they argue for a space of cohabitation with animals beyond the confines of the home; reclaiming the streets as spaces of multispecies contestation and conviviality. Here further clarification is needed. Although I believe that the stray-ness/non-petness of the non-human animals on the streets is a constitutive part of building hap care that can also be fundamental for imagining alternative forms of kinship as I will try to sketch below, I do not want to echo the wolf/dog or feral/pet opposition Deleuze and Guattari evoke in their chapter on

becoming-animal in *A Thousand Plateaus* (1987, pp. 232-309). In their criticisms against the individuated Oedipal subject, they praise the multiplicity of the wolf-pack as opposed to the singularity of “family pets, sentimental Oedipal animals each with its own petty history which only invites regression” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 240). This dichotomy is figured primarily by opposing the wild to the domesticated. Although different animals are used as examples for figuring the anti-Oedipal project of becoming where patrilineal, hierarchical rule by genealogy is challenged, this critique on identity and singularity is carried out at the expense of the mundane potentialities the actual domesticated animals, and pets for that matter, have in themselves. As highlighted by Haraway in *When Species Meet* (2008), this approach disregards the messy ordinariness of relations with pets or other forms of companion species. It’s a philosophy that turns into an “incuriosity about animals and horror at the ordinariness of flesh, here covered by the alibi of an anti-Oedipal and anti-capitalist project” (p. 30). Siding with Haraway and other feminist theorists who work on animal ethics and affect, I believe in the fleshy, mundane, affective – not sublime- entanglements with the non-human world as a practice of becoming-with and/or becoming-worldly. This necessitates a re-engagement with and perhaps an undoing of the boundaries between the human and the animal/the non-human. To that end, unpacking the *anthropological universals* that are always fed by “the persistent presence of the same ‘question’: that of the difference between humanity and animality” (Balibar & Wallerstein, 1991, p. 56) emerges as the initial step. Blurring the cartesian boundaries between those two categories in not only theoretical abstractions but also in everyday entanglements means discussing the relations of power and ethics without posing them as polar opposites. This necessitates engaging with pets, stray animals and wild/feral animals not through the

pre-given categories to identify their worth in our projects, but through attention paid to how power works in our relations with each, what kinds of alliances are formed and which ones of those alliances can lead to transformative encounters.

4.3.2 Linking kin and kind: Care and kinship revisited

Up to this point, my argument echoes Maria Puig de la Bellacasa's work on permaculture in her book *Matters of Care* (2017) where permaculture as an alternative collective ecological imagination emerges as a form of care, grounding relational ethics that is embedded in our ordinary engagements with the more-than-human world. The hap care that I argue animal volunteers exemplify resonate with the generic conceptualization of care Puig de la Bellacasa uses. Citing Tronto she takes care as "everything that *we* do to maintain, continue, and repair '*our* world'"—our bodies, *our selves*, and our environment—"so that we can live in it as well as possible in a complex, life-sustaining web" (2017, p. 217). This generic care blurs the line between every day ethics and public politics when it manifests itself in the spatial claims the animal volunteers make for streets as homes to those animals. Relations with street animals is slightly different than Puig de la Bellacasa's experiences in permaculture, as here mutuality and response-ability (in a Harawayian sense where she breaks the word into two as response and ability in an effort to emphasize the connotations of being in response¹⁶) is not necessarily informed by a sense of interdependency: more often than not, the efforts of bridging ethical claims with public politics against municipalities' lethal policies do result in the diminishing well-being of the animal volunteers themselves. This diminishment further accentuates the question of "why?". Here the volunteers deliberately use the socially

¹⁶ Haraway argues that "responsibility is a relationship crafted in intra-action through which entities, subjects and objects come into being." (2008, p. 71)

contingent character of the kinship and its capacity to be strategically deployed as a ground for an ethical claim to a different spatial and ethical engagement with the lived-world.

For Haraway, a multispecies flourishing that will include humans in the face of Anthropocene/Capitalocene – being taken as a boundary event throughout which *refugia*, or in other words, places to take refuge is destroyed as suggested by Anna Tsing (2015)- can maybe happen through “intense commitment and collaborative work and play with other terrans”(Haraway, 2016, p. 101). To this end, Haraway proposes, it is time for “feminists [to] exercise leadership in imagination, theory, and action” in unraveling “the ties of both genealogy and kin, and kin and species” (Haraway, 2016, p. 102). What Haraway calls “oddkin” is kinship as a non-genealogical, non-anthropocentric kin-making practice that will make “persons, not necessarily as individuals or as humans” (Haraway, 2016, p. 103). Being fully aware of the intricacies of reproductive politics, Haraway engages with her slogan “Make kin, not babies!” only through a feminist call to find ways of decolonizing this: “Feminists of our time have been leaders in unraveling the supposed natural necessity of ties between sex and gender, race and sex, race and nation, class and race, gender and morphology, sex and reproduction, and reproduction and composing persons” (Haraway, 2016, p. 102). This is a feminist call to engage with kin beyond the generic kinship with all animals as well as beyond logical blood relations. It is a way of emphasizing relatedness over relatives and echoing the questions Kath Weston evoked in her book “Families We Choose” (1991): Is it possible to think of relatedness outside the reified boxes of (biological) kinship? What happens when we attend to not what makes a relative but to what happens when we are related, what

does belonging together mean? After all, kinship, if it exists, is because it is making relations.

The claim over kinship with stray animals is a common strategy animal volunteers use when they are asked to justify their commitments to street animals. As an alternative possibility for relating, volunteers use kinship to legitimize their care labor that sometimes happens at the expense of potential care labor they are expected to spare for themselves or their biological kin, especially their children. Would volunteers' claims mean extending the scope of kinship in a way to include non-human animals (beyond pets and the ones we share genetic affinities with) or would it mean altering and perhaps queering the kinship altogether? Here I think we need to invite speculative futures: in the same book *Staying with the trouble* Haraway argues

kin is a wild category that all sorts of people do their best to domesticate. Making kin as oddkin rather than, or at least in addition to, godkin and genealogical and biogenetic family troubles important matters, like to whom one is actually responsible. (2016, p. 2)

Simply extending the scope of kinship to include non-humans in it would mean keeping the moral prescriptions associated with it intact; thus, not challenging the norms about relating, caring and being responsible. Making oddkin as Haraway emphasizes, on the contrary, requires unexpected collaborations and combinations and perhaps imagining of kin as an interspecies relationship.¹⁷ Thinking about and with animals beyond pet-kin and more in lines of stray in the sense that evokes hap, non-directionality and oddkin can be a ground for creating spaces and relations where we all take refuge. And in the face of different scales of catastrophes we all are going through, we need those refugia, perhaps more than ever.

¹⁷ Haraway builds her contention on Anna Tsing's claim in her book *Unruly Edges* that human nature is a multispecies relationship. (2012)

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

This research has started with a question of causality: By observing some people's lives that centers on the care for the non-human counterparts of Istanbul, often despite all the material and emotional costs, I tried to understand the reasons behind the urge to defend the non-human and the struggle to keep them on streets. As I delved into the field and reflected on the question of why, "why care for the non-human animals?", I came up with certain normative assumptions behind that question that try to limit the number and the kind of bodies care is owed to. As a result, I tried to highlight the infrastructures of and the histories that feed those normative assumptions as they shift according to the different formations of the social. The attempt at unpacking those normative assumptions led this research towards two main fields: A new set of social theories that try to decenter the human and rework the theories regarding the formation of the social and the analysis of certain moments in Istanbul's multispecies histories to understand the ever-shifting nature of human – non-human animal socialities on streets.

For the first, I engaged with the new theories that seek to characterize and name the current critical moment to account for the non-human in both philosophical and social accounts. Attending to the mainstream Western philosophical tradition and its engagement with the question of the non-human, I tried to highlight the moments that culminated in today's discussions around multispecies socialities, the relevance of the non-humans in the formation of the social, and the need to rework not only the framework but also the tools of the social sciences in order to account for the complexity of lived world. Despite the human exceptionalism that blinds our

analyses which makes the social formation appear as the human endeavor that determines the non-humans' lives, I argue that the alterities provided by the messy relationships between humans and other animals provide an opening to question that premise. Those alterities bring forth questions regarding ethics. If we start with the premise that human – non-human relations are an essential dynamic in the formation of the social and that the social is a process of multispecies becoming, attending to those relations and accounting for the human – non-human animal relations with and through ontological differences emerge as a difficult task. On this, I argued for an ethics that is not based on the universalized normative principles that generally express humanistic concerns in their engagement with the non-human. Rather, what is argued for emerges as a relational, horizontal ethics that is based on the practice of arranging one's own affective community in a way that would enhance the capacities and the flourishing of the beings involved.

For the second, I started with the most calamitous moment of human – non-human animal socialities in Istanbul's history. The Hayırsızada event, throughout which 80.000 dogs were exiled to a rocky, deserted island in Marmara sea, only to die from hunger and thirst, to drown while trying to swim to the passing boats or ships, has been the key incident around which the social and spatial dynamics of human – non-human animal socialities in early 20th Century have taken shape. In order to go beyond the functionalist and culturalist accounts that explain the human-dog relationships in Istanbul prior to Hayırsızada, I engaged with the role spatial distribution played in the changing dynamics of that relationship. I concluded that the change in the spatial distribution through a change in the normative ordering of the world has affected the contentions with regards to the non-human presences on streets: The ideal to create and sustain a modernized city-scape, deemed non-human

counterparts unwanted elements of the city. However, this new order did not necessarily find its reverberation amongst the inhabitants of Istanbul; despite a century-long, large-scale attempts at eradicating street animals, the non-human animals found their ways to survive and populate the streets. This, I argued, is related to the care labor that has always been performed by certain volunteers who, especially today, play a crucial role in the defense of non-human animals as the rightful inhabitants of the city. This demanding task to care for the non-human animals on streets is further aggravated by the municipal level policies to eradicate the street animals through the same mechanisms employed throughout the 20th Century. In addition to the direct ways of killing the non-human animals, exiling them to death in the outskirts of the city is another method that echoes the Hayırsızada event. However, the animal volunteers of Istanbul and their embodied, relational ethical claims do complicate this history: I argue that the animal volunteers of Istanbul do employ a form of care ethics that challenges normative assumptions regarding the bodies care is owed to. Despite being overly psychologized by the public – most of the animal volunteers are regarded as psychologically unstable,- the animal volunteers’ efforts, I argue, exemplify a social and ethical claim that is strengthened through their strategic deployment of the concept of kinship.

As a concluding remark, I would like to engage with the larger implications of multispecies kin-making beyond biological and genetic ties. The question of a multispecies ethics has increasingly become urgent lately as the planetary effects of anthropogenic processes have become a source of anxiety to the extent that it is used to alter the name of the geological epoch we are in. Anthropocene, as many proponents of the need to rework the ways of inhabiting the world call this era, is defined as the epoch in which human effects have become a geological force,

affecting the working of geological factors in significant, irreversible and mostly damaging ways (Bonneuil and Fressoz 2016; Schmidt, Brown and Orr 2016).

Humans have always been effecting the planet in transformative ways, but according to Haraway, “the issues about naming relevant to the Anthropocene, Plantationocene, or Capitalocene¹⁸ have to do with scale, rate/speed, synchronicity, and complexity;” it marks a moment when “the changes in degree becomes changes in kind” (2016, p. 99). Taking the Anthropocene as a boundary event rather than an epoch, Haraway’s take on the Anthropocene builds primarily on Anna Tsing’s argument that “the Holocene was the long period when refugia, places of refuge, still existed, even abounded, to sustain reworlding in rich cultural and biological diversity” (Haraway, 2016, p. 100). The destruction of the refugia is what marks the Anthropocene different and “our job is to make the Anthropocene as short/thin as possible and to cultivate with each other in every way imaginable epochs to come that can replenish refuge” (Haraway, 2016, p. 100).

For Haraway, the possibility for the “flourishing of multispecies assemblages that include people” can be accomplished only “with intense commitment and collaborative work and play with other terrans” (Haraway, 2016, p. 101). The most significant aspect of this collaborative work for Haraway is making kin. As kin making is making persons, not necessarily human beings, stretching the imaginations with regard to the kin-making practices can make kinship something beyond genealogical or ancestral ties. The earthly kinship ties, the fact that “all critters share

¹⁸ Haraway suggests that we should use these terms interchangeably as Anthropocene alone signals another form of human exceptionalism that disregards the relational formation of exploitative and damaging effects of the capitalism and plantation systems. Haraway defines Plantationocene as the systemic practices of producing radical simplification of biodiverse and culturally diverse systems and relocating them elsewhere; reconfiguring them in a way that force life to extract produce value. Arguing that plantations are not the reality of the past and an important contribution to the climatic catastrophes originates from the exploitative monocrop (palm) economies of today, Haraway proposes that Plantationocene and Capitalocene can be used to emphasize this extractive economic webs that humans have been a formative part of. (2016, pp. 99-103)

a common “flesh,” laterally, semiotically, and genealogically” forms the basis for that stretch to happen (Haraway, 2016, p. 103). On “the edge of extinction” which is no longer a metaphor for many species, and on the verge of experiencing “system collapse”, the novel problems emerging in the Anthropocene require a close examination of ethical precepts and reworking of ways of relating to the world (Haraway, 2016, p. 102). Kin making with non-human species and working for an ethics of care that emphasizes the importance of “becoming-with, composing-with the earth-bound¹⁹” can be an essential part of that imaginary. The indeterminacies imposed on the world through the unpredictable futures Anthropocene will bring about might be a place to start thinking about multispecies aggregates. “In our interacting trajectories within and beyond the individual, within and beyond the species, we make patterns, ecosystems, and worlds;” (Tsing, 2014, p. 223) attending to those might be a starting point for the formation of new socialities that go beyond the dichotomies between progress and ruin, supernaturalism and subnaturalism, human and animal.

¹⁹ The term is one among many Haraway uses to denote all the life-forms. Some alternatives used in the book *Staying with the trouble* (Haraway, 2016) include “terrans” and “chthonic ones” to signal the relatedness and earth-boundedness of the life forms.

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