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POWER AND ANIMALS: A FOUCAULDIAN THEME IN CRITICAL ANIMAL STUDIES

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Abstract. A critical view on the relationships between humans and animals has become salient both within the public sphere and in academic discussions. An innovative research field – critical animal studies – has emerged to address the related issues. It employs a variety of tools, including theoretical constructs suggested by Michel Foucault. This article focuses on the potential of the Foucauldian tradition to analyze power in human – animal interactions. I review critical research to describe various practices of power – external, internalized, and constitutive – and the proposals related to domination. How animals are treated in different contexts exhibits relations of power. This comprises control and termination, training and shaping, management and biopolitical regulation. Moreover, humans' technologies of self-regulation manifest themselves in the approach to animals and the natural environment more broadly. It is indicated that to address the issue of power in human – animal interactions, recognizing the constructed nature of ontological boundaries is crucial, as well as acknowledging that power runs both within and across those frontiers. The critical approach might draw attention to the interconnectedness and interdependency of humans and nonhumans, as well as to their shared destiny in terms of their positions in the matrixes of domination and control. Whether anthropocentric or posthuman, future social research on animals must account for the critical tradition, social dialogue, and social activism.

Key words: agency, animal rights, discipline, natural environment, regulation.

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ВЛАСТЬ И ЖИВОТНЫЕ: ФУКАЛЬДИАНСКАЯ ТЕМА В КРИТИЧЕСКИХ ИССЛЕДОВАНИЯХ ЖИВОТНЫХ

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Аннотация. Критический взгляд на отношения между людьми и животными становится все более значимым как в общественном пространстве, так и в академических дискуссиях. Для обращения к данной проблематике возникла инновационная область знания – критические исследования животных. Здесь используются различные теоретические инструменты, в том числе конструкции, предложенные Мишелем Фуко. Данная статья фокусируется на потенциале традиции Фуко в анализе власти во взаимодействиях человека и животного. Я делаю обзор критических исследований с целью описать практики власти – *внешние*, *внутренние* и *конститутивные* – и соответствующие возможности противодействия. Как показано, практики обращения с животными в различных контекстах демонстрируют властные отношения. Сюда входят контроль и истребление, обучение и формирование, управление и биополитическое регулирование. Более того, человеческие технологии саморегуляции проявились в более широком подходе к животным и окружающей среде. В статье делается вывод о том, что для решения проблемы власти во взаимодействиях человека и животных решающее значение имеет признание сконструированной природы онтологических границ, а также признание того, что власть действует как внутри, так и поверх этих границ. Критический подход может привлечь внимание к взаимосвязанности и взаимозависимости человека и нечеловека, а также к их общей

судьбе с точки зрения позиционирования в рамках матриц доминирования и контроля. Будущие социальные исследования животных, будь то антропоцентрические или постчеловеческие, должны учитывать критические традиции, социальный диалог и социальный активизм.

Ключевые слова: агентность, права животных, дисциплина, окружающая среда, управление.

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Introduction

During the last decades, debates have addressed the living conditions and the destiny of animals in the world fashioned by the interests of humans. Activist organizations all around the globe advocate for reshaping the treatment of agricultural and other animals. Some academic researchers have joined the debate, providing shreds of empirical evidence for the need for social-political change. Critical animal studies is an innovative transdisciplinary academic field that arose from social activism and dissatisfaction with the traditional approaches to animal research [Pedersen 2011]. At the turn of the 21st century, scholars launched productive efforts to address issues of the hierarchization of species living on the Earth and the oppression and exploitation of some animals by human society [The Institute for Critical Animal Studies web]. To institutionalize this initiative, a voluntary academic organization, the Institute for Critical Animal Studies, was established in 2001. Moreover, an open-source academic organ – The Journal for Critical Animal Studies – launched the related publishing activity. Critical scholarship employs a wide spectrum of theoretical traditions, from existentialism to poststructuralism.

As a starting point of the discussion, critical commentators demonstrate a dualistic nature of the notion of human. From the time of Aristotle, the borders between "vegetative life" and "organic life," and between humans and animals, have been considered as socially constructed and therefore changeable [Agamben 2004, 14-15]. In this respect, Agamben [Agamben 2004] hypothesized the existence of a specific discursive apparatus – *anthropological machine* – that works continuously to (re)define the human / animal division to construct a particular mode of a human subject. Both humanity (relevant and accepted features) and animality (alien and inappropriate features) are identified and differentiated as immanent to the human being, with a flexible line separating the two elements: "It is possible to oppose man to other living things, and at the same time to organize the complex… economy of relations between men and animals, only because something like an animal life has been separated within man, only because his distance and proximity to the animal have been measured and recognized first of all in the closest and most intimate place" [Agamben 2004, 15-16]. Operation of the anthropological machine presupposes there is interplay between external and internal and inclusion and exclusion. This allows the abjection (animalization) or subjectivation (humanization) of living beings. There is a "zone of exception" where life is unconditionally exposed to arbitrary treatment and even violence [Agamben 2004; Chrulew 2012]. Here, life turns into bare life, a mere biological existence stripped of any legal protection. A concentration camp is a typical "exception," which, as Agamben [Agamben 1998] argued, became a model for contemporary society at large.

Similarly, for Foucault, animalization is a discursive tool that helps to justify the oppression of vulnerable individuals and collectives [Chrulew, Wadiwel (eds.) 2017]. Furthermore, the idea of animals was brought into being to define human ontology more broadly. With the rise of scientific knowledge in early modernity, as Foucault showed, animality had become metaphorically associated with the phenomenon of death and the overall sense of *finitude*. Thus, even if a man had always served as a model of evaluating, signifying, and organizing animals as species, his (self)definition was dramatically interwoven with the rhetorical construction of nonhumans [Chrulew, Wadiwel (eds.) 2017]. The latent biologism / zoologism of anthropocentric political doctrine [Chrulew 2012] finds its culmination in biopolitics, a specific mode of power aimed at regulating the human population as a collective of living beings defined by the organic processes of procreation, health dynamics, and wellbeing [Foucault 2003].

Foucault's theoretical constructs frequently inspire critical animal research. This article

systematically approaches critical writings on power and animals to show the usefulness of the Foucauldian theoretical framework. It also illustrates how power technologies applied to animals and humans can merge and reinforce each other in an all-embracing project of population management. The paper proceeds with a review of critical articles that address various practices of power, followed by a discussion on the alternatives to domination.

Power and animals

While Foucault addressed primarily human societies, scholars associated with critical animal studies use the notion of power to explain human politics and practices toward animals [Taylor, 2013]. Almost all modes of power described by Foucault are found in interpretations of human – nonhuman interactions. Palmer [Palmer 2001] translated those different power forms into three types of practices – *external*, *internalized*, and *constitutive* – to describe human – animal relationships more specifically. Next, I review the studies that analyze the variety of power exercises. Animals appear in such studies as individual creatures, distinctive populations, and as a part of the environment. Moreover, critical scholarship showed how different power forms and technologies interweave both within and across the species' borderline.

External practices of power

External practices of power are defined as "practices which affect the external bodies and/or circumstances of animals" [Palmer 2001, 355]. These mainly correspond with the exercise of sovereign power that manifests itself in a so-called "war against animals" [Wadiwel 2015].

With urban animals, warfare involves domination of a specific area [Taylor 2013]. In line with Foucault's view on sovereign power, urbanization is interpreted as a colonization of natural environments accompanied by "dispossession, negotiation, transformation, and resistance" (cited by: [Palmer 2003, 48]). Colonization shapes human – animal relationships: "resident native animals" are exterminated, displaced, and confined in the name of protection, and their natural habitat is destroyed or degraded. In this way, urban life oppresses and dominates nonhuman species of different kinds. Wild bodies are seen as disease transmitters and a threat to humans and their possessions. They are potential transgressors of "widely accepted Western human 'rules' about purity and contamination" [Palmer 2003, 52]. Urban animals are defined as "scavengers," "pests" [Palmer 2003, 49], or a "nuisance" [Michelfelder 2003, 82]. Being suppressed, animal life in urban areas is frequently unseen. When it appears in public spaces, wild urban animals are perceived as "illegal aliens who do not speak the local language and never will" [Michelfelder 2003, 82]. Rats and predators are treated accordingly. They are disabled and removed. Other species might enjoy a more sophisticated reception. Squirrels typically serve an aesthetic function, so they are tolerated in cities. However, they become dependent on humans for survival, and self-subjecting to the established order [Palmer 2003].

In the sphere of agricultural industries, slaughterhouses resemble Agamben's model of a camp in which animal life is fundamentality a bare life exposed to death [Agamben 1998]. Thus, already in 1990s, US-based reports showed poor life conditions of industrial farm animals. As described by one commentator, "on a sloping wire floor (sloping so the eggs roll down, wire so the dung drops through) the birds live for a year or 18 months while artificial lighting and temperature conditions combine with drugs in their food to squeeze the maximum number of eggs out of them" (cited by: [Wadiwel 2015, 84]). A hundred million pigs, calves, cows, sheep, as well as billions of chickens, are reported slaughtered annually. As the human population increases, these numbers are expected only to rise [Wadiwel 2015]. Thus, the exercise of sovereign power on animals is widespread in contemporary consumerist economy. As I will further demonstrate, sovereignty is frequently combined with other manifestations of dominance.

Internalized practices of power

Internalized practices "affect and construct the subjectivity of animals" [Palmer 2001, 355]. In Foucauldian terms, such practices correspond with disciplinary power, and disciplinary power focuses on producing *docile bodies* through

control, training, and "optimization" [Palmer 2001, 352; Chrulew, Wadiwel (eds.) 2017]. Disciplinary power manifests itself in the treatment of domesticated animals and pets, industrial farming, and the captivity and preservation of wild animals.

Dressage is a typical example of discipline – a power form that concerns an individual body [Chrulew, Wadiwel (eds.) 2017]. Dressage horses must adjust to regular body-centered procedures and treatments, such as cleaning, feeding, and training. Training shapes the horse's body and performance following certain standard expectations. Moreover, discipline addresses the overall attitude of the horse since the body's value is directly associated with compliance: "The body becomes 'more obedient as it becomes more useful' and 'less useful if less obedient' " (cited by: [Chrulew, Wadiwel (eds.) 2017, 139]). Here is the moment where breeding comes into play. The rise of breeding in the 17th and 18th centuries reflected a historical change in the role of horses in Western societies. A shift in use of horses from the sphere of military affairs to agriculture and construction work required new physical and behavioral characteristics. It is not a coincidence that the French origin of the word "dressage" connotes "making proper" or "improve" [Chrulew, Wadiwel (eds.) 2017, 141].

While Foucault initially insisted on a separation between sovereignty and discipline, it became clear that those power forms coexist and can reinforce one another [Foucault 2003]. Palmer [Palmer 2001] analyzes discipline and sovereignty in the treatment of pets with a colorful example of a cat, Yuri, whose behavior is disciplined and whose body is maintained to satisfy certain standards and modified to prevent transgressions of the established order. Yuri's destiny makes it clear that discipline and the exercise of the owner's sovereignty interweave. "He returns, some hours later, asleep and castrated; when he wakes up he no longer urinates on the furniture; his behaviour is calmer, less aggressive, he sleeps more, sits on his owner's lap more. The external practices of castration have changed his behaviour; now he fits more comfortably into his owner's environment and disciplinary regime… Ultimately, if the power play becomes too difficult, or Yuri's presence becomes too time-consuming or expensive, his owner can have him "put to sleep" or (less euphemistically) killed – a more final end to power relations" [Palmer 2001, 357-358].

Neutering is not only the practice of sterilization applied to male domestic animals and pets, but a discursive event that establishes a specific order of signification [Palmer 2001]. Palmer [Palmer 2001] notes that apart from producing desirable behavior, "desexualization" of animals eliminates "evidence of animal sexuality from the domestic environment: animal sexuality which might be disturbing for many reasons (a constant reminder of that which is kept hidden in human relationships; a reminder that a pet is an adult mammal rather than an infant; the cause of transgressive displays or behaviors)" [Palmer 2001, 357].

Wild animals can be subjected to disciplinary power as well. Rinfret [2009] developed the related discussion of the reintroduction of wild spices, including animals and birds. In introductory programs, nature is redefined in utilitarian terms, as "a system of systems that can be dismantled, redesigned, and assembled anew to produce its many resources efficiently and in adequate amounts when and where needed in the modern marketplace" (cited by: [Rinfret 2009, 573]). Wild animals are part of this economy, included in circulation through various interventionist technologies, such as training, monitoring, and assisting migration. Such "species management" aims at "controlling the behaviors of animals to preserve, or rather restructure, what humans consider to be their wildness" [Rinfret 2009, 576]. As an example, the reintroduction of whooping cranes in the US took place because of a notable decline in the local population. Cranes born in captivity are going through certain programs, preparing for survival in a natural context. The birds are trained to recognize the sound of an airplane and follow it, exploring a "natural" migration track. In another case, condors that were released from the zoo got GPS devices on their wings, allowing daily monitoring of the birds. The docile bodies of endangered animals are supposed to be visible and compliant with scientific schemes aimed at facilitating incorporation into or occasionally protection from the natural environment. Eventually, "[t]he reintroduction efforts of these species induce constructed and

disciplined behavior, creating not a wild animal, but a managed one" [Rinfret 2009, 576].

Constitutive practices of power

Constitutive practices "affect the biological constitution and form of animals" [Palmer 2001, 354]. They involve breeding, genetic alteration, and other ways to optimize an animal body. Palmer [Palmer 2001] links constitutive practices to the notion of biopower invented by Foucault [Foucault 2003] to signify a mode of domination focused on managing the population at the biological level. Biopower is productive since it generates new identities, practices, and discourse, and it is futuristic being concerned with future hazards to be addressed in the present [Palmer 2001]. It may employ methods of previous epochs – disciplinary and coercive – striving to maintain homeostasis of the system [Foucault 2003].

Biopower is typically exercised on animals [Chrulew, Wadiwel (eds.) 2017, 183] in a form of "scientifically-based care" [Chrulew 2011, 144]. Scientific management of animal life is clearly observed in zoological gardens and natural reserves as feeding, protection, medical treatment, and mating. "They [animals] receive medical care to prevent and cure injury and disease. They are unburdened by stress and trained to perform natural behaviors. Demanding only the sacrifice of freedom, the zoo is an apparatus for the production of paradise" [Chrulew 2011, 145]. The purpose is to ensure the wellbeing and survival of endangered species, but it involves constant surveillance, exposure to spectators, disciplining, breeding experiments, and the risk of being euthanized if the animals do not satisfy the owners' expectations. Eventually, the paradise turns into bare life, highly dependent on people's interests and services. Zoos produce impaired animal bodies, modified and much less fit to survive on their own, and they also produce an artificial version of nature, manipulated to satisfy practical and ideological human objectives. Thus, breeding – "controlled reproduction" [Srinivasan 2013, 113] – enables the management and exploitation of animals in domains of labor or entertainment. As Hansen [Chrulew, Wadiwel (eds.) 2017] demonstrated with horse dressage, "high-priced" female horses are subjected to a life of being reproductive machines: "Broodmares, if they are able to produce talented prospects on a regular basis, stay at their job their entire lives, often until their middle age, with one pregnancy after another, each offspring removed after a short period of time" [Chrulew, Wadiwel (eds.) 2017, 133]. Horses that do not provide good results for dressage are sold for agricultural or private needs.

Discourses and rationalities enable constitutive practices of power [Miller, Rose 1990]. Classification and documentation provide a basis for the related politics [Srinivasan 2013; Taylor 2013]. Biopower works by differentiating specific groups within the population to be treated differently [Srinivasan 2013]. Srinivasan explored the effects of the rhetorical construction of dogs in the UK and Indian legislation on related policies. The discourses on dogs and their treatment are shaped by the animals' status in relation to humans. The UK legislation perceives dogs exclusively as a type of human possession; ownerless animals are defined as illegitimate, incapable of living a "good life," and thus subjects for euthanasia. In this way, the "truth discourse" constructs a connection between homelessness, wellbeing, and life value. It is the Agamben mode of biopolitics expressed in the formula "live well or die" [Srinivasan 2013, 106]. In contrast, Indian legislation, initially tailored after the British model, recognizes the possibility of the existence of stray animals beyond humans' needs, and it establishes roles ("pets," "working animals," or "experimental objects in laboratories"). This allows stray dogs to be seen in urban public places without strict control and violence from the side of the authorities.

Therapeutic rhetoric is a feature of biopower that found conceptualization in the notion of *pastoral power* [Cole 2011]. Pastoral power initially developed in the Hebraic shepherd's leadership as positive and productive power, manifesting itself by facilitating individual beings on their way toward salvation [Foucault 1997]. Today, the theme of care increasingly fashions legislation toward animals and public rhetoric [Cole 2011; Srinivasan 2013]. Neutering is reframed with the emphasis on value for the animals themselves, including perspectives for food, overall health status, and longevity. This led to the justification of neutering for pets and stray animals, individual animals and animal populations [Srinivasan 2013]. In contrast to a previous view

of animals in terms of machinery, nonhumans have increasingly become recognized as affective creatures, having specific desires and capable of experiencing, apart from pain and physical suffering, emotions such as joy, frustration, and desire [Srinivasan 2013; Anneberg et al. 2012]. This "emotional turn" [Cole 2011, 89] builds on the recognition of animals' subjectivities. It develops instruments and procedures to attain animals' living conditions in relation to their personalities and emotional states [Anneberg et al. 2012]. These "therapeutic" moves, however, do not promise to liberate the animals, but rather to construct and legitimize more sophisticated methods of exploitation [Cole 2011].

Power across the ontological borders

Regulatory power – a variation of biopower that emphasizes the self-conduct of individuals as "regulated autonomy" (cited by: [Rutherford 1999, 60]) – was difficult to apply directly to animals [Srinivasan 2013]. Lacking self-reflexivity, animals cannot exercise the *ethics of the self,* which is central to this form of domination [Srinivasan 2013]. In this context, the notion of *agential subjection* is introduced to signify human agents' "internalization of truth discourses and practices relating to animal being and wellbeing" [Srinivasan 2013, 115]. Animal rights advocacy is an example of agential subjection. As seen in the analysis above of neutering politics, the emphasis on animal welfare, however, might justify the damage done to animals by interventions framed in therapeutic terms.

Critical studies show that the emotional turn in public discourse on animal welfare shapes subjectivities and human – animal relations [Chrulew, Wadiwel (eds.) 2017; Cole 2011; Srinivasan 2013]. Thus, the politics of ethical consumption build on the technologies of the self. Cole [Cole 2011] analyzed the concept of "happy meat" – framing some UK meat products in ethical terms by linking livestock welfare with meat quality – to show how regulatory power operates to benefit the dominant species. Animals continue to be killed and consumed while consumers get a moral self-benefit. As summarized: "Happy meat discourse then, represents the "popular" expression of pastoral power relations manifested in "animal centred" welfare discourse. It facilitates adoption of the benevolent role of pastor in place of the disciplinary role of gaoler. It reassures consumers that they *know* the needs and desires of "farmed animals," and that those needs and desires are being fulfilled precisely *because* they eat the flesh of those animals. The animals themselves therefore live self-mortifying lives of perfect submission to the aesthetic norms of their "consumers' " [Cole 2011, 95-96]. Similarly, the discursive construction of laboratory animals in medical ethical guidelines as care recipients functioned as self-pardon for scientists [Chrulew, Wadiwel (eds.) 2017].

Discourses that constitute human collectives might affect human – animal interactions. Hansen [Chrulew, Wadiwel (eds.) 2017] analyzes a phenomenon of "natural horsemanship" to show how new ethical frontiers of human society affect cross-species relationships. The classical mode of horsemanship was based on the idea of forced obedience of the horse to the demands of the riding human. With the democratization of Western political regimes, however, the emphasis changed to self-management and cooperation, reflecting class dynamics. The horse has become reframed as "someone to be negotiated with, rather than something to be deployed" [Chrulew, Wadiwel (eds.) 2017, 145]. The horse and the rider are now believed to be involved in a process of continuous interaction aimed at securing a coordinated performance. The rhetoric of cooperation shadows the disciplinary nature of the new technologies of horsemanship. It constructs an idea of relatively balanced exchange, assigning the animal self-directed personhood. The relations of power became less visible, but they did not disappear. "The horse here becomes the physical expression of human thought, a process that requires such a finely tuned level of coordination that the horse fails to realize his / her own submission to another's commands, rather like the well-trained ballet dancer in Xenophon. For the rider, the synchronicity of riding involves the extension of the human body through equipment, including bridle and saddle, into and onto the horse's body to allow for command and control, or 'communication' in the discourse of partnership" [Chrulew, Wadiwel (eds.) 2017, 152].

In the global context, regulatory power appears in the management of the ecosystem [Chrulew, Wadiwel (eds.) 2017; Rutherford 1999].

Countries around the globe have engaged in "green governmentality" and "enviro-discipline" [Luke 1999, 146]: "The authority of eco-knowledgeable, geo-powered forces to police the fitness of all biological organisms and the health of their natural environments." This discipline works to produce institutional structures and identities that allow "surviving" and "sustainability." Nature is commodified and turned into "the human race's 'ecological life-support system,' which has 'with only occasional localized failures' provided 'services upon which human society depends consistently and without charge' " (cited by: [Luke 1999, 146]). Thus, genetic engineering allows for the enhancement and revitalization of endangered species in the name of preserving biodiversity. As an effect, "[m]embers of endangered species are subjected to an increasingly intensive anatomo-politics of the animal body: regular testing, extraction of fluids, transportation, enforced tranquilization, separation and recombination of social groups, imposed breeding and the removal of offspring… that is, veritable abduction and rape at the hands of their shepherds, with all the supposedly humorous sexual confusion this generates" [Chrulew 2011, 148].

Concerns in environmental issues has emerged with the development of natural sciences, colonialism, and transnational capitalism [Rutherford 1999]. Contemporary environmentalism "problematizes the environment as the previously taken for granted biological basis for human life, and constitutes it as a domain of social concern and potential political conflict" [Rutherford 1999, 52]. Population management becomes increasingly linked to managing the environment, since ecology turns into "the rationale behind a *new form of political economy*" [Rutherford 1999, 54]. With the proliferation of biology and other natural sciences, the natural environment becomes knowable and calculable, and an object of governing [Rutherford 1999; Rutherford 2007].

In this way, domination exercised on humans and animals is interwoven. As noted regarding sovereign and disciplinary techniques, a 19th-century ban on cockfighting in Europe worked to discipline lower social classes [Chrulew, Wadiwel (eds.) 2017]. The "animality machine" was put to work dehumanizing those marked as uncivilized: "Savages, children and working-class, still enjoying the old spectacles of cruelty, are now figured as a sort of intermediate species separating the 'humane' bourgeoisie from the wild beasts in the bear garden and the cockpit" [Chrulew, Wadiwel (eds.) 2017, 185]. Along the same alley, Thierman [2010] in an analysis of a journalistic investigation, explained how domination in human – animal interactions mirrors power-laden relations among humans and how the rhetoric of animalization among workers at a slaughterhouse is used to reproduce race-based discrimination. As reported, in the slaughterhouse, the managerial role comprises surveillance and the exercise of force: managers are always ready to take harsh measures, and their localization resembles a privileged position in a panoptical architectural structure. A normalized classification was registered among workers with low-status work (e.g., killing and reassembling animals) and strictly associated with specific ethnic groups. While assigned to others, work on the cutting line was experienced as dehumanization. Thus, as Agamben [Agamben 2004] suggested, the anthropological machine operated to produce a division among workers by the interplay between inclusion and exclusion, human and animal. Not only identities but human corporeality is molded by the surrounding milieu: individuals are hurt and exhausted by the working technologies and assignments. As a result, "[w]orkers simultaneously bring home 'the bacon' and find themselves transformed by their environment into a slaughterhouse body" [Thierman 2010, 106].

Conclusion

Human – animal relationships trigger evident social concern. This paper systematically reviewed early contributions to the field of critical animal studies that use Foucauldian tradition. It showed how practices of animal treatment in different contexts exhibit various forms of domination, including control and execution, training and shaping, management and biopolitical regulation. Moreover, humans' technologies of self-regulation manifested themselves in relation to animals and the natural environment more broadly.

However, some doubts exist regarding a direct application of Foucault's idea of power in

the analysis of human – animal interactions. For Foucault, the fundamental feature of power is its relationality or an imperative of strategic exchange between interacting partners [Palmer 2001]. Animals, however, are typically seen as lacking agency and being therefore reactors rather than actors, [Palmer 2001; Srinivasan 2013]. Several proposals emerged to address this problem. As pointed out, the very definition of resistance can be broadened to include unreflective transgressions and therefore emphasize the very possibility of challenging power [Palmer 2001]. Moreover, the focus of analysis can be shifted to humans' actions and ideologies, as in the discussion on agential subjection [Srinivasan 2013].

As argued in this article, the situation is more complex. Power runs within and across ontological boundaries, which are rhetorically constructed. In this context, an interrogation of what Agamben termed an anthropological machine is crucial. As summarized by Chrulew [Chrulew 2012, 58]: "Agamben's focus is on how the anthropological machine produces a state of exception *within* the human, whether via an inclusion of the outside (the premodern humanization of animals in the slave and barbarian) or an exclusion of the outside (the modern animalization of man's biological body as bare life)." It follows that in the anthropocentric world, animals are always already abjected and subordinated to humans. The way out would be a post-humanist politics that recognizes the interconnectedness and interdependency of humans and the natural environment. Chrulew [Chrulew 2012] gets inspiration from the notion of "the poor" suggested by the Italian philosopher Antony Negri: "The poor," he (Negri. – *L. R.*) writes "are excluded from the world that they produce, but that power becomes resistance and resistance nourishes new power." Perhaps in this conception of poverty we can bring closer together the lives of human and animals (not simply *seen* as but *made* to be "poor-in-world," whether the tick in the library or the cows in the factory farm), who notwithstanding their ontological differences, are nonetheless exploited in common by the working capitalist biopower and the anthropological machine" [Chrulew 2012, 63].

The acknowledgment of a common destiny of both humans and nonhumans might facilitate the accumulation of bioenergy of the common and its channeling to contest the global capitalist order of domination. According to Wolfe [2012, 105], "The biopolitical point is no longer 'humans' vs 'animals': the biopolitical point is new expanded community of the living and the concern we should have with where violence and immunity protection fall within it, because we are all, after all, potential animals before the law."

Discourses and classification give structure to nonhuman collectives. Wolfe [2012, 54-55] emphasizes dualism in naming and threatening animals. Some nonhumans are considered as "family members" and cared for; other members of the same species can be killed. A type of "ideologeme" cuts across nonhuman species differently, shaping conditions and life prospects of individual living beings: "it makes little or no sense to lump together in the same category the chimpanzee who endures biomedical research, the dog who lives in your home and receives chemotherapy, and the pig who languishes in the factory farm" [Wolfe 2012, 55]. Similarly, Kirk [Chrulew, Wadiwel (eds.) 2017] problematizes a legal framework that emerged around clinical experimentation. It embodies a fundamental paradox of perception of laboratory animals as simultaneously closely resembling humans and thus suitable for testing and fundamentally different from humans to morally justify their subjection to medical manipulation and frequently death. Indeed, how could one explain, let us say to a child who visited a laboratory and afterwards wanted to replicate the observed scientific procedures at home on a pet, that laboratory animals are "an exception"? [Chrulew, Wadiwel (eds.) 2017].

In this context, the contemporary human practices of protecting animals might become contestable. The idea of animal rights primarily concerns species who are known and "who are most like us" primarily to mammals [Tester 1991, 14]. Fish, insects, and other distant species are hardly present in the discussions over animal rights, vegetarianism, or anti-vivisection. Some scholars suggest that the very classification of animals aims to clarify the nature of a human. Eventually, animal rights turn to be anthropocentric: they are not just about animals, or in fact not that much about animals, as about human society and its anthropocentric morality and operation. According to Tester: "[t]he crucial facet of animal

rights is precisely that it states claims which are asked to do something about it; animal rights is a social problem" [Tester 1991, 16].

Can we, as Wolfe [Wolfe 2012] asks, drop altogether all the classifications? Should we allow viruses and bacteria to spread and dominate or even destroy our lives? The answer is still not obvious. Thierman [Thierman 2010, 110] turns our attention to mutuality and coevolution of humans and nature. The scholar refers to Donna Haraway's contributions from her experience with companion spices. They problematized the very possibility of authenticity looking instead for "co-constitutive nature cultural dancing, holding in esteem and regard open to those who look back reciprocally" (cited by: [Thierman 2010]). While impressive work has already been done on the analysis and conceptualization of human – animal interactions, more studies are to come with new critical research, social dialogue, and social activism.

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