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Reckless Occupations: Encroachment and Estrangement among Dogs and Humans in  
Delhi

By

M. Mather George

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requirements for the degree of

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in

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of the

University of California, Berkeley

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## Abstract

### Reckless Occupations: Encroachment and Estrangement among Dogs and Humans in Delhi

by

M. Mather George

Doctor of Philosophy in Anthropology

University of California, Berkeley

Professor Lawrence Cohen, Chair

This dissertation examines human and dog interactions in Delhi, India. In this project I follow the multiple ways in which dog and human life rub up one upon the other. This approach to thinking about how entities encroach upon each other emerged from living with a particular pack of dogs in relationship to other dogs in one neighborhood. Becoming caught in a particular pack of dogs and their human supporters or detractors organized my possible interactions and ability to meet, greet, acknowledge or to know about particular dogs and humans in this neighborhood. Becoming caught in specific scenes, where references to any general belonging of type such as categories of species, country, breed or specific family lineages or inheritances could not always be at the forefront of what was organizing sociality and alliances, helped make visible how encroachments and avoidances and solidified and fragile histories of sensing can be understood at the level of individual entities, be they human or dog.

This specificity of movements of humans and dogs helped me think about understandings of encroachment, or how sneaking, creeping, hooking, seizing, impinging, and overreaching have influenced considerations of rightful occupations and invasions of both dogs and humans in Delhi. I examine this grasping, creeping and hooking in terms of juridical decisions about dog and human interactions, dog sanctuary experiments in living and relationships of kinship, servitude, the domestic and the interstice.

The dog in Delhi is also a locus of some practices within which struggles over reformulations of categories such as caste and the foreign are taking place. Some uncomfortable correspondences and complicated histories of breed, class and kinship interpolate both dogs and humans in Delhi. And yet a detailed examination of exceedingly provincial configurations of relationship and place that cannot be made into a generic sense of belonging of kind for either dogs or humans in Delhi can help us think about how understandings of servitude, rightful occupation, invasion, sanctuary and everyday estrangement might question some common-sense notions of family, belonging, inheritance, lineage and legacy, as well as what often gets glossed as the post-colonial in a locale such as Delhi.

To Audrey J. George  
and  
LibbyD (Little Big Dog)

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## Introduction

This dissertation looks at how specific lives, be they either human or dog existences, can be ‘caught’ by other entities all with their own particular histories, predispositions and blind spots of sensing. The focus of this dissertation emerged from my own becoming hooked within a specific configuration of dogs in one particular neighborhood in Delhi, India. Thus, this finding of myself as so particularly and explicitly ‘caught’, a term I am borrowing from Jeane Favret Saada, organized my possible interactions and my ability to meet, greet, acknowledge or to know about particular dogs and humans and not others in this one Delhi neighborhood.<sup>1</sup>

The specificity with which I explore human and dog life in Delhi in this dissertation contrasts with this locale’s designation as a ‘megacity’.<sup>2</sup> This more microscopic approach to dog and human interactions in Delhi also differs from how the dog in India has sometimes been framed in terms of immense numbers. “No country has as many stray dogs as India, and no country suffers as much from them” is the conclusion of a recent New York Times article (Harris 2012). Here dog and human encounters in all of India are framed in terms of tens of millions of street dogs, millions of bites and 20,000, or a third of the global human rabies cases per annum (Harris 2012). Thus, the dog and human encounter in its Indian formation is, according to this New York Times article, constituted as exceptional, extreme and possibly excessive.<sup>3</sup>

At the same time, some position the Indian street dog in larger projects of creating a particularly Indian citizenship. To “have compassion for living creatures” is one of a list of “fundamental [human] duties” outlined in the Indian Constitution.<sup>4</sup> This admonishment for compassion is one of the defenses of the 2001 policy outlawing the killing of dogs in Delhi and the promotion of Animal Birth Control policies of sterilization instead. In the Indian Constitution an absolutist stance towards the killing of dogs as part of the category of “living creatures” has been framed in this document as a fundamental duty that defines particularly located humans as both citizen and Indian.

In these discussions of immense numbers and assumed absolute human duties towards the category of the living, one could ask how particular understandings of what it

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<sup>1</sup> I am using Favret-Saada’s (1980) definition of being ‘caught’ in her research on witchcraft in France. In some ways being caught has similarities to Haraway’s (1986) call for situated knowledge in science studies. In both, neutral knowledge or what Favret-Saada terms a “mere desire for information” is impossible. However, becoming caught highlights a slightly different problem than situating knowledge, whose main goal seems to be locating knowledge production and producers to reclaim an embodied objectivity. Instead, Favret-Saada makes the claim that one can only study witchcraft from within the structural/linguistic positions of actually being ‘caught’ in the roles of what she calls either an unwitcher or the bewitched.

<sup>2</sup> Delhi actually exceeds by more than twice the numerical requirements of humans necessary to achieve this attribute.

<sup>3</sup> I should point out that to make a claim for the extreme or excessive one needs to already be in a framework of comparison. It is also significant that Western representations of India have often described this locale in terms of the excessive and the extreme (Inden 1990).

<sup>4</sup> The dog’s status would differ if we framed it according to different texts, or community or religious understandings of the dog in India; however, in the constitution the dog would fit the category of living creature and the special relationship to compassion of the Indian citizen being promoted within it (<http://lawmin.nic.in/coi/coiason29july08.pdf>). The dog then is a particularly interesting form of the living to think about the admonishments of the Indian Constitution since its form of life is sometimes considered to also be polluting and dirty.

means to be categorically human, dog, Indian or foreigner are being brought to the fore. This dissertation, in lieu of focusing directly on these questions, asks what might emerge from, instead of concentrating on incredible numbers, absolute dictums and categorical imperatives of taxonomy or kind, one followed a much more minute frame of the multiple ways in which particular dog and human lives encroach one upon the other in particular milieus in Delhi.

Framing this inquiry into dogs and humans in Delhi in terms of encroachment, it might seem that my methodology would fit well with calls for multi-species ethnography and in some respects it does (Kirksey and Helmreich 2010). I am inspired by Donna Haraway's (2008) formulation of Vinciane Despret's (2004) concept of human 'becoming with' different forms of life. And yet my own concerns push me in directions that tend towards particularization and individualization from categories of species and kind, at the same time that I want to highlight the psychic life, minds and lineages of experience of particular humans and dogs.<sup>5</sup> Therefore, I am just as interested in how individual humans and dogs interact in a specificity that must include particular life histories, experiences and lineages qua individual as I am in a "human becoming duck" as Despret outlines for the ethologist Konrad Lorenz learning how to be a duck and what is at stake for a duck in a duck world in her notion of "becoming with" (2004).

Therefore, in studying encroachment as such, I possibly pay more attention to the boundaries and histories of particular perceiving selves than does much current work on animal and human interactions in anthropology.<sup>6</sup> Part of my concern for insisting on always inquiring into that which could be called a 'who' in any particular scene is that it is the very boundary of this 'who' or sometimes an 'I' that must be posited in order to talk about being caught in configurations of relationship or practices of encroachment at all. In *When Species Meet*, Haraway talks about how "becoming is always becoming with—in a contact zone where the outcome where who is in the world is at stake" (2008:244). I would like to think more about this "contact zone" to inquire into how personal memories and traumas forged in exceedingly provincial configurations of relationship with other entities might affect how we conceive contact, meeting or the contours of a zone. Both contact and meeting tend towards a temporality of the moment of encounter at least in their everyday sense, whereas encroachment has many modes and can be imperceptible in a temporality of glacial creeping. And yet even in first encounters, there are particular legacies of configurations of relation impeding the possibility of co-presence in scenes that must exceed the categorical.<sup>7</sup> In addition, species do not tend to meet each other qua species and yet imagined categorical

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<sup>5</sup> A concern for individual psychic life as well as its particular histories and lineages would be viable only for certain forms of life and whether we can talk about dog psyches is a debatable topic. This is less so for the problem of mind for both dog and human. As I have said I am just as interested in individual dogs and humans as opposed to exploring differences in kind between the human and the dog.

<sup>6</sup> This perspective is indebted to the work of Terrence Deacon (2012) and shares a concern for the production of selves with that of Eduardo Kohn (2007). I am also grateful for Stefania Pandolfo's (1997) insistence on the continued importance of the scene and the unconscious in anthropological inquiry.

<sup>7</sup> Borneman and Hammoudi (2009) emphasize "co-presence" as a methodology in anthropological practice. My interest is to put this concept in dialog with others such as Despret's (2004) "becoming with" and Haraway's (2008) extension of Despret's concept with her focus on interspecies' "meetings" and "contact zones," as well as Favret-Saada's (1980) emphasis on becoming "caught" in psycho-structural relationships.

encounters of kind exert their material-semiotic influences on possible meetings, as Haraway might say, in actual encroachments of human and dog in Delhi (2008).

It is my concern that in attempts to undo categorical boundedness and to gesture towards the complexity of actual arrangements, conceptual repertoires such as assemblage, entanglement and fragmentation sometimes make it difficult to hold a place for personal memory, trauma and the (un)conscious in imagining just how what might be considered a ‘contact zone’ might be configured between or among entities that are not either reduced to mere category or completely dissipated or entangled. This dissertation attempts to explore some possibilities of the ‘whos’ that might be meeting and the milieus or topologies of these entities’ encounters, if I to some degree bracket both the absolutely categorical and the infinitely entangled, in order to pay attention to provincial configurations of selves or individuals that have some, but not infinite capacities to modulate and vary the specificity of their own boundedness, inheritances and perceptual apparatuses.<sup>8</sup>

Focusing so much on particular selves or loci of perception and the (un) conscious and their histories of configuration and caughtness to some degree departs in terms of emphasis from conceptual repertoires of human and animal interactions or multi-species ethnographies in which the mingling, entanglement, dispersion, or clumping (the crowd) of entities is more highlighted. I do appreciate how focusing on entanglement, networks, assemblages and complexity has questioned overly bounded conceptions of the contours of entities, agencies, selves or individuals; however, I am still interested in pursuing stubborn questions of the I and the ‘who’ that I will return to repeatedly in this dissertation. This obdurate focus on the particularity of some entities is I think significant in terms of what cannot be spoken about in methodologies that might want to permanently bracket the “I” from discussion.

I would then be questioning, from the perspective of being caught in a dog ‘pack’ in Delhi, this desire for “a point where it is no longer of any importance whether one says I” that Deleuze and Guattari mention in the first paragraph of *A Thousand Plateaus* as they claim that they have kept their own names as authors “out of habit, purely out of habit” (1987:1).<sup>9</sup>

Yet, I am interested in habit. I would also like to limit to some degree understandings of the individual that insist that it must always be that nineteenth century figure or completely formed in Cartesian dualism or neo-liberal strategies. My concern is that a methodological focus that always attempts to de-center or provincialize the individual might not be able to ask certain questions. In this inquiry I would like to think about individuations that cannot be completely contained by this individual that holds no mystery for many.

This research then is a field study that is attuned to following particular encroachments of entities, be they particular dogs or humans, to make sense of understandings and contestations over what constitutes the limits of entities and their

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<sup>8</sup> I am thinking a bit here about Canguilhem’s claim that “it is characteristic of the living that it makes its milieu for itself, that it composes its milieu,” as well as always remembering that this ‘who’ is a relational creature (2008: 111).

<sup>9</sup> I am using the term ‘pack’ for a grouping of dogs. I will discuss the problem of the pack as a group name for wolves and dogs and as a conceptual philosophical term in chapters two and three of this dissertation respectively.

rightful occupations in Delhi. Some current academic work that looks at human interactions with other forms of life examines manipulations, moldings and reconfigurations of organisms in bioengineering, warfare, scientific research, ecological catastrophe, projects of imperial desire, ethology, capitalism, training, industry and epidemics, which are fascinating and necessary interventions. However, this project is centered on somewhat more modest territorial ambitions of some humans and dogs in Delhi. The scale of this encounter and analysis is specifically on different dog packs pushing in upon each other in just one part of a neighborhood, individual dogs encroaching upon both dog and human milieus, some neighbors trying to stop other neighbors from feeding dogs, the uneasy triad of employer, servant and dog relationships in domestic space, and individual dogs and workers living on top of each other in dog sanctuary environments.

My aim in this approach, even in light of what is surely a time of “radical revision in the biosciences” (Kirksey and Helmreich 2010: 548) is to think about some stubborn mammal problems, as well as what I can only describe as tribulations of being a singular mortal human that can be elided or made sometimes unbearably light in work exploring the effects of managerial and instrumental aspects of institutional, research and technological practices. What I mean by this, is that sometimes a focus on the emergent or entanglements of government, science, capital and life, in which I agree so much is at stake, I am still left wanting to know more about how a particular author of a text is caught in provincial lineages of relationality, memory, family and mortality, an absence of any mention of which sometimes makes the tone of what are crucial issues seem oddly unbearably light at least to this reader.

This project then is a return to thinking about the relationship between ethnography and biography, yet this biography is not one of causal confidence, but one that pays particular attention to species, form, and the productive power of very particular affinities and abhorrences of singular entities.<sup>10</sup> I am also absolutely indebted to different experiments in thinking and participating in the world that have attempted to write more from the blind spots of this I, as well as its affinities, abhorrences and interests, than from any other framing of perception or knowledge.<sup>11</sup> I cannot really know how I am exactly ‘caught’ except in a sideways grasping kind of gesture or the impossible task of trying to notice when I forget, go blank, disappear or become unconscious.<sup>12</sup>

To that end I will not attempt to justify this project of following the dog and its human lovers and haters through Delhi in a register of some needed sociological knowledge. I will particularly not justify this text’s worth in terms of claiming any special ability or analytic of the dog or its human lovers or haters to identify or define the contemporary for Delhi or India. I do not wish to argue, for example, that “a key analytic

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<sup>10</sup> I am less interested in the question of who can have a biography discussed in relationship to Agamben’s (1998) categories of the killable (Kirksey and Helmreich 2010) since this kind of argumentation is more interested in classification than in the petty everyday irritations that can result in sudden rage, fear, fleeing and killing.

<sup>11</sup> I am specifically referencing psychological concepts such as the unconscious and the shadow (Freud 1965; Jung 1953). I will also note that some would claim my remarks here to be sightest, while others would reference the primate’s lineage of sight. (Haraway 1988)

<sup>12</sup> In this dissertation I put the conceptual insights of Favret-Saada (1980) and the biologist von Uexkull (1957) in dialog with each other. Both are interested in specific limits of perception in psycho-social/structural and biological/environmental registers respectively.

for understanding contemporary India (and its constitutive histories) is that of the fraught politics of human-animal relations” (Dave 2011). I would instead mark how a search for “key analytics,” seems to (re)produce an anthropological practice that is in danger of taking too much of its form from what Annelise Riles (2000) has described as an “infinity with the brackets,” or a writing practice of pieced together NGO documents that in anthropology could be analogous to the migration of the justificatory terms used in writing to acquire funding becoming the ultimate language of analysis for a project.

Similarly, I will, as a human approaching the age of fifty, attempt to think about the temporal framing of this project more from the perspective of the Islamic philosopher and theologian Al-Ghazali, who exhorts everyone to continually meditate on his or her more permanent actual state of individual death rather than his or her short present life, instead of a perspective that attempts to temporize in terms of understanding phenomena as being actual, new, emergent, radical, late, -post or -part of a particular -cene. In terms of temporal phrasings that incorporate post- or late-, I am reminded of the joke in which someone is asked for spare change and they answer, “I don’t know yet.” This perspective of thinking about a research project from individual human impermanence is especially important for a study of human and dog interactions in which dog and human life tend to have to negotiate the disparate timings of their lifespans.<sup>13</sup> To that effect, I will mention that Darwin’s tortoise just died in the year 2013.

In terms of other timings, I am very interested in what “anthropos might be becoming” in “a radical revision in the biosciences” (Kirksey and Helmreich 2010: 548). And yet from the position of this possibly sometimes studier of science that got caught in a ‘pack’ of Delhi dogs, I want to maintain an alertness to how the growth of Science and Technology Studies and some of its attendant methodologies such as a focus on expert informants might be influencing anthropology more generally. In this dissertation, I hope to pay attention to how a focus on disciplines, experts as informants and a way of framing questions in terms of specific disciplinary knowledge can create both a critique, as well as extensions of facts from the knowledge practices being investigated. These extensions of current research in a field being studied are then sometimes put forth in a conceptual or ethical register in a tense that one might want to call the future hopeful. I think we need to note this switching between a constructivist discourse and the extension of insights gained from experimental methods, as we keep in mind that not all sites or scenes of ethnography are uniformly affected by what seems to be possibly a more “radical revision” in some milieus than others.

Similarly, this project is indebted to insights gleaned from thinking about organism and environment interactions.<sup>14</sup> To that effect, I am always concerned about milieu even in terms of thinking about how concepts cannot have a particular meaning, ethos or politics without thinking explicitly about issues of habitat and just as importantly of perspective. Therefore, I think it would be beneficial to put some discussions from the current turn towards thinking about forms gleaned from the ways in which different organisms are in the world in dialog with Stuart Hall’s discussion of the impossibility of

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<sup>13</sup> Understandings of the average lifespan of species would be complicated by the normed living and dying of different groups of dogs and humans, for example.

<sup>14</sup> I am also interested in Canguilhem’s essay exploring the notion of milieu and how it changes as it travels among multiple fields. It is a interesting work to think about conceptual habitats from (2008). I am indebted to Paul Rabinow’s reading of this essay.

a sign ever being sufficient in its meaning. In the following Stuart Hall is quoting Isaac Julien who is in an interview with Bell Hooks:

...blackness as a sign is never enough. What does that black subject do, how does it act, how does it think politically.... [B]eing black isn't really good enough for me: I want to know what your cultural politics are (Hooks quoted in Hall 1993: 112).

Hall explains that:

It is also that these antagonisms refuse to be neatly aligned; they are simply not reducible to one another; they refuse to coalesce around a single axis of differentiation. We are always in negotiation, not with a single set of oppositions that place us always in the same relation to others, but with a series of different positionalities. Each has for us its point of profound subjective identification. And that is the most difficult thing about this proliferation of the field of identities and antagonisms: they are often dislocating in relation to one another (1993: 112).

We are in a very different register here from the authors of the “turn to the animal” who are possibly invoking a politics and poetics of rhizomes, swarms or packs, but his insistence on how what he is calling identifications here are “dislocating in relation to one another” and how these things “refuse to be neatly aligned” whether we are talking about identifications, concepts, categories or models, is a point that I think continually needs to be reinforced and restated. In my own work, I sometimes imagine Hall rushing into some scene or text and saying to a creature attempting to make hierarchies of alterities something like “wait a minute: these antagonisms refuse to be neatly aligned!”

In addition to thinking about (often petty) antagonisms and the non-alignment of concepts, I will in this dissertation be continually putting understandings from different disciplinary traditions, arguments and evidentiary milieus into “contact zones.” In so doing I am interested in exploring where extensions of concepts lead to a reinvigorated understanding and where a notion might meet its limit in slightly different circumstances and habitats. In this dissertation I will let concepts ‘meet’ from biology, biological anthropology, science studies, psychology, psychological anthropology, animal studies, fiction and post-colonial studies, to name a few possibilities. I am then interested in thinking about how concepts in addition to dogs can encroach and possibly be productively invasive.

As I have said, the rationale for my focus on this possibly outmoded individual is an attempt to maintain a mystery for the ‘I’ that both categorical and entangled thinking tend to dissipate. If we completely evacuate this exceedingly provincial ‘I,’ it becomes too easy to have entities either disappear or to assign names to them and diagnose using one word distillations of complicated arguments in which anthropology then could become a practice of caricature and projection.<sup>15</sup> Hall’s warnings in this regard are also quite salient and still necessary, I fear.

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<sup>15</sup> I am thinking here of how some have invoked the gaze or orientalism (Said 1978) as one word acts of naming, or a single self-explanatory “deadly word” as Favret-Saada (1980) might say.

Haraway makes a similar point about how “one cannot ‘be’ either a cell or a molecule—or a woman or a colonized person or laborer” or write from these perspectives presumably (1988: 585). Categories such as Western, upper-class, servant and European breed dog though will creep into this work because of the necessary work that they do, although I will try to take note of how these terms often create more error than understanding in analysis.

That being said, whether one ascribes these divisions to legacies of colonial governmentality or enduring social formations, dog and human interactions are laden with categorical divides such as caste, class, species and breed in Delhi. And yet for most dog and human encounters of which I will write about in this dissertation, even if some of these categories of type are in play, to stay at this level of analysis would lead to a flattening of the everydayness of these encroachments, especially in their petty irritations, play, jealousies, joys, minute claims to territory and challenges to an other, just as a networked dispersal of the encroacher or encrochee would evacuate the scene completely.

And so when these dogs and humans meet in Delhi what of the radical reconstitution of the biological is at stake? What kinds of negotiations of categorical, post-colonial or family belongings are up for consideration? Haraway in *Situated Knowledges* offers the strategies of “mobile positioning and passionate detachment” and I am of course indebted to her more recent turn to dogs and the murky mud.<sup>16</sup> I appreciate and use these modes of engagement, but in this dissertation I am exactly interested in going to the sometimes “problematic and contingent” problem of “being” (Haraway 1988:585). I am much less concerned with de-centering, re-thinking or un-doing understandings of human nature, then in thinking about the problem of enigma not as a problem of categorical alterity or abjectivity, as a response to a no-where center, but in terms of the possible affinity or aversion that one entity can have for another in exceedingly provincial relations that might disturb some claims of belonging, legacy or lineage.

Eduardo Kohn warns about making this socio-cultural turn to “nature” into a typical anthropological mode of a quest for increasing alterity (Kohn in Kirksey and Helmreich 2010). His comments about how the search for the “strange” and the “exotic” in what I would say is left of the “nature” concept is possibly an inversion of this formerly more powerful “nature” that could once ground the social or the cultural and now is more deployed to undo the category of the human than those of culture or society, if I am reading him correctly. Kohn instead wants to rethink categories such as “voice, agency, and subjectivity” in an “analysis that would radically rethink those of our analysis as they pertain to all beings” (Kohn in Kirksey and Helmreich 2010). I would agree with these insightful comments, but also mark how this inverted nature is then sometimes being asked to also shore up ethical projects trying to imagine an unmarked way to more appropriately be in the world with facts and forms taken from more current research in biology. This move brings us back to a nature holding up worlds, but in a slightly different constellation of effects and with particular forms of life and individuals unaccounted for.

I would also point out how an inquiry into understandings of voice, agency, and subjectivity that would pertain to all beings would be interesting in establishing the

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<sup>16</sup> I must also note that I attempted for way too long to not do this project.

thresholds of how these terms could be defined as either inclusive of all selves, or exactly at what point and under what constraints of the form of a creature, would the meaning of the way in which one of these terms is defined lose its particular sense and why. I understand that dog 'whos' and human 'whos' have both similar and different modes of being and engaging the world and I do not want to collapse these differences or make them absolutely categorical either.

In this dissertation, I will bring some of these conversations about biology, nature and animals in dialog with critiques of liberalism and imperial rule in India that in particular turn to forms of categorical and experiential belonging to attempt to undo the abductive logics of categories of exclusion of empire. One insight I take from Uday Singh Mehta's exploration of how the thought of Edmund Burke in particular challenges British Imperialism, is how Burke had a basic suspicion of attempts to always radically undo all tradition and lineages (1999). Burke feared that these undoings could jeopardize the supports necessary for the functioning of society and even life. In what follows, I hope to neither become enamored of claims of radical revision nor calls for tradition and belonging. Instead, I want think about how, within very provincial configurations of relationship and exceedingly particular legacies of inheritance and disinheritance, "one individual human being [or possibly a dog] can be a complete enigma to another" (Wittgenstein 1953: 190), or even more importantly, have some sense of an understanding that cannot be reduced to abduction only.



## Acknowledgements

Since one of the inspirations for this dissertation has been the question of how to think about family, lineage and legacy, I will use these tropes to give thanks.

I would first like to thank the family Canidae or the Canids. This group of animals, through their intrepid ways of being in the world, has re-organized my own sense of what is at stake in occupying a body on this planet for a time. In particular, I would like to thank all of the dogs that I have met in Delhi.

And of course, since this is an anthropological text, I would like to profoundly thank everyone who talked with me about dogs in Delhi. Whether someone was obsessed with dogs in terms of love, or wanted to rid the city streets of what they considered to be pests, each person who was willing to converse with me about dogs is much appreciated. I am particularly thankful to those humans who have recognized a kind of family non-resemblance in the dog that somehow turned them into “animal lovers” in Delhi parlance. What can I say except that I respect and admire all of these people variously caught up in Delhi dogs.

I must also particularly thank my mother and sisters, all of whom make up the category of the “ex-daughters-in-law” that I discuss in this dissertation. While writing this text, I became even more profoundly thankful to my mother for raising me in a manner that resembled some of the best methodology in ethology or the study of animal behavior. My mother never told me what I was, or attempted to categorize me even by sex or species, but instead was always both respectful and playful in encounters that never assumed that she knew what kind of a creature she was dealing with a priori.

In retrospect, I have learned that pursuing a dissertation is not something that one should entertain lightly. Interactions with advisors are over many years and there are not really adequate terms to express these intellectual and emotional bonds and encroachments. These relationships sometimes resemble family intimacies more than what could go under the rubric of the professional. The debts are therefore profound and it becomes almost impossible to express proper acknowledgements in words; however, I will try.

I would like to thank Lawrence Cohen for many fabulous conversations and always leaving a space open to the something more, a mode of being that he shares with my mother. His influence will be apparent to the readers of this text. I also share an elective affinity with Stefania Pandolfo and her very principled insistence on the continued importance of the concept of the unconscious to anthropological inquiry, which we might ignore at our own peril. I would like to thank Cori Hayden for her expertise in the anthropology of relation and kinship, her ability to always ask provocative questions of my writing, and introducing me to her dog Tsuki.

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I would like to thank Jake Kosek for his very engaged reading, as well as his challenging insights. Gene Irschick has suggested more novels to read that would be relevant to this work and I am grateful that he recognizes this mode as one of inquiry.

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## Chapter 1

### Encroachment: Of Neighbors and Enigmas

The philosophy of encroachment—when you find empty land on your borders—grab a few feet of it when no one’s looking.<sup>17</sup>

...One human being can be a complete enigma to another. We learn this when we come into a strange country with entirely strange traditions; and, what is more, even given a mastery of the country’s language. We do not understand the people. (And not because of not knowing what they are saying to themselves.) We cannot find our feet with them.<sup>18</sup>

...If a lion could talk, we could not understand him.<sup>19</sup>

### Finding One’s Anus with the Snout of a Dog

The dogs that I came to identify with the possessive--what for a brief moment would become my ‘pack’—habitually greeted me with a firm punch of their noses to my anus.<sup>20</sup> After an absence of any length of time from one particular corner-- a corner not that different from many other corners in similarly mixed lower to upper-middle class neighborhoods in Delhi, I would return and feel the precision blow of one, then another dog’s nose making contact, not just with my backside, but dead center at the very nerve sensitive end of my alimentary canal.

In terms of Wittgenstein’s discussion of the problem of enigma from the quotation above, this encounter between human butt and dog snout could be made sense of in terms of a stranger in a strange country given that my tenure in this neighborhood in Delhi was predicated on coming to India from not India to do anthropological fieldwork and this positing of “a strange country with entirely strange traditions” comes dripping in the anthropological. Yet the movement of these tropes of the stranger to philosophy and back to anthropology might run the risk of reinvigorating concepts that have been generally exhausted in anthropology such as the positing of overly-bounded entities of coherence.

Deployments of Wittgenstein’s discussion of enigma can easily get subsumed into posited entities of a we (a people) and a them (a people), which ignores the much more compelling questions embedded in his text. Namely, how can one human be “a complete enigma to another” even when, or especially when he or she might share what Wittgenstein calls a “passionate commitment to a system of reference” in terms of what commonly gets glossed as country or culture or language (1980:64).<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> (Sukla 1992:14)

<sup>18</sup> (Wittgenstein 1953: 190)

<sup>19</sup> (Wittgenstein 1953: 190)

<sup>20</sup> I am using the term ‘pack’ for groups of dogs in this neighborhood, which for some is a controversial term. I will discuss objections to this term specifically in the case of the dog, as well as its use as a philosophical concept in chapters two and three.

<sup>21</sup> Mehta uses this quotation from Wittgenstein to discuss the importance of experience and belonging in response to liberal defenses of empire (1999).

The question of one individual being an enigma or not to another informs this inquiry into human and dog love, hate and indifference in Delhi, India. The addition of another species to the question of what kind of a who might be an enigma or not to what sort of a whom highlights the other intriguing problem in this much used quote of Wittgenstein: of all possible body parts, why is the calibration of one human to another judged in terms of finding one's own feet?<sup>22</sup> And if we consider the bodily organization of another species, even a fellow mammal such as the dog with its paw feet, in what body parts of sensing might an encounter that exceeds enigma originate or be located? I will first discuss this positing of an orientation of human feet as that which registers some form of a particular human to human understanding first.

My Delhi dog pack, in punching their snouts into my anus, generally herded me forward by knocking me slightly off balance. So in what I understood to be a joyful greeting of dog nose to human butt, at least from the perspective of this anus, was an alternating losing and finding of my two human feet in terms of my standing balance and the particular relationship to gravity of my bodily organization.<sup>23</sup> I cannot really account for the finding or losing of four paws as a result of the hurtling a four-legged body snout first into the anus of a human. Yet, for Wittgenstein in his imagined human with human encounter, why is a finding and not a losing of feet, balance, or equilibrium what is at stake? And why are the feet and not some other part of a body—say the hands, the eyes, the head, or the nose-- that which senses or registers the success or failure of an encounter with another entity?

### **Umwelt: What Stands in for Feet?**

The biologist Jacob von Uexküll's concept of the *umwelt* has helped some humans imagine the 'phenomenal world' or the 'self world' of organisms other than those organized similarly to the human.<sup>24</sup> The *umwelt* is the specific environment or milieu that can be sensed or registered by the particular sensing and moving apparatus of a bodily organization. The main point is that each animal or the world sensed from the form or the perspective of its body plan does not share the same general environment or

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<sup>22</sup> This choice of feet would still be intriguing if one were to accept the framework of bounded entities of a "strange country" as the form of encounter. One interesting aspect of this often quoted line from Wittgenstein for me is how an emphasis on group or social meaning becomes a specifically a country and not say a family or a pack, for example. In the forward to *Life and Words*, Stanley Cavell makes the point that the strange country or tribe is equivalent to the philosopher wondering about the strangeness of other humans or of himself and therefore Wittgenstein's *Investigations* is "a portrait more specifically of the modern subject" (Cavell in Das 2007:X). In this discussion of the problem of enigma or understanding between individuals of the same or different species, I remain more interested in the work that the positing of a country as that which brackets strangeness does to this discussion of enigma, understanding or belonging. I would then like to bring in the problem of *Elective Affinities* and the possible strangeness among family members to question the contours of Wittgenstein's "strange country" (1971).

<sup>23</sup> This would be a human, female and fat relationship to gravity. In terms of a form of life the human has what von Uexküll calls an operational space or coordinate system that is similar to other organisms that share a semicircular canal structure in the ear (1957:16).

<sup>24</sup> Von Uexküll outlined a biology of the subject in the late part of the 19<sup>th</sup> and early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (1957: 5-6).

milieu. Instead, a specific umwelt or different world of sensory relating exists in relationship to each organism.<sup>25</sup>

In Wittgenstein's analysis of the problem of understanding or the ability to find one's feet with another there is only one species involved, although language, at the same time that it becomes a country, is also haunted by entities who have a different body plan than the human, as von Uexküll would say.<sup>26</sup> And in a common reading of Wittgenstein's discussion, this enigma is the result of differences in commitments to different systems of reference, often glossed at the level of country, culture or language.

It would seem that von Uexküll's concept of the umwelt, if imported into a certain reading of Wittgenstein's "strange country and traditions" would only further the promotion of some necessary alienation between entities of coherence. It might just move this isolation from the category of specific cultures or tribes of the human as stranger to the category of the species as stranger.<sup>27</sup>

It must be noted that this addition of different species to this divide of strangeness--the strange land--seems to illicit general and universal claims for the human even from some who would defend culture or language as the divide that matters. For the proponents of enigma as culture, the people who seem strange might start to seem much more readable in terms of positing thresholds of human subjectivity when a dog's "passionate commitment to a system of reference" is added to this discussion of enigma (Wittgenstein 1980:64).<sup>28</sup>

And even though the concept of the umwelt might seem to intensify a sense of boundedness if each organism's milieu is thought of as a "bubble," by also focusing at the level of organs or parts of perception or the sensing apparatus of an organism, umwelt theory actually multiplies the specific sensing encounters that two organisms (or even one) might engage in and thus opens up what could possibly be meant by being an enigma or coming to some understanding as well as the boundaries of entities.

For, von Uexküll, an umwelt is created through the "number of objects which an animal can distinguish in its own world."<sup>29</sup> In terms of the dog, its snout senses a specific dog world, and my Delhi dogs in particular, in sensing and distinguishing the object of

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<sup>25</sup> Von Uexküll makes the point that some parts that are not controlled by a central site of organization such as a brain are actually individual persons. Thus, for example, the quills of a porcupine are persons for von Uexküll (1957).

<sup>26</sup> We would not understand the lion even if it could talk (Wittgenstein 1953).

<sup>27</sup> Von Uexküll does in fact talk about each organism being enveloped in its umwelt as if in a bubble, but he complicates this by also stating that each umwelt is ultimately individual at least for the human (1957)

<sup>28</sup> A fellow Ph.D. candidate made sure to tell me about a roommate who was confident that she could understand what her dog was thinking. In this encounter it seemed clear to me that this speaker thought the roommate was in error and that my research project made me also suspect in this regard. What I noted, although it may be projection on my part, is that the category of human subjectivity became instantly more uniform as it encountered this roommate's claims, at the same time that I felt particularly slotted in the old dog lady category that Haraway has noted (2008).

<sup>29</sup> "The umwelt only acquires its admirable surety for animals if we include the functional tones in our contemplation of it. We may say that the number of objects which an animal can distinguish in its own world equals the number of functions it can carry out. If along with few functions it possesses few functional images its world too will consist of few objects. As a result its world is indeed poorer, but all the more secure. For orientation is much easier among few objects than among many. If the paramecium had a functional image of its performance, its entire world would consist of homogeneous objects. All of them bearing the same obstacle tone. To be sure such an umwelt would leave nothing to be desired as far as certitude is concerned (Von Uexküll 1957:49).

my anus possibly increased the “number of functions” of their umwelt in von Uexküll’s terms. And my anus as another organ of sense, and not just an object encountered by the dog’s snout distinguished a specific world also. Not that we cannot think of other practices of distinguishing and functioning for both the dog snout and the human anus in terms of their umwelts.<sup>30</sup>

And just as important for thinking about the problem of finding one’s feet with another are the multiple ways in which a foot of a particular organism might sense, distinguish and function in the different worlds posited by these functions of its sensing.<sup>31</sup> Feet might not talk, but they possibly walk, trip, stand, make signs or are objects in the world. Snouts smell and sometimes stink, as well as becoming hands or primary instruments of worldly investigation for some organisms. Anuses pass excrement as well as being conduits for sensing joy and fear, just to mention a few possibilities.<sup>32</sup>

In terms of finding “our feet with them” in which the division of the “our” is human and the “them” is dog, it seemed to me that this snout to human anus encounter in Delhi was specifically reserved by dogs for humans. Certainly, “my” pack of Delhi dogs did not greet other dogs with a punch of snout to arse and I did not ever see any dogs greet any other dogs in such a manner in Delhi.

However, more importantly for this discussion, the pack that become mine greeted just myself and one or two other human individuals that they encountered in their daily ramblings with a punch of a snout to an anus. Thus, the possibility of snout finding arse (my only slightly tongue in cheek version of Wittgenstein’s problem of finding one’s feet with another) may not cut neatly across categories of species or sortings of country, nation, language or even neighborhood.

Instead, I am talking about a relationship of particular dogs and humans that brings us back to the most important and sometimes ignored part of Wittgenstein’s famous quote. “One human being can be a complete enigma to another.” Yes, one; one individual possibly living on the very same corner or in the same pack or family can be an enigma or not to another at the very same intersection, or in the same pack or family. This forces me to question whether or not the site of my pack encounter could possibly stand in for other corners as I had claimed. How could it be “a corner not that different from many other corners in similarly mixed lower to upper-middle class neighborhoods in Delhi?”

I will now turn to exploring this specific territory of my pack to think about how *encroachment*—a common explanatory concept used to make sense of the limits of entities and rightful occupations in Delhi and India in general—can help us think about the problems of bodies, parts and enigmas.

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<sup>30</sup> We do not need to be reductionist in the positing of functional tones in the world of sense that an organ can posit.

<sup>31</sup> In evolutionary theory parts are often considered in relationship to certain interactions with the milieu of the animal. Other functions might be considered to be repurposed for a changing interaction. Necessary use is not really a concern of this dissertation.

<sup>32</sup> This discussion of body parts and the possibility of enigma or understanding among selves or persons resists explanatory schemas in which all life lives itself as one mass or entanglement and instead focuses on selves of parts of bodies, as well as selves that exceed the limits of one organic body, but always with a focus on a possible ‘who’ or ‘whom’ in question.

## **Encroachment: Human as Dog Cover**

The six dogs that were part of my pack, whether I call them street, stray, neighborhood or community dogs—all terms in play in the Delhi context, well, they knew exactly the patch of dirt beyond which they should not cross. All six dogs, or just a few, would sometimes follow me as I came out of the house and herd me across the community park in front of the house. Three quarters distance across the park each dog would consistently sit his or her butt down in the same place and start whining. On the other side of the park (about 30 feet away) was another pack of dogs.

I had to walk through the territory of the other dog pack to exit the neighborhood. These other dogs would eye me from a distance. This pack was neither aggressive nor friendly towards me, but would definitely note my presence and their eyes would follow me. I think I was registered by this particular pack of dogs in the neighborhood, not just as any random human or stranger, but as a person who definitely belonged in the neighborhood and most importantly as a human that pertained to a particular other dog pack in the vicinity.

On just a very few occasions my pack followed me past the line three-quarters through the park. Twice at dusk, I walked with the owner of the house in which I was staying to visit a neighbor who lived on the other side of the colony. This larger group of humans and dogs did enter the territory of the other pack. During these unusual forays into this part of the neighborhood, all six dogs of ‘my pack’ trotted with unusually low slung bodies and they kept their gaze focused straight ahead and towards the ground—the effect of this bodily movement made them seem to have an extra purposiveness to their manner. The few times that we walked as a human/dog pack into the territory of the other dog group, my dogs also stayed unusually close to us humans. The dogs of the other pack came forward just a bit which made my pack members walk almost under my feet causing me to sometimes lengthen or shorten my stride so as not to get tripped up in dog. The novelty of the situation was that we humans were walking through abruptly alienated territory in accompaniment with this nervous pack. The humans had become dog cover.

In this neighborhood of a few streets and maybe forty houses, there were at times during my habitation, besides for my pack, up to six different identifiable dog packs dividing the space. The particular configurations of relationships that I am calling my pack had a range of about six or seven houses plus a good portion of the central park. Two of the houses, including the one I was staying in, offered food on a more or less regular basis. Three other houses would provide food for what I am calling ‘my pack’ on a much more casual basis.

## **Encroachment: “Beyond the Usual or Proper Limits”**

To encroach is “to enter by gradual steps or by stealth into possessions or rights of another” or “to advance beyond the usual or proper limits”<sup>33</sup> To encroach comes originally from *croche* –to hook, to get and to seize, yet it is interestingly an intransitive

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<sup>33</sup> Middle English *encrochen* to get, seize, from Anglo-French *encrocher*, from *en-* + *croch*, *croche* hook  
First Known Use: 1528 (Merriam-Webster.com 2013)

verb. One can seize or hook something or someone, but one cannot encroach without the help of a preposition.<sup>34</sup> Encroachment cannot take or possess its object directly, yet it needs an ‘Other’ for its existence. There must be an ‘Other’ whose possessions or rights are infringed upon to name encroachment yet the action remains with the subject of the proposition and can only influence the object of the action through the intermediary of a preposition.

Some words listed as synonyms to encroachment are to creep, to inch, and to worm, with to snake being listed as a related word.<sup>35</sup> There is a movement here and it takes its cues from animal worlds of both locomotion and time. The gradualness of the movement of encroaching and its relationship to imperceptibility and advancing beyond limits, -to name more synonyms- to impinge, infringe, intrude, invade, overpass, overreach, overrun, overshoot and to overstep,- invokes at least for me questions of what is *perceivable* for particular solidified histories of sensing and bodily organization or the umwelts that von Uexküll helps us see. However, the stubbornness of a perspective that must be either an intransitive verb (encroaching, to encroach) or a substantive (encroachment) belies thinking about how particular senses and temporalities developed in predator, prey and sexual relationships of hooking, catching or a seizing might be part of the history or practices of encroaching.

### **Bracketing Encroachment as Demolition, Restoration and the Law**

Encroachment is a common term in India.<sup>36</sup> Discussions of encroachment in media such as newspapers and some academic literature often frame encroachment as a problem that can be remedied by demolishing human-built structures. This action is offered as restorative gesture. What is defined as a previous encroachment of space gives a sense of returning to a more original, proper, or legal relationship. The distribution of space may have been disturbed by gradual stealthy creeping, sneaking, infringing behaviors of encroachment of one upon another. Both practices—those that are labeled as a form of encroachment and those that are considered to be a remedy to the problem of encroachment—point to a concern for, and a questioning of, inhabitation in terms of territory, permanence, generation, permeability and erasure.

The concept of encroachment is used in the law and is also tied to ideas of legal tenure, public space and the rightful (re)claiming of space. Ananya Roy in her work on Calcutta stresses how the category of illegality which justifies demolition functions as a disciplining “realm of regulation” in which the state can at any future point reevaluate and relocate occupants of many different spaces by declaring their inhabitation illegal (2003, 2004).<sup>37</sup> One of the main assertions of her work is to show how, in the name of

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<sup>34</sup> It is interesting to note that Wittgenstein’s “Finding of feet” also requires a preposition and cannot have a direct object.

<sup>35</sup> (Merriam-Webster.com 2013)

<sup>36</sup> Encroachment is a common term in the novels *Raag Darbari* and *The White Tiger* whose original publication dates span half a century (Sukla 1992, Adiga 2008).

<sup>37</sup> Thus, illegality/legality is a disciplining regime (Roy 2003). Amita Baviskar has also discussed how the arbitrary enforcement of particular groups’ illegal actions has led to social and spatial inequalities. Particularly interesting for this study of politics and practices of encroachment among dogs and humans in



public space or a reclaiming of what she terms the bourgeois city, different locations, at least in Calcutta, are reinscribed as informal and therefore illegal in a process that maximizes insecurity as it maintains both the patronage and political exclusion of groups of people. I agree with this assessment, but would like to shift the focus of thinking about encroachment a bit away from the schemes of urban developmentalism of the state and the political patronage of bounded entities of class, caste or inhabitation.<sup>38</sup>

Does encroachment as act, practice, phenomena, concept or term of discourse only come into existence through large-scale practices of state-sponsored legal codes or demolitions, and if so, is it even possible to think about encroachment while, at the very least, momentarily bracketing discussions of legality and large scale human interventions?

This is a field study that is attuned to the politics and practices of stealthy creeping, hooking, and seizing, or of the encroaching of different kinds of creatures in the city of Delhi. It is my hunch that following a microscopic frame focusing on the ways that human and dog life rub up one upon the other in a mega city such as Delhi will push understandings of encroachment as a set of practices, as well as its deployment as a conceptual term.<sup>39</sup> In the pages and chapters that follow, I will pay special attention to the dissimilar timings of dog and human lives in terms of differences as species and as individuals, as well as distinctions in class or caste for both human and dog. I am interested in how the constraints of time, perception and the experiences of particular life histories and forms of embodiment can speak to understandings of encroachment in terms of Wittgenstein's concerns about finding an entity's own feet or whatever might 'stand' in for feet for the who or the whom attempting to sneak, creep, hook, seize, impinge, overreach or understand.

### **Becoming Caught: Opaque Perspectivisms**

But why write about this particular dog pack? Why this neighborhood? Why Delhi? In the earnest questioning language of anthropologists- what is at stake and what should the call be to take seriously here?<sup>40</sup> What claim can these dogs or I make about possible contributions to anthropological insights? I feel insecure and defensive towards these kinds of questions since I cannot really defend myself, Delhi dogs and their lovers or haters in this language.

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Delhi is a particular case of caste, class, breed and species scatological politics in a park space in Delhi (2004).

<sup>38</sup> Lawrence Cohen has pointed out to me that another significant form of encroachment in India is manifestation of the divine (personal communication).

<sup>39</sup> The timings of particular species life spans and histories also affect possible field and experimental studies. The fruit fly and the tortoise would require very different methodologies of engagement to ask certain questions.

<sup>40</sup> In a dissertation writing seminar the professor asked everyone to make clear why the particular story that each student was working on needed to be told in the particular geographic location in which it was embedded. I never felt that I could adequately answer this. In this dissertation, besides for questioning if specific geographic locations have a particular fit to certain stories, I would also inquire whether or not seriousness is always the tone in which the anthropologist needs to make appeals to relevance.

In lieu of a justification, I would like to discuss what I learned about encroachment and understanding among entities from living with a pack of dogs in relationship to other dogs and humans in one particular neighborhood in Delhi. As I mentioned in the introduction, without planning to, I became caught in a specific group of dogs, which then organized my relationship to other humans and dogs in this particular neighborhood. Thus, becoming caught, a term I am borrowing from Jeane Favret-Saada, organized my possible interactions and ability to meet, greet, acknowledge or to know about particular dogs and humans in this neighborhood (1980).

Jeanne Favret-Saada calls attention to what she calls the problem of becoming caught in her work on witchcraft in rural France. In some ways being caught has similarities to calls for situated knowledge in science studies.<sup>41</sup> In both, neutral knowledge or what Favret-Saada terms a “mere desire for information” is impossible. However, becoming caught highlights a slightly different problem than situating knowledge, whose main goal seems to be locating knowledge production and producers to reclaim an embodied objectivity.<sup>42</sup> Instead, Favret-Saada makes the claim that one can only study witchcraft from within the structural/linguistic positions of actually being ‘caught’ in the roles of what she calls an unwitcher or the bewitched.<sup>43</sup> Favret Saada points out that in witchcraft:

Wanting to know for the sake of knowing, is literally unthinkable. For a single word can tie or untie a fate and whoever puts himself in a position to utter it is formidable.” (1980:10).

In this neighborhood in Delhi one cannot occupy a non-locatable position in relationship to human speech about dogs or human and dog interactions. This is similar to the study of witchcraft in rural France where:

Nothing is said about witchcraft which is not closely governed by the situation of utterance. What is important, then, is less to decode what is said than to understand who is speaking and to whom.<sup>44</sup>

It is interesting to note how Favret-Saada in her study of witchcraft outlines a perspectivism that rivals that of von Uexküll’s study of the biology of sense.<sup>45</sup> In both, there is a posited limitation of what can be perceived due to the structure and history of

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<sup>41</sup> Favret-Saada’s work (1980) predates that of Haraway’s call for situated knowledge (1988).

<sup>42</sup> Favret-Saada is freed a bit by the subject matter of witchcraft, which unlike science studies, does not have to concern itself as much with a recuperation of a less naïve concept of objectivity (1980:11).

<sup>43</sup> The position of the witch him or her self cannot really be occupied in this system according to Favret-Saada (1980).

<sup>44</sup> “Nothing is said about witchcraft which is not closely governed by the situation of utterance. What is important, then, is less to decode what is said than to understand who is speaking and to whom. In the field, the ethnographer is himself involved in this speech process and is just one speaker among others. If he then chooses to write a scientific report on spells, it can only be done by always going back over this situation of utterance and the way he was ‘caught’ in it; this interchange between having been ‘caught’ and ‘catching’ things (from a theoretical viewpoint) is precisely what must be pondered” (Favret-Saada 1980:14).

<sup>45</sup> Perhaps there is an affinity in the phenomena of witchcraft and the biology of sense that science considered as a general term lacks?

one's perceptual apparatus and placement within different configurations of communication and relationship.

And a discussion of dogs and humans in a particular Delhi neighborhood, like witchcraft, is located in already opaque relationships between neighbors, where the position of the “dog lover” the “dog hater” and the “I don't give a damn about dogs” person and his or her kin, affines and servants marks a limit of interaction, conversation, knowledge and the possibilities of human and dog encroachments. These caught positions of “dog lover” and “dog hater” are of course articulated with other forms and histories of “caughtness” and the categories and kinds of human and dog that these catchings have helped engender. It is a partial aim of this dissertation to explore some of these multiple forms and categories of being caught as a human or dog in Delhi. I will now turn to a woman, let's call her K, who is hooked into a particular web of dog and human interactions in the same Delhi neighborhood where certain dog snouts found my particular anus.

### **K: “Propping up the Pack”**

K takes a walk many afternoons with her toddler. As she walks the neighborhood with her daughter, sometimes with, and sometimes without a stroller, her pack of dogs follows proudly behind.<sup>46</sup> I very much enjoyed catching sight of this group. The dogs would see K and the baby leaving their house and come from wherever they had been resting to trot behind K and the stroller, often in single file. Each dog's head would be held forward and slightly down looking at the same time both purposeful and complacent to be moving in a group. The dogs were most certainly going for an afternoon stroll with K and the baby but they were definitely not being walked. Circumambulating the neighborhood with this mother and child seemed like a great prize to the dogs and the habitual nature of the event reminded me of ritual procession.

For more than five years K, her husband and older son had been taking care of this pack of Delhi ka dogs (dogs of Delhi). In K's terminology she was “propping up the pack.” She explained to me that this meant that the dogs were not pets in what she defined as a “Western” sensibility. Her family might go away for a month or more to visit family in South India where they were originally from. During these times she expected the dogs to fend for themselves, but normally when the family was in residence the dogs got one meal a day from this household, often rice with some chicken.

K was very aware of offering the dogs a space to live in the city that was neither servile nor abject. For her, this “propping up” of street dogs is the proper arrangement for the dog in the city. She stressed that she did not need to “be in their business” all the time. The dogs can have their life and sociality because they have been “propped up” by K and her family, but they are free to come and go. As she saw it, she was providing a space for the proper sociality of dogs. Neither dog nor human needed to live on top of each other. However, the city would be much a sadder milieu “if there were no possibility of meeting a dog sitting next to you at the bus stop,” according to K.

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<sup>46</sup> I hesitate using the adverb proudly because I do not want to start a conversation about possibly multi-cultural anthropomorphisms or the possibilities of understanding emotions across species or culture at this juncture.

However, K's act of propping up this pack has been controversial in the neighborhood. K knows that some of her neighbors resent her and her pack. When some neighbors complain that their children are not safe with K's dogs, she counters with questions about some of these children's innocence. Do these children taunt the dogs by throwing stones or by pretending to, or actually hitting them with sticks?<sup>47</sup> And K also sees other more sinister undercurrents in some people's complaints about the dogs. K is sure that "what is at issue is pollution."

K is from South India. She eats meat, including beef. She does not tell people about the beef, but she thinks some neighbors suspect it. She is in a mixed Hindu and Christian marriage and she props up a pack of street dogs that she does not attempt to control or tie up.

One of the main advocates for eliminating all the street dogs in the neighborhood keeps two European breed dogs tied up in his yard at all times. They never stop barking and the noise of these two tethered breed dogs is a constant sound in the neighborhood. K says that "he keeps those dogs for prestige and protection, but he never interacts with them...The servants feed and walk his dogs." In fact, another common procession in the neighborhood is the nightly walk of the two white Spitz dogs of the neighbor who wants to rid the streets of all stray, community, pariah or Delhi ka dogs. The two Spitz are always on leash and K is correct in stating that it is always the servant who walks these dogs. These dogs trod the very same ground of the central park as K, her toddler and her pack, but these two groups never overlap in the same space temporally. K's pack is generally dispersed and ignores the nightly walk of the breed dogs and servant as a non-event.

In the problem of becoming caught the issue of "who is speaking to whom," or perhaps even more importantly for the humans or dogs in this neighborhood, 'who can 'speak to' or interact with whom' comes to the fore. This politics of location is dependent on opaque positions and relationships. This one neighborhood in Delhi is just such a site where complex histories of being caught determine the emergence and interactions of different whos and whoms.

### **Knowledge, Naivety and the Problem of the Near**

Favret-Saada in her own study declared that she was never able to study witchcraft nearer than ten kilometers from her residence (1980). This does not mean that this distance of ten kilometers somehow permitted a broader vista or any semblance of a disembodied "god's eye view" to enlighten the problem of witchcraft (Haraway 1988). Favret-Saada is adamant that even 'embodied objectivity' is not on offer and one needs to be hailed as either an 'unwitcher' or a 'bewitched' in order to enter into the phenomena of witchcraft at all. In discussing the importance of Favret-Saada's concept of becoming 'caught' for this work, I am stressing how both fragile and solidified affinities, abhorrences, and indifferences among particular humans and dogs in this Delhi

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<sup>47</sup> There is a common practice of hitting and pretending to hit dogs, especially among male children and adults in Delhi. Cohen notes a childhood training of violence towards dogs, as well as old women in Varanasi in his work on aging. "Dogs were powerful signs of the interstice and were frequently juxtaposed with figures of interstitial old women" (1998: 264-265).

neighborhood have structured interactions that in turn seem either transparent or opaque due to the particular catchings or caughtness of each individual dog or human perceiver.

And for this project, I need to ask a methodological question: what if Favret-Saada had attempted to study witchcraft in her neighborhood and not ten kilometers away from it? What paradoxically might have come to light by embracing instead of resisting the constraints of how one has been positioned and caught in a very opaque relational nexus that one really cannot gain another vantage point on? And how would a focus on these kinds of limits affect discussions of what can be loved, despised or known?

I first enter this neighborhood as a paying guest. A friend of a friend of a friend has a room to rent. I start living in this neighborhood and I do not initially put that much attention on the local dogs or the humans for that matter. The man whose house I am living in wants me to keep a low profile in the neighborhood, which I attempt. Yet, the addition of a foreigner and a female to this enclave is impossible to keep a secret. When I move into this neighborhood, I am not a dog or ‘animal lover’ which is the common term for Delhiites who participate in mass feedings of street dogs or dog sterilization programs.

Yet, over the course of months I do become undone by specific dogs in Delhi. I become caught by Delhi street dogs and the pariah dog as a type, as well as and more importantly by very specific individual dogs. This does not happen all at once like a Christian conversion or new birth, but there is no way that I can be adjacent to the Delhi dog story I am telling.<sup>48</sup> However, my problem of being caught is not just a limitation of knowledge acquisition due to the opacity and absolute specificity of the positionings that one must occupy to know anything about neighborhood street battles with and over dogs in Delhi. There is another form of the caught in play here, which is my increasing devotion to particular dog ‘whos’. This love for specific pariah dogs becomes a problem that helps me explore both Delhi “dog love” and “dog hate” and the upper limits of the fear of seeming to be overly taken in by the world or naïve in academic discourses.<sup>49</sup>

As I have said the care of pariah, street or community dogs had become a controversial topic among neighbors and therefore the household in which I was living asked me to be discrete about even what started out as the casual feeding of the nearest

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<sup>48</sup>Paul Rabinow proposes adjacency as a methodology for inquiry (2008). I will discuss this concept more in chapter five. My particular take on adjacency puts Rabinow in dialog with Von Uexküll (1957) and his concept of functional tones of an organism in order to think about how humans can be very near and even cohabit with another and yet in no way overlap.

<sup>49</sup> It would be much easier to speak of dogs and humans in Delhi in terms of their vulnerabilities to each other by either making categories such as Western dog love or invoking the words of a philosopher such as Levinas to dissimulate my predicament. However, a sometimes better modality for understanding Delhi dogs and humans, at least in my case, might be to talk of bhakti, rather than continental philosophy or categorical clichés. And even though I was not at all looking for or expecting this transformation through dog (and Donna Haraway has opened up the terrain of declaring oneself out as an old female dog lover) I do realize a declaration of dog bhakti is not a defensible analytic position, especially since its contours can at the same time be reviled in terms of dog love as an essentially Western contagion, while bhakti can be read as my inappropriate appropriation of an India as essence. Thus, dog bhakti occupies all too easily a site that I am calling the anthropological abject, the position of many an anthropologist’s absolutely unassimilatable other, the naïve appropriating new age romantic or any such grouping of adjectives. However, as someone who was until recently been much more comfortable in a cynical register, I realize that having a beloved is a necessarily mute secret, although it is all about idiotic smiles. Devotional caughtness is never articulate and all I or anyone in a similar predicament can really do is blink like an idiot if they are ever caught by others in the splendor of their full adoration.

pack which was already a habit of this household.<sup>50</sup> However, the dogs themselves could not keep our relationship secret and started to greet me publicly at the start of their territory in this anus punching manner that I have already discussed.

When K's son would come home from school he also was greeted and herded by this repeated punching of dog nose directly into human anus. K's son and I were actually the only two people in the neighborhood that were greeted in this way by this pack. You see, K's pack of dogs and mine was the same. I was, without yet knowing this term, "propping up" the same pack of dogs as K. However due to tensions in the neighborhood over dogs and my commitment to maintain a low profile, K and I did not speak to each other while I lived in this neighborhood. When we finally met and started to talk about the pack, our first conversation lasted three hours. Towards the end of this meeting K said "it was so good to talk about those dogs" and "I did not realize how much I needed to talk about those dogs."

From our conversation, I learned that on the other side of the wall from where I had been staying the dogs had different names.<sup>51</sup> On my side the two males who I actually did not like that much were "the Guptas," a joke between the owner of the house and one of his friends. I did not feed these two fawn-colored males on my side of the wall. On K's side, the Guptas were the most esteemed of the dogs. The more 'dominant' one was a solid Delhi ka Dog hound with a wide head. K and her family called him Edmond.<sup>52</sup> The lesser Gupta on my side of the wall was named Squiggles on the other side. He was much leaner than Edmond and I was not that endeared to him because he had the bad habit of continually marking the front porch of the house I was staying in. In my mind I thought of him as a Cassius figure or kind of a lurker.

K's family did not have a separate name for Charlie who was most probably Edmond's 'son'. The owner of the house on my side of the fence had saved Charlie's life when he was a puppy, which was about a year before I lived in the house. The owner had let Charlie and his sibling stay in the house a few nights when it was very cold outside. This was a major event because the owner did not think dogs should be let in the house. Both dogs were sick and the owner brought the dogs to the vet for medicine and only Charlie survived. So our house was more Charlie's house than the two dominant Guptas', although Charlie was definitely not taken account of in the overall pack. Charlie was fed only white bread from the home I was living in. He was not really part of K's pack. K thought Charlie had a lumpy misshapen head and we both agreed that he was not the brightest dog we had ever met. Charlie also had scaly patches on his ears, which is often a sign of high estrogen levels in a male and he, unlike his uncle the lesser Gupta/Squiggles, did not mark territory. Instead he urinated, not unlike a horse with his back legs spread apart, dumping all of his urine at one time.

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<sup>50</sup> Even before my arrival, this household was in the habit of feeding pre-packaged white bread to the nearest dogs (what would become my pack) because this food would not add any extra work for the servant.

<sup>51</sup> I met a woman on a bus in Oakland, California, who had grown up in Bangalore, India about fifty years ago. She told me that when she was a child the dogs in her neighborhood "had breakfast by one name, lunch by another and yet one more for dinner."

<sup>52</sup> The question of what is meant by a dominant or submissive dog, like the term pack is controversial and I will discuss it to some degree in chapter two. That being said, one of the Guptas was in general deferred to by the other, even though I think it could be said that for humans and dogs power relationships are often subtle and changing, as well as often institutional.

The adult female of the group, and Charlie's 'mother', was a very small but powerful white dog with bat ears that K called CP and my side called Pinky. I thought Pinky was a force of nature and I was in awe of her. She could scramble over ten foot walls and had boundless energy. She was very adroit at defending her status in the group and I started to become increasingly aware that Pinky had bitten a few people in the neighborhood.

I never did talk with the neighbor who keeps the two Spitz dogs even after I no longer live in the neighborhood. I may be following K's lead here because she also generally avoids speaking with this neighbor even though his house is just past the one that I stayed in. Most communication between these households happens through other neighbors or neighborhood committees or information is gleaned from servants who in some senses move more readily through the space of the neighborhood than their employers or the dogs do.

This reticence to engage with neighbors is not that dissimilar to the dogs of the colony who hesitate to go beyond territory that they can comfortably claim as a pack. For example, going in another direction from K's place about four houses, there is another dog pack of all black dogs. I find that I almost never go in this direction in the neighborhood, because I know I will be greeted by less than friendly dogs that are actually quite a bit more aggressive towards me than the pack at the front gate to the colony. I see no reason to risk moving in this direction since there seems to be nothing to gain by this dog and human encounter from my perspective.

I am also quite aware, especially as I become more caught in caring about 'my' pack, that the Spitzes' owner is a threat to the fragile sociality of K's and my "propping up the pack." This specific dog sociality is caught in opaque relationships among different entities, both human and dog, that permit its possible flourishing. And that which permits this specific pack sociality to exist in this human urban milieu is tenuous and ephemeral at the best of times.

I also realize that my declaration of dog devotion is for some not a defensible analytic position and that it can easily be dismissed since it approaches the limits of certain academic fears of seeming to be overly taken in by anything in the world or being naïve. In her work, Favret-Saada marks her discomfort with conceptual practices that are overly concerned with not being considered naïve or caught by discourse.<sup>53</sup> Specifically she states that her project is not about attempting to 'get uncaught' but that "what is needed is a second [or more] 'catching.'"<sup>54</sup> Favret-Saada quotes Bertrand Poirot-Delpech and his critique of some post-structural thought at length: For Poirot-Delpech:

They [Chatelet, Derrida, Foucault, Lyotard, Serres] are all trying to stop being taken in by words...not to de-pendre [depend] either on God, on Being, on Man on any centre or even on any locatable place. The spatial comparisons used by

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<sup>53</sup> I think that Favret-Saada's point here is to mark explicitly what one cannot know from the particular relationality in which they find themselves (1980).

<sup>54</sup> I wish to suggest that what is needed is a second 'catching' and not a 'getting uncaught'...this marks unequivocally the distance that separates me from both classical anthropology and post-structuralist thinking in France in their shared ideal of 'a totally a-topical' theorizing subject (Favret-Saada 1980:7).

them all refer to the same total a-topia, an absolute nomadism: to talk from nowhere, to become ungraspable, unapproachable, irrecupable in every way'<sup>55</sup>

If we attempt to think about the requirements or necessity of understanding from a position of being caught or grasped by an entity or entities in the world, then the issue of encroachment comes once again into focus in terms of the who or the whom attempting to sneak, creep, hook, seize, impinge, overreach or understand.

This desire that Poirot-Delpech points to of becoming ungraspable or irrecupable or what I might term unencroachable in some post-structuralist thought is a certain rejection of sneaking and creeping, as well as a denial of how encroachment might produce topos, location, place, milieu or territory versus obliterating it. Favret-Saada states that her rejection of attempting to become 'uncaught' "marks unequivocally the distance that separates [her] from both classical anthropology and post-structuralist thinking in France in their shared ideal of 'a totally a-topical' theorizing subject" (1980:14). This is an important comparison. However, I do see differences that matter in the preoccupations of Bacon's God's eye view interpretation of the world, classical anthropology and the desire to "not depend on words" that Poirot-Delpech marks as a post-structuralist tendency.<sup>56</sup> These positions can be as different as what coalesces under the signs of positivism and post-structuralism, yet these positions do share some refusals to accept limitations, although there are important differences in what those refused constraints are. With that caveat, the relationship between becoming caught and the importance of location or place or what I could term becoming near that Favret-Saada is gesturing towards helps me make sense of how K's 'propping up the pack' was different from some other offerings to dogs or other animals in the neighborhood, as well as in other parts of Delhi.

In this particular neighborhood, the only person engaged in the daily offering of food that was indiscriminate in terms of not having a very specific target of feeding particular named dogs, a specific pack or just the dogs that were the most near to one's house was a man who drove everyday from another neighborhood to leave food at the outside walls of this neighborhood. He always brought paneer (cheese), white bread and

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<sup>55</sup> "They [Chatelet, Derrida, Foucault, Lyotard, Serres] are all trying to stop being taken in by words[...] their "politics" in the full sense of the term- are defined by words from the family of prefixes "de" de-voiler [to reveal], de-caper [to scour], de-crypter [to decipher], de-pister [to detect]de-construire [to deconstruct', in short, de-penswer [to unthink], de-river [to drift]too: not to de-pendre [depend] either on God, on Being, on Man on any centre or even on any locatable place. The spatial comparisons used by them all refer to the same total a-topia, an absolute nomadism: to talk from nowhere, to become ungraspable, unapproachable, irrecupable in every way'" (Bertrand Poirot-Delpech quoted in Favret-Saada 1980: 14)

<sup>56</sup> I would like to make clear a few points. Each of these experiments of subjectivity was set in motion by different sets of disagreements in their respective intellectual milieus. By collapsing the milieus of these different perspectives and clumping them together, Favret-Saada may be making too general of a claim of an a-historical empty-subject of the knower by combining locations of the ethnographic narrator and post-structuralist thinkers, for example. There is also a difference between Bacon's God's eye view of an observer who has even lost his body and attempts by authors who get clumped into a post-structuralist category to de-center modern objects/subjects, such as Man. In a similar but even broader argument, Uday Singh Mehta (1999) has all 'Western' thought occupy the sign of the empty subject which then becomes the whole world. This type of argument reinforces immense entities of coherence such as the West and the East. I will examine a bit more different forms and projects of the empty subject or desires to become ungraspable or self-less in chapter two.



milk which he placed together in a bowl that he left by the outside wall. This white on white on white mixture made me a bit nauseous, but this man told me that it was an offering to god.<sup>57</sup> I asked him who this food was for and I was told that it was for any creature or nature in general. He told me that he owned a hotel and he was offering the food to ensure an auspicious enterprise.

Besides his god or business, the concrete beneficiaries of this offering were many birds (mainly crows), rodents, cats and one particular extremely obese large white dog that guarded the territory of the bowl from all other dogs and for that matter most of the birds, rodents and cats. This man was very obese himself and he never interacted with the primary beneficiary of his extra-neighborhood feeding—this bloated large white dog. This dog was not a member of one of the packs in the neighborhood and most people and all other dogs went out of their way to avoid this animal. Most people in the neighborhood considered this dog to be particularly mean and crazy and a guard in the area mentioned that this obese large white dog had bitten many construction workers at a nearby building site.

It is interesting to think about the extra-local nature of this offering of food. We could think about this man's offering in terms of both transactional theory and projects that attempt to become a-topic or ungraspable. What might this man be 'propping up' to borrow K's conceptual term? This man comes to this wall marking the border of a neighborhood that he does not inhabit and he lingers in this location for not more than five minutes a day to deposit this food and then he drives off. He is not concerned about what creature might eat his offering and in the end he is mainly producing just one dog that is challenging for the neighborhood in terms of the scale of its living. This is true in terms of the dog's immense size as well as his sociality that exceeds the constraints or norms of other dog or human living in the neighborhood. And the man himself is not very caught by his fed creatures since he does not make himself locatable in the neighborhood or to the animals that he feeds. This feeder for god is not completely a-topic since one could find him for at least 5 minutes each day, yet his feeding can be compared to practices that attempt to become ungraspable or empty—or in this case to feed from nowhere—in terms of not bothering to figure out who he and the other entities in his (non)neighborhood and (non)encroachments could be becoming. However, as

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<sup>57</sup> It is interesting to think about how this practice might be a-topic in terms of refusing to feed near where one actually lives or is 'caught' in a neighborhood scene by either human or animal to use Favret Saada's term. It is also interesting to think about how these feedings might relate to admonishments to offer food to animals as outlined in the Bhagavata Purana. Lawrence Cohen discusses the significance of what this text says about the feeding of certain categories of animals in his work. Cohen puts this textual requirement for the Hindu householder to feed animals in dialog with the gendered and aged human body in North India whose animal feeding practices can be read as more mad than altruistic or becoming graspable (1998: 264-277). One question to ask might be to what degree is even an a-topic desire to feed from nowhere or everywhere also a transactional world, but one in which the transactional circuits are unknowable, not because they are opaque in a Favret-Saadean sense, but because they are defuse and do not seem to be of value. At issue are the relationships between attempting to be ungraspable and un-locatable in terms of different modes of cultivating a self-less subject as opposed to focusing on entanglements or networks that also tend towards evacuating the graspability of particular actors or subjects, but in a different registrar. I will address the ways in which the subject or an entity can become self-less in these very different modes of engagement with the world more in chapters two and six.

what could be termed an invasive human from another neighborhood, the hotel owner was profoundly affecting the creation of milieu in this neighborhood.<sup>58</sup>

K's definition of the evocative phrase "propping up the pack" is worth exploring further. It had its limits. It was actually all about limits. She was not feeding hundreds of dogs like some upper middle class and rich "animal lovers" in Delhi. She was also not indiscriminately offering food as an act of religious piety to anything in the city that might eat in the hopes of obtaining a boon of health or personal wealth for the human. She did not make this pack into pets and quite consciously resisted taking custodial, legal or medical possession or responsibility for these animals. She refused to have them registered with the municipal authorities and did not have them spayed, neutered or vaccinated. Instead, she "propped them up."

### **India: Topic and A-topic Inversions<sup>59</sup>**

In different moments of conceptualizing India, the importance of location has occupied alternative understandings of the good. Arjun Appadurai in a seminal essay mainly concerned with how a particular concept can become paradigmatic or stand in for a specific place in anthropological thought, outlines a classic dualism between the figures of the native and the cosmopolitan in anthropological literature.<sup>60</sup> The native is defined by his or her belonging to a place. However, Appadurai sees this belonging as an immobilization, an incarceration and a confinement.<sup>61</sup>

In contradistinction, the cosmopolitan is an outsider in terms of not being constrained by a native place, as well as being mobile in the sense of seeing, knowing and thinking outside the constraints of a native place, as well as often being the one who defines someone else's native place.<sup>62</sup> The cosmopolitan is paradigmatically a Westerner whose native place is considered to be so diverse and ambiguous in its manner of thought

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<sup>58</sup> There are some interesting similarities here with Latour's description (1993) of how the boundary work of modern divisions permits more entanglement without constraint, as well as my own interest in the very different projects of becoming ungraspable in scientific experiment, philosophical inquiry and service to god that I have started to explore in this chapter. I will address the problem of the self-less servant more explicitly in chapter two.

<sup>59</sup> In thinking about how concepts tend to invert as they move across both disciplinary and historical milieus of thought, I am indebted to Canguilhem and Paul Rabinow's reading of him (2008). J.P.S. Uberoi in his study of Goethe, as well as his engagement with different modes of Indian thought offers more forms than inversion to engage the world in what could be termed a modern methodology of expanded similitude (1984).

<sup>60</sup> In a discussion that is now approaching a twenty-fifth anniversary, Arjun Appadurai connects the anthropological figure of the native to a conception of hierarchy as exemplified by Dumont's arguments (1970) that Appadurai claims have "frozen" what is possible to think about India as well as confining the possible "varieties of human consciousness within these boundaries" (1988: 36).

<sup>61</sup> "So what does it mean to be a native of some place, if it means something more, or other, than being from that place? What it means is that natives are not only persons who are from certain places, and belong to those places, but they are also those who are somehow in-carcerated, or confined, in those places" (Appadurai 1988: 37).

<sup>62</sup> "These outsiders, these observers, are regarded as quintessentially mobile; they are the movers, the seers, the knowers. The natives are immobilized by their belonging to a place. Of course, when observers arrive, natives are capable of moving to another place. But this is not really motion; it is usually flight, escape, to another equally confining place" (Appadurai 1988: 37).

and living that it exceeds the native's confinement of place or limited mobility of fleeing.<sup>63</sup>

Some critiques of Neo-liberal and Imperial Reason have tended to invert the hierarchy of values that Appadurai is marking in this essay. Instead of positing a particular native location or inhabitation as a trap or prison and a particularly Western non-place as liberation, Dipesh Chakrabarty, Uday Singh Mehta and Ajay Skaria in quite varied work argue for the importance of place glossed as belonging, tradition, experience and an intense commitment to what Wittgenstein defines as "a passionate commitment to a system of reference" (1980). For Mehta, for example, it is precisely the rejection of the constraints of the local that instead of producing the cosmopolitan knower, creates 'monstrous' effects as evidenced by British Liberalism/Imperialism (1999).<sup>64</sup>

At issue in discussions of being either caught or irrecupable, or imprisoned or ambiguously complex are experiments in thinking about the limits of what can be perceived, thought, known or lived in a specific place, environment, milieu and bodily organization. One of the targets of Appadurai's essay is some of the conceptual registers or analogies taken from the natural sciences or biology:

The slightly more subtle assumption behind the attribution of immobility is not so much physical as ecological. Natives are those who are somehow confined to places by their connection to what the place permits. Thus all the language of niches, of foraging, of material skill, of slowly evolved technologies, is actually also a language of incarceration. In this instance confinement is not simply a function of the mysterious, even metaphysical attachment of native to physical places, but a function of their adaptations to their environments. (1988: 37)

So the confinement that Appadurai is objecting to is that which the milieu demands of the native as organism.<sup>65</sup> Appadurai offers Levi-Strauss' 'Science of the Concrete' as evidence to show how whoever is deemed a native in anthropology can only think his milieu or niche:

The intellectual operations of natives are somehow tied to their niches, to their situations. They are seen, in Levi-Strauss's evocative terms, as scientists of the concrete. When we ask where this concreteness typically inheres, it is to be found in specifics of flora, fauna, topology, settlement patterns, and the like; in a word, it is the concreteness of place. Thus, the confinement of native ways of thinking reflects in an important way their attachment to particular places. The science of the concrete can thus be written as the poetry of confinement. (1988: 38)

What is missing from these accounts—both Appadurai's native imprisoned by place or its inversion, the praise of belongings, inheritances, roots and communities by

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<sup>63</sup>This discussion of a mobile knower and immobile known has similarities to some critiques of science such as that of the collective authors of *Science, Hegemony and Violence: A Requiem for Modernity* (1988).

<sup>64</sup> There are echoes of Latour's argument about categorical entanglements of modernity here also (1993).

<sup>65</sup> Appadurai marks the way in which anthropology and sociology literature has sometimes posited a stronger emotional sense of belonging to place for the 'native' than for any other. Mehta (1999), Skaria (2002) and Chakrabarty (2000) pick up on this tendency, but invert its valuation.

critics of liberalism and Empire such as Chakrabarty, Mehta and Skaria—is the problematic of thinking location, perceiving and thought as being formed in its absolutely specific graspings and encroachments or what could be called a micro-nativity of specific configurations of relationship and their particular lineages. Both the concept of being “caught” that Favret-Saada’s witchcraft scene brings to the fore and von Uexküll’s Umwelt theory share a commitment to perspectivism that does not permit a universal, general or categorical environment or atmosphere of the native to emerge especially as an inversion to a nowhere West.<sup>66</sup>

Favret-Saada’s distinction between different situations of utterance or positions of caughtness in reference to all the participants in any necessarily obscure scene undoes any easy reference to a generic native or community, general niche, collective inheritance or the stubborn division between the West and the Rest that such arguments often rely upon. There are two features to being caught that Favret Saada brings out. First, is the aspect that I have mentioned already, of acknowledging that in any human or dog scene one is positioned by others and therefore one cannot know the whole scene.<sup>67</sup> This ‘caughtness’ brings us to the second point: one should not try to understand ‘catchings’ or ‘caughtness’ in terms of an imported or pre-determined typology of identity or already formed categorical ‘whos’. Thus, the ‘usual suspects’ or the long reach of the native and cosmopolitan division that Appadurai employs to discuss the shifting values of mobility, location and thought might actually impede listening to how becoming caught emerges whos and whoms in a particular scene, just as it ignores investigating more specific legacies of differential positioning.<sup>68</sup>

And in the inversions of the valuation of place and belonging that some critiques of Liberal Reason and Empire have deployed, there is also a tendency to think these particular graspings or encroachments of location as a universal milieu, a blank tableau or general atmosphere populated by similar entities of belonging. Chakrabarty and Mehta in particular invert Appadurai’s discussion of certain historical tendencies in anthropology and present a defense of tradition as a sense of belonging to a particular place which is often glossed as experience. What is particularly important to each of their arguments and the important intervention that they are making is the assertion that the *constraints* of location are necessary for any human existence, functioning or definition of freedom to emerge. I agree with them on this point and would broaden it to include work that makes us think about the constraints that have emerged from the solidified histories of evolution.<sup>69</sup> This focus on constraint helps undo the over valuation of the cosmopolitan that Appadurai marked. However, Chakrabarty, Mehta and Skaria maintain an overly bounded understanding of their entities, a possible partial inheritance from some anthropology that does not pay enough attention to how forms of becoming ‘caught’ create encroachments that exceed references to a generic or general milieu, place,

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<sup>66</sup> The concept of a background that Marilyn Strathern brings out in her work is very similar. However, Strathern (1988, 1991) also tends to make this division between generic environment and the particular umwelts of specific entities mirror divisions between broad categories such as the West and the non-West.

<sup>67</sup> Freudian thought also marks the importance of the scene (1965).

<sup>68</sup> A distinction should be made between identifying a typology in a certain discourse and operationalizing that discourse in all other spheres of engagement.

<sup>69</sup> I am indebted to the importance of thinking about constraint to Terrance Deacon. Similarly, in an insightful essay Lewis Thomas declares that he would rather land a 747 with no training, than attempt to do all the work of his liver (1974).

tradition or a belonging that is not also marked by differential inheritances, especially within what Wittgenstein marks as a “strange country” and an “passionate commitment to a system of reference” (1953, 1980).<sup>70</sup>

Now let’s return to focus on the “flora, fauna, topology, and settlement patterns” that fascinated Levi-Strauss. His ‘science of the concrete,’ or what his ‘native’ can perceive or think in relation to his location is not a priori an error in terms of trying to think about the constraints of milieu and the relationships among flora and fauna as species, population and individual. At issue is how the deployment of biological concepts such as milieu or environment became flattened into a blank tableau and lose nuance as they have been incorporated into some anthropological discourse.<sup>71</sup> One could ask why the biologically infused socio-cultural anthropology of Levi-Strauss refused to explore the multiple milieus of any so-called native place more in the tradition of Von Uexküll.

It seems that Chakrabarty and Mehta’s promotion of a particular native experience still carries with it intellectual inheritances that have repeatedly confused the positing of constraint with determinism, as well as the refusal to break up generic milieus into the perspectives of grasping, encroaching, and becoming caught of multiple ‘whos’ and ‘whoms’ that must make up any scene or milieu. The biology that I would partially like to return to—that of von Uexküll -- is obsessed with this basic question: how does a particular “creature” “let in some influences and screen out others” (1957).<sup>72</sup> This question includes, yet exceeds biology and exploring some ramifications of this problem in multiple registers of dog and human interactions in Delhi is one goal of this project.

Appadurai seems disturbed by a discourse that wants to think about the constraint of place mainly, I think, because it is a space that somehow only encumbers the native and not the cosmopolitan. Chakrabarty, Mehta and Skaria attempt to rehabilitate the positive value and necessity of constraint, but they do not challenge, and in fact strongly reinforce understandings of generic milieus that become mere backdrops for pre-determined identities, instead of focusing on what emerges out of more specific histories of becoming differentially caught in what could only seem to be the same milieu or umwelt from a certain perspective many kilometers away and not from the problematic location of the too near for academic research that Favret-Saada marked as ten kilometers away from where she was actually caught in a scene or configuration of relationship of living.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> The family is one site in which the impossibility of a general sense of belonging is quite apparent.

<sup>71</sup> And yet some histories of studying constraint in biology, information theory and cybernetics would alternately be aware of and also reject thinking about perspective.

<sup>72</sup> I am not alone in this fascination with von Uexküll, but I would also caution against using his work to propose a general umwelt for the human, which seems to just replace the concept of the social. Instead, I am particularly indebted to von Uexküll’s biological Kantian insistence on the ultimate individuality of each umwelt. I also take note of the critique of von Uexküll that points out that so much of what influences organisms is not sensible to them that Terrance Deacon pointed out in conversation (personal communication).

<sup>73</sup> Von Uexküll in outlining umwelt theory states that: “We shall gain insight into the first principle of the Umwelt theory: all animals, from the simplest to the most complex, are fitted into their unique worlds with equal completeness. A simple world corresponds to a simple animal, a well-articulated world to a complex one” (1957:6).

## Differentially Caught in a Scene

When I first came to this particular Delhi neighborhood, Pinky the tiny super energetic female dog of K's pack had just had four pups. Two were white and two were fawn. Within the first week of my arrival, I noticed that one of the white pups was missing. At the time I had hoped that someone had adopted it, but later learned from K that this puppy had been mangled by a female dog in the neighborhood named Sundar and later died from its injuries. Sundar was the beloved dog of a boy's hostel nearby. Sundar, like the creation of the un-locatable feeder for god, was also very large, lumpy and obese. Similarly, she did not seem to be part of one of the dog packs in the neighborhood. Instead, her 'pack' seemed to be the fifty or so boys of the hostel. According to K, Sundar had never had puppies.<sup>74</sup> Instead, K termed her a "puppy eater." K estimated that over the five years that she had 'propped up the pack,' she had buried twenty or more puppies that Sundar had killed. K had buried so many of Sundar's kills that she stopped naming the puppies. K told me that sometimes in the night Pinky would arrive shaking and have diarrhea all over K's porch. K said that she "hated Sundar." However, she didn't do anything about her because Sundar was loved and protected by the hostel boys.

The other white puppy disappeared about two months after I had arrived in the neighborhood. I later learned this was also Sundar's work. Even though nights were filled with the sounds of dogs barking, howling and having both altercations and wild romps, one night a few weeks after the second white puppy had disappeared, I heard sounds that can only be described as screams of one entity being killed by another.<sup>75</sup> This was still before I knew of Sundar's existence. I went outside and found one of the fawn colored puppies quite cut up. I brought her into my room for the night. She shook all night and I noticed that she would whimper in her dreams for months after this encounter.

This event commenced my dog "propping up" activities in the neighborhood. About four months after this incident, the other fawn-colored puppy had a chunk of her back leg bitten out by Sundar. This event initiated my interactions with a local veterinarian. Therefore, Sundar could be considered an actant who enrolled me into this dog pack "propping" behavior and my own becoming in the milieu of K and her dog pack.<sup>76</sup> K herself told me that before she had started "propping up" "this pack over here, they were just getting slaughtered."

How to make sense of the dog Sundar? She was both K's despised "puppy killer," as well as the beloved mascot of the boys' hostel. Would she make the most sense in a Darwinian frame? Should I cite references as to how wolves and wild type dogs will kill the litter of a non dominant female in the pack (Marshall Thomas 1993). Even though she was definitely not part of K's or my pack, could Sundar somehow have

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<sup>74</sup> Is K making a pan-species normative declaration about female procreation here?

<sup>75</sup> I want to, but I am resisting saying murder here. However, the screams of this creature under threat in this case were too familiar for comfort. It reminded me of hearing a pig in Jaipur being caught by two boys on a motorcycle. In both cases my nervous system reacted in a way that I cannot differentiate between being a witness of an assault on a human versus another being.

<sup>76</sup> I am thinking of Callon and his famous scallops here (1999).

thought she was the usurped breeding female of a pack that she did not share a territory with?

How might Sundar's milieu make sense from her perspective? This is in many respects an unanswerable question.<sup>77</sup> However, thinking specifically about how she was caught by particular humans and dogs in the scene of this neighborhood, as well as thinking concretely about how particular humans in the neighborhood were caught by Sundar and her supporters helps undo any appeal to generic natives, floras, faunas, milieus, experiences or traditions. Neither Appadurai's native as prisoner of a niche nor Chakrabarty's or Mehta's native as believer can hold all the ways in which the multiple actors (and even just the humans) in just this one little scene in a tiny fragment of this one neighborhood in Delhi were caught.

Just as difficult would be attempting to find an irrecupable or empty location to make sense of this scene from. The naturalist might be tempted to edit him or herself out of the scene along with the other humans (K, the hostel boys, the Spitzes' owner, the a-topic feeder, Charlie's rescuer and me). This figure might also collapse Pinky and Sundar into a composite female street dog category and altogether avoid the questions of individual difference and the specific life history of a dog.

However, this scene is most at risk of being self-censored. Irrelevant, naïve, and inconsequential are just some of the words that come to my mind and I am the one attempting to point out why this scene might matter. I imagine someone attempting to occupy the non-position of an a-topic nomad probably mentioning how I must be embedded in an anthropomorphic 'Western' pet discourse at the very least. The studier of the social might mock this dog and human drama of dead puppies and diarrhea as being out of place and not a serious concern for India—a location defined by serious concerns. Or if this street and house level study of humans and dogs were to proceed, its sense might be mostly enveloped by immense conceptual terms such as globalization, liberalism, modernity or governmentality.

From K's perspective, Sundar's actions were about both morality and pathology, neither of which frame would have probably been that of Sundar. Sundar's actions were outside what K could accept as a valueless nature. She disliked Sundar, but she mainly blamed the hostel boys for cultivating and protecting such a dog.

And from Pinky's perceiving apparatus, how could K's, Sundar's or the hostel boys' actions be interpreted? Also most likely an unanswerable question. However, Pinky could be seen in the neighborhood scrambling over ten foot walls, obsessively grooming her remaining two pups for literally hours, and sometimes in the night shitting and trembling in fear on K's porch.

It is interesting to note that both Sundar and the white dog of the extra-local feeder for god both became out of proportion in terms of their immense size, their existence outside of any semblance of a dog pack and their tendencies to bite tens of humans or puppies respectively. Was this a question of scale? Was the love that so many boys might have shown for one dog a problem in terms of ratio or bodily organization? Was there too much devotion and care directed towards just one dog? Did this love show up in Sundar's immense size and penchant for tearing the puppies of other dogs apart? Did Sundar think that all the hostel boys were her huge all male, all young

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<sup>77</sup> Since anthropologists gave up getting into the heads of natives, they should probably not attempt to start doing this with dogs.

and all human pack? Was the institutional setting of so many boys living together particularly sexed, gendered or aged in a way that transferred some kind of understanding of what a proper milieu should be from these rationally housed human boys to this one female dog?

I am being intentionally provocative and slightly comedic in my positing of different possible umwelts and causalities of becoming caught in this scene. However, I am quite adamant in my desire to highlight how any easy reference to natives glossed as country or culture, generic location or belonging needs to be submitted to even more questioning. Who and what could be coded as Indian experience in contradistinction to a particularly liberal reason in this scene? Phenomena are not always legible in a framework of belonging, inheritance or roots and this does not mean that they are not legitimate problems to think about particularly in India where the clichés of the native and the cosmopolitan haunt attempts to think about milieus in their specificity and complexity.

### **Generalizing the Operator: Typology and the Evacuation of Milieu**

Von Uexküll's biology is based on always thinking first about what he terms the operator or subject who perceives and acts (1957:6) His main point is that different life forms have very different capacities of sensation and therefore the perceptual world of each is in a deep sense a different world. He points out that humans tends to assume that the life world that they perceive from the specific organization of their body is also that of all other creatures.<sup>78</sup> Von Uexküll then permits what he has defined as a universally projecting human to be able to see differently by attempting to imagine how the different organization of a creature encounters and makes a world. For example, very different persons are imaginable from his discussion of the organization and functioning of the sea urchin compared to the dog:

When a dog runs the animal moves its legs; when a sea urchin runs, the legs move the animal" (von Uexküll 1957:32)<sup>79</sup>

Similarly, what from a human perspective might seem to be very different categories of experience or function are not distinguishable for the jellyfish:

For the medusa *Rhizostoma* swimming, feeding, breathing are carried out by the same rhythmic contraction of the muscles on the edge of the umbrella (von Uexküll 1957:32).

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<sup>78</sup> "The umwelt of any animal that we wish to investigate is only a section carved out of the environment which we spread around it-and this environment is nothing but our own human world" (Von Uexküll 1957:13). I should also point out that this is an unusual universal claim for Von Uexküll.

<sup>79</sup> "We cannot think in terms of the sea urchin projecting the receptor cue of darkness outward into space, since it has no visual space. What actually happens is better conveyed by the analogy of a wad of cotton passing lightly over it photosensitive skin" (von Uexküll 1957:36)



Sometimes, as in the examples above, von Uexküll's postulating of differences in perception, the specificity of subjects, operators and umwelts is couched in terms of a discussion of general kinds. We can see this tension between categorizing entities and attempting to think the specificity of the lived Umwelt that von Uexküll is dealing with also in some neighbors' speculations about the causality of dogs biting humans in K's colony.

K's dogs as well as others in the neighborhood did bite some people. K is embarrassed for the dogs because it makes her politically uncomfortable, but she does think that dogs can read signs of human hierarchy and that dogs are in fact casteist creatures because in her view dogs as a general group tend to be more aggressive to humans of lower caste/class groups.

Some of the hostel boys made quite different categorical distinctions about humans, dogs and the act and perception of a dog biting a human when they advocated removing all street dogs from the neighborhood. These particular hostel boys wanted to exempt Sundar from their plan as they suggested getting rid of those dogs classified as street or stray to protect the category of blind humans. The logic of this advocacy was to protect humans who cannot see from being bitten by sleeping dogs if the blind human happens to hit a dog with their cane while maneuvering in their dog-laden Umwelt.

Theories offered by different people in the neighborhood about why dogs might bite humans included: 1) Dogs are aware of the caste distinctions of humans. 2) Dogs can be aggressive towards the blind. 3) The people bitten are not from the neighborhood and are considered foreigners by the dogs. 4) The people who get bitten move in a timid or non-authoritarian way. 5) Dogs bite people who tease dogs or are aggressive towards them by hitting or pretending to hit them. 6) Dogs are excellent judges of character and being bitten by a dog is a sign of bad moral character.

It did seem to me that certain classes of people such as tutors, workmen, rag pickers and sweepers might be at more risk of an aggressive encounter with dogs qua dogs; however, I would always be more interested in the specifics of each encounter and the importance of being caught for both individual dog and human.<sup>80</sup> Instead of adjudicating these schemas of causality and categorization of the dog bite in Delhi, my point here is to examine how these discussions of dogs, humans and biting were so easily dislodged from the specifics of graspings, encroachments, affinities, hatreds and territorialities of particular dogs and humans and the scenes of their socialities and multiple milieus and instead, restricted to the level of categorizing the dog qua dog and human qua human in reference to a generic milieu or backdrop. This species division is then further delimited by distinctions of type that could be glossed as culture or a "commitment to a system of reference." These definitions of class, caste, street and blind for example seem to too readily become categories that have this amazing ability to dislodge from their locations, territories and milieus and specificities of encounter as they confront each other in a general or empty space.

When I think of the category of the Delhi street dog, one image comes to my mind of a dog gazing up with a sideways glance (I can see the whites of its one eye), as it skulks away and hunkers down to protect itself from a pretend or real human blow. I am not sure if dogs have general categories, but people carrying sticks or moving their arms

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<sup>80</sup> I will deal with a less categorically driven and more of an Umwelt and being caught in configurations of relationship approach to dog biting in chapter five.

over their heads at a forty-five degree angle would include the police, guards, rag pickers, the blind and people, usually male who enjoy making a dog cower.

Just as breathing may also be eating for the jellyfish, a human with a stick or an arm gesturing upward might be one general category or kind of experience for a certain kind of dog in Delhi. And for von Uexküll's umwelt theory, people thinking about dogs biting humans in one Delhi neighborhood and myself and this project, this play between experience and typologies seems to tend towards evacuating the particular location or milieu and the specificity of encounter in attempts to make human sense.

If we continue this comparison of umwelts and problems of typologies or classifications, the category of the native is not the kind of human who could assume that all human subjective life can stand in for that of all other creatures' umwelts. Instead, as Appadurai points out, the native is the one by whom a difference in a supposed generic human umwelt becomes noticeable.

Many have pointed out how correlations between the native as a different kind of human have played out in racist histories that have also divided the human from the animal as type of creature. Grappling with this painful legacy of divisions between the human and other organisms, as well as those of different typologies of humans is evident in the critiques of Appadurai, Chakrabarty and Mehta. It would seem that it is exactly these legacies of violent colonial encroachments and their solidifications that seem to make a defense of categorical belonging seem an attractive argument, and yet if the permitted entities and boundaries are those forged within this same history, then all the legacies and histories of experiments of more provincial configurations of relationship and becoming caught are made continually unperceivable.

Thus, for example, Appadurai's generic untethered cosmopolitan cannot be an equivalent to von Uexküll's human who extends his umwelt to include all of life because the cosmopolitan is explicitly defined by not having a milieu, but instead to be a figure of inversion.<sup>81</sup> Instead, von Uexküll, even though he is talking in kind or species, also seems to be promoting thinking that attempts to control for this tendency of typology to escape its milieu or to become ungraspable, unapproachable or unencroachable.

### **Locating Strangeness: Of Wanderers and Talking Lions.**

The best way to find out that no two human umwelten are the same is to have yourself led through unknown territory by someone familiar with it. Your guide unerringly follows a path that you cannot see. Among all the rocks and trees in the environment there are some which stung together in sequence, stand out as landmarks from all the others, although they are not apparent to a stranger. (Von Uexküll 1957:50)

So, with this discussion of territory and strangers of von Uexküll, we might be in a similar milieu to that which some have deployed using Wittgenstein's concept of the strange land. One would have to ask if Wittgenstein's strange land is similar to the promotion of belonging that Mehta and Chakrabarty have invoked, which seems to make

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<sup>81</sup> And von Uexküll is positing this assumption of a human milieu that assumes that it encompasses all creatures to give an example of an error in thinking.

the most sense as a foil to the cosmopolitan, the untethered, the neo-liberal and the universal and not those caught in the very near that Favret-Saada marks. The point I would like to make is that these milieus of cultural belonging, just like that of the imprisoned native, seem to emerge as overly coherent inversions of a general or even absent environment of the West. This legacy of thinking a general milieu or atmosphere makes understanding what is considered the social sometimes dangerous activity.<sup>82</sup>

However, the particular landmarks that von Uexküll is mentioning in the quote above are created by actual use in a particular terrain and do not seem to be dependent on a sense of belonging that cannot even entertain the idea that another entity that wanders into a scene might learn some sequence or make its own invasive path. This type of argument of belonging does not even permit what is described by Wittgenstein as the “*mastery*” of the language of an Other to make any dent in any possible understanding or interpretation of another creature’s sign.<sup>83</sup> “If a lion could talk, we could not understand him” is an apt slogan for this perspective (1953). The promotion of belonging deployed as a counter to unmoored existence has helped produce a politics in which the native seems to be as imprisoned as he is exalted in his type, his uniformity, his generic milieu and his status as enigma.

### **Differential Inheritance and the Parsing of Enigma and Understanding**

Instead of focusing on a general belonging or ‘commitment to a system of reference,’ I would like to concentrate on how one can be caught as a certain creature, often by other creatures all with particular histories, predispositions and blind spots of sensing that must exceed a system of reference. Von Uexküll brings out the possibility of thinking these multiple histories in his concept of the *umwelt*. By putting the concept of the *umwelt* in dialog with Favret-Saada’s focus on the importance of being caught in specific scenes of interaction where references to any general belonging are not possible, we can try to see how encroachments as well as avoidances and solidified and fragile histories of sensing can be understood as opaque or not—and most importantly *for whom*. We should attempt to reduce the effects of histories of the blank milieu and the general belonging of category, but I do not think it is wise to attempt to eliminate the individual entity.

Then we shall also see all our fellow men in their individual soap bubbles, which intersect each other smoothly because they are built up of subjective perceptual signs. There is no space independent of subjects. If we still cling to the fiction of an all encompassing universal space, we do so only because this conventional fable facilitates mutual communication (von Uexküll 1957: 50).

For von Uexküll there is “no space independent of subjects” and each human (and I would add dog) is to a large degree in his or her individual *umwelt*. However, to pretend that von Uexküll’s individual is a neo-liberal individual sans milieu would be to

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<sup>82</sup> Strathern makes this point, but also provides us with a Melanesian *umwelt* that operates as an inversion to a generic Western environment (1988).

<sup>83</sup> I am making reference here to Wittgenstein’s quote that begins this chapter (1957:50).

profoundly misunderstand him.<sup>84</sup> To understand this individual, one must first focus on solidified histories of organization or the *evolution* of different kinds of organisms.<sup>85</sup> And the issue of specific territory and landmarks cannot be ignored. However, one must try to take notice as much as one can of the actual scene and not only categorical distinctions or some belonging produced from an imagined inversion of a posited nowhere. This is a crucial point. Von Uexküll's biology of sense can actually help problematize any easy reference to belongings or kinds in a posited milieu. Similarly, Favret Saada's insistence on looking at how different individuals are positioned in any scene undoes any generic belonging that can really only make sense in relationship to some outside.

What also needs to be added to this conversation is the developmental milieu and the specific life history of an individual as an organism or particular life form and life. Proponents of general cultural belonging or categorical milieus often make reference to the concept of *inheritance* in a register that highlights the concepts of family and kinship.<sup>86</sup> However, in this work, I will have to be concerned with how inheritance in many different registers of family, kinship and life history is often more about very specific inheritances and disinheritances that position and catch individuals quite differentially rather than create any sense of general belonging of a group.<sup>87</sup> Differential inheritances, disinheritances and exclusions at the level of the individual are crucial to thinking about what legacy, lineage or roots might mean. The individual that I am proposing is complicated and it is with this creature of solidified and fragile histories that anthropology seems to have the most difficulty.<sup>88</sup> The who or whom that shits and shakes on the porch and the who or whom that bites or gets bitten does not live or die in a generic *umwelt*, milieu or scene of belonging.

Differential inheritances, disinheritances and the trauma of specific histories of becoming caught especially *within* what gets glossed as a 'passionate attachment to a system of reference' can help me think about the problem that I mentioned at the beginning of the chapter: How is enigma and understanding parsed in the world?

If I want to look at the dog as well as the human while at the same time exploring the histories of the native and the cosmopolitan in relationship to thinking about specific dogs and humans in Delhi, then I cannot start by positing generic milieus for these categorical distinctions from inverted terrains of nowhere. A newly posited outside does

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<sup>84</sup> I think it would also be a mistake to equate von Uexküll's individual in his *umwelt* with the schema that Strathern outlines for the individual in reference to the bubble of society. An *Umwelt* seems much closer to the emergent process oriented world that Strathern outlines for Melanesians. However in making the Melanesian system specific to a Melanesian culture, Strathern puts a veneer of belonging onto her schema (1988). Referencing Kant, von Uexküll sees the environment as produced from an intersection of different operator's perceptual signs (1957:29).

<sup>85</sup> This would be a turn to evolution that would entertain insights from an evolutionary development approach, as well as endo-symbiotic theory, while being aware of the limits of extending any insight too far into other domains. For an introduction to evolutionary development see (Minelli 2009). And for an introduction to symbiosis see (Margulis and Sagan 1995).

<sup>86</sup> I have used the examples of Mehta (1999), Chakrabarty (2000), and Skaria (2002) in this chapter.

<sup>87</sup> Freud is another thinker who posits scenes in which there is no equality of 'whos' posited. Chaucer might be another reference to how any territory is going to have individuals in it who are in a very different relationship to each other that always disrupts general belonging.

<sup>88</sup> Jeffrey Moussaieff Masson and Susan McCarthy in their book on animal emotion relate how Jane Goodall talked about the problem of the unusual individual in research (1995:3).

not collapse the complexity of any particular scene whether we are thinking at the level of species, society, community, neighborhood family or friend. Erasing the ways in which encroachments are multiple layered histories of becoming caught does not create belonging, which brings us back to the question of why any entity lets in some influences and screens out others?

### **Biographical Catalepsy and Receptor Cues**

An exploration of enigma, understanding and encroachments must unfortunately explore who I can or cannot stand or “find my feet” or some other body part with. As I think about navigating all the ways an entity becomes caught, I must dwell a bit on the attractions, consciousness and catalepsies of my own organism and its histories of very particular inheritances and disinheritances. What are some of the histories of the receptor cues of my own interest as von Uexküll might phrase the question (1957)? What or whom is able to sneak into my frame without my awareness of it? What or whom are my attractors? What or whom does this particular history invite me to perceive, love, hate, know or not in Delhi?

As I mentioned in the introduction, this project is indebted to different experiments that have attempted to write from one’s blind spots, as well as their affinities and abhorrences. In the chapters that follow I will attempt to pay special attention to ellipses and catalepsies or when I feel particularly weak or vulnerable in a scene. Deleuze has wondered if these catalepsies or disappearances are the spaces that actually permit human thought.

As I also stated in the introduction, this project is a return of biography. And yet in this biography, attunement to sensing or figuring out what could ‘stand for feet’ and with whom is as much about thinking about disinheritance within what has been glossed as a ‘shared commitment to a system of reference’ than any general belonging.

K’s relationship with her dogs is about kinship. However, this relationship is less about solidified histories of typologies or reproduction, but encountering the vagaries of each individual dog and human. Like so many of the people that I met in relationship with dogs in Delhi, K does not feel that she chose her pack, but there is a lived and particular affinity that has developed between her and her dogs that is differentially played out in relationship to each individual dog. I told K that I did not know the kinship term for our relationship as co-pack proper uppers on either side of our shared wall, but that we were related somehow. K told me that she was very intrigued by this idea.

## Chapter 2

### Juridical Dogs and Other Abductions

And he and his tutor and counselors were very troubled because they did not understand me nor I them. Nevertheless I gathered that he told me that if something from this place pleased me that the whole island was at my command.<sup>89</sup>

#### Part 1: Selfless Service and Public Dogs Feeding and Milieu

In chapter one I examined multiple experiments in feeding and “propping up” dogs in one little corner of one neighborhood in Delhi. Each of these different forms of engagement produced very different forms of occupation, becoming caught and possible dog and human milieus, all in a territory that an unencumbered dog or human could objectively walk through in less than five minutes.<sup>90</sup>

K wanted to give just the right amount of “propping” to her dog pack that also became mine so that she would not be excessive or infringe upon her particular dogs’ enjoyments and what she considered to be their own responsibilities and socialities apart from their engagements with people. For K, it seemed that issues of constraint, proper ratio in all things and what might be considered correct or proper encroachment between human and dog and dog and human, as well as dog and dog and human and human configured K’s engagements with both particular dogs and her human neighbors in Delhi.

In contradistinction, the portly hotel owner indiscriminately fed all that eats outside of his neighborhood and for god, a multi-species entanglement that materially manifested the huge ‘pack’-less white dog who almost all configurations of humans and dogs actively avoided in this neighborhood. This dog was said to have “bitten more than thirty” workers at a nearby construction site, according to two guards or watchmen, who also fed and cared for an elegant black pharaoh-type dog in front of their guard post on a part-time due to this dog’s preference to spend more time at a nearby home where the guard’s conjectured that the food was probably better.

In yet another dog and human experiment in living which took place within a few hundred meters of the three that I just mentioned, a multitude of hostel boys and their one and only favorite dog created a milieu, at least for the dog Pinky of K’s and my pack, in which dozens of mangled dead puppies continually appeared. In human worlds, only K really seemed to perceive these events and to take on the work of burying the dead.

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<sup>89</sup> (Christopher Columbus quoted in Greenblatt 1991).

<sup>90</sup> Lawrence Cohen in his work on aging in Varanasi identifies the dog as a creature of the interstice, or the space between domiciles as opposed to that of the domestic. This interstice is also occupied by old women, widows, sadhus and all creatures that trouble orthodox understandings of generation and proper lineage of the family (1999). The dog in Delhi could be seen as occupying this space for some; however, dogs are also involved in government programs like the Animal Birth Control project, as well as massive feeding programs of animal rights advocates. There is also a space, as I have attempted to demonstrate in chapter one and this chapter, for the casual feeding of the dogs that are nearest to one’s home. These practices for many are not abject, massively interventionist or involved that much with attempts to change the human self, but casual parts of everyday life. This would also include everyday violence.

The feeding of dogs then in this neighborhood was not one activity and it was most certainly not considered animal rights activism on the part of any of the human participants. It was also not universally condemned or condoned by people in a way in which coherent types, kinds, classes or categories of people could also then be classified as either lovers, haters or indifferent to dogs by type. One could not make obvious correlations, for example, in class or caste background and one's relationship or sentiments towards dogs and what one might consider to be their rightful occupation of Delhi.

Instead, very intricate milieus were created in which what was perceivable depended upon if, and how, one might be caught in what could be termed overlapping environments, *umwelts* or configurations of relationship that exceeded any analysis in broad social categories such as nation, region, class or caste. In addition, each of these feedings created different scales, ratios constraints and limits among configurations of organisms in which very different understandings of engagement, entanglement, encroachment and inhabitation emerged from each particular world or milieu of feeding for particularly caught individual dogs and humans.

### **Encroachment or Entanglement**

As I said in the previous chapter, encroachment is an explanatory term that is in wide discursive and practical use in India to make sense of the limits of entities and rightful occupations. Encroachment in some popular deployments of the term in India is construed as a problem that can be remedied by demolishing human built structures in what is then defined as a restorative gesture to a more originary environment or rightful tenure. In this argument, what is seen as a previous encroachment of space gives a sense of returning to a more original, proper or legal relationship that bears some similarity to designations of invasive plants or animals in ecological discourses, as well as some popular discussions of what some in Delhi consider to be Aryan, Vedic, Persian, Greek, Muslim, British or Punjabi occupations. Designations of encroachment and excessive expansion are then concerned with identifying proper limits of entities and returning territory to the most original or most legal of occupiers.

In the law, encroachment is tied to ideas of legal tenure, public space and the rightful (re)claiming of space. As I said in chapter one, Ananya Roy shows how, in the name of public space, different locations have been re-inscribed as informal and therefore illegal in a process that maximizes insecurity as it maintains both patronage and political exclusion of groups (2003).

All these understandings of encroachment in India are complicated by battles over temple and mosque spaces in which the power of the deity can assert itself in what can be understood by rightful occupation. Here encroachment is an effect of the "self-making" of a god or spirit that emerges or occupies a site through its own efforts only needing to be recognized by particular humans to consolidate its divine encroachment upon territory.

In the different experiments in human and dog interactions that I discussed at the beginning of this chapter we can see that not one particular form, political understanding or moral value emerges from these encounters that produce very different worlds for both dog and human in a space that could seem to be the same environment from only a

certain perspective. Yet what difference would it make to think about the creation of different milieus of dog and human in this part of a neighborhood in Delhi from an analytic of encroachment as opposed to that of entanglement?

In the definition of encroachment, there is a sense of going beyond proper limits and this could be its power as a conceptual tool; however, as the cases of dog and human feedings and the formations of milieus in one section of one little neighborhood in Delhi might make more clear, whether invoked in the context of the state, community politics, neighbors or the divine, encroachment is a tool whose main use seems to be to actually resist particular entanglements and co-inhabitations as such. In other words, the call or the naming of encroachment seems to mark boundaries, borders, territories, selves and transgressors against all of these as its main function.

Encroachment as it is used in India then is an interesting concept to think about some limits in the deployment of notions of relatedness, entanglement and fragmented or networked selves as possibly aspirational forms for analysis, living or politics absent a discussion of particular milieu and perspective.<sup>91</sup> For example, if we think about the “rhizomorphic zeitgeist” of what has been called the animal turn and multi-species ethnography in anthropology, what would “aspiring to mimic the “rhizomic sociality” of mushrooms” mean for either dog or human in the experiments of feeding, eating, biting, living, shitting and dying of K, Pinky, the hotel owner, the white dog, the construction workers the guards, the pharaoh hound, the homeowner L, the hostel boys, Ana or the mangled puppies?<sup>92</sup>

This attempted thought experiment might push us towards having to spend more time thinking about how understandings of entangled, dispersed or networked selves are being used in different contexts, texts and arguments to what effect. However, this preliminary exploration of putting the concept of encroachment in contact with that of entanglement seems to bring up the issue of how understandings of the boundaries of selves and the boundaries of territories cannot be assumed to have one value absent an examination of particular milieus, environments of sense, conceptual habitats and particular perspectives.

In this work of letting concepts of encroachment and entanglement rub up against each other we could think in terms of translation and language. However, in this case a focus on environment and especially what we can learn from Von Uexküll’s concept of an *umwelt* might help gesture towards keeping in mind how all conceptual tools have something akin to a habitat. To that effect borrowings of metaphor and model that want to think about different body plans, behaviors and the attendant histories of sense of organisms would I think do well to pay attention to disciplinary knowledge, body plans and how, where and to what effect metaphors and models are being put to work.

Dogs are not humans in significant ways and mushrooms are not dogs and all the dogs creating a life in the different socialities that I have given a brief sketch of in this chapter so far do not share the same sociality or any necessary form of politics or cosmology from the forms of these relationships. In addition, for dogs and humans, what

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<sup>91</sup> McKim Marriott’s concept of the ‘dividual or relational individual would be a particularly interesting concept to think about what is being asserted for the form of the rhizome in terms of attempting to think about the different modes of encroachment that I have discussed so far in this dissertation (1968, 1976)

<sup>92</sup> (Choy, Faier, Hathaway, Inoue, Satsuka, and Tsing. 2009; Tsing N.d. quoted in Kirksey and Helmreich 2010; Kirksey and Helmreich 2010)



I am calling configurations of relationships seem to have profound effects on the differential positioning of individuals that the rhizome as concept would seem to elide. The metaphor of the rhizome while maybe doing significant work of disruption in some arguments, terrains and environments, particularly obscures the degree to which becoming 'caught' in partially opaque configurations and histories of relationship for both dog and human in Delhi micro-habitats matters in a way that it might not for mushroom living, for example.<sup>93</sup>

In other words, a rhizome as a form or relationship should not operate as a sign, even as a material-semiotic one, absent specific discussions of particular milieu. To paraphrase Stuart Hall from another conceptual *umwelt* in which he discusses the impossibility of blackness as having one meaning or political valence: I don't care what a rhizome is as a sign, I care what it does (1993).<sup>94</sup> This is probably exactly what invokers of the rhizome would say they are interested in, the particular doing and furthermore that being, becoming and doing cannot be separated. However, I would point out that no form, metaphor or model can have just one general meaning or function and I would want to know if a rhizome always acts in the same way with all body plans or organizations or would it eradicate all other forms re-making all as itself. Would there be any danger in this mimicry for some forms? Would it make any sense to talk about different milieus for the rhizomic? And could we not think of some situations in which a rhizomic form would result in a not so stellar cosmology or politics of living as examined from a perspective of particular human living? Has anyone ever met an 'evil' rhizome and how would 'evil' be marked from the logic of its form?<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>93</sup> My point in making these comparisons is to demonstrate how what Freud (1965) or Favret-Saada (1980) are attempting to think about in invoking scenes of opaque human encounter becomes obliterated in the form of the rhizome as a general kind. This may have been Deleuze and Guattari's goal; however, if one wants to replicate the rhizome in a generic milieu, then they should at least make these issues explicit. I will explore the concept of the rhizome more specifically in chapter four

<sup>94</sup> Jake Kosek in his exploration of military uses of the swarm patterns of bees mentions that he is more interested in how actual patterns are being used as opposed to how they are being discussed as philosophical concepts (2010). I would agree that there is a distinction to be made here, but Donna Haraway with her continued insistence on the meld between material and metaphor would remind us that this distinction is not a hard one.

<sup>95</sup> This would most probably be true even for genetically modified organisms. For example a human with some mushroom gene would most probably have a psychic life quite different from that of a mushroom itself. Later in this dissertation I will deal more explicitly with some problems in attempting to denaturalize differences among and within species at the same time deploying biological concepts to extend social and political theory. Once again an attention to the requirements of certain arguments will keep us from putting all arguments together. We need to ask exactly what we might be denaturalizing or re-naturalizing in biological arguments depending on the locus of investigation. At issue in this kind of questioning is the need for attention to what is operating as foundational or a critique of foundation in arguments about nature, politics and cosmology. It is particularly important to think about when in a text the author is critiquing disciplinary formulations and when they are using insights gleaned from a particular knowledge formation to extend concepts in their own work. A careful monitoring of these moments would help us question assertions that claim a particular politics must be the outcome of certain disciplinary understandings or conceptual form.

## Scenes of Enigma, Understanding and Abduction

If I add the concept of the scene as it emerges in work that is often coded as that of psychology or drama, with the notions of the environment, the milieu or the *umwelt* whose conceptual habitat is more that of biology or philosophy, then what changes in attempting to understand multiple manifestations of possible dog and human encroachments, entanglements, and scales and ratios of human and dog in this one neighborhood in Delhi?

In the previous chapter, I discussed the concept of the scene in terms of Favret-Saada's understanding of how becoming caught in a configuration of relationship was a different formulation of existence, experience and knowledge than what is understood by either situated knowledges in terms of all knowledge being partial, embodied and yet objective or a post-structuralist nomadism that in the words of Bertrand Poirot-Delpech is an attempt to "become ungraspable, unapproachable, [and] irrecupable in every way."<sup>96</sup>

The importance of the scene and becoming caught entertains the possibility that an entity such as a human or a dog can be so near or imbricated with others in specific configurations of relationship, and not some gestured towards complexity, that they cannot gain any traction or perspective on some of the other differentiated players in a scene due to this closeness, which opaques. So this caughtness is at the same time that which is necessary to gain access to certain knowledges and feelings, while also being what limits or impedes access to other perceptions or points of view.<sup>97</sup>

The concept of becoming caught in exceptionally provincial scenes of encounter and histories of relation is necessary to maintain a space for the relational psychic life of humans and dogs in this story and analysis without either prematurely reducing each entity to a kind—such as a species, nation, class, breed, or caste—or blithely dissipating selves into entanglements, networks or elements.<sup>98</sup> The notion of becoming caught, since there is an insistence on a nearness, that promotes certain knowledges as it forecloses others, seems like a significant perspective from which to think about some differences between encroachment and entanglement as modes of encounter, analysis and possible cosmologies or politics.

As I mentioned in chapter one, to encroach is "to enter by gradual steps or by stealth into possessions or rights of another" or "to advance beyond the usual or proper limits"<sup>99</sup> To encroach comes originally from *croche* –to hook, to get and to seize. And of course there needs to be someone whose possessions, rights or person are infringed upon to name encroachment. Some kind of limit needs to be pushed against, but it also needs to

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<sup>96</sup> "They [Chatelet, Derrida, Foucault, Lyotard, Serres] are all trying to stop being taken in by words[...] their "politics" in the full sense of the term- are defined by words from the family of prefixes "de" *de-voiler* [to reveal], *de-caper* [to scour], *de-crypter* [to decipher], *de-pister* [to detect]*de-construire* [to deconstruct], in short, *de-penswer* [to unthink], *de-river* [to drift]*too: not to de-pendre* [depend] either on God, on Being, on Man on any centre or even on any locatable place. The spatial comparisons used by them all refer to the same total *a-topia*, an absolute nomadism: to talk from nowhere, to become ungraspable, unapproachable, irrecupable in every way" (Bertrand Poirot-Delpech quoted in Favret-Saada 1980: 14).

<sup>97</sup> The concepts of a vantage point and opaqueness are both favoring the sense of sight; however becoming caught would also be just as structural/relational and emotional, as it would be visual or exclusively enveloped in a loss of sight as a metaphor for the unconscious.

<sup>98</sup> And of course the mental life of humans and dogs would not be the same as kind, but would have some overlap in terms of both being vertebrates and mammals.

<sup>99</sup> Encroach (Merriam-Webster 2013).

be registered as such to name encroachment which brings us back to questions of sense. What is perceivable for particular histories of sensing and bodily organization and individual histories of experience? An entity can, of course, be completely ‘invaded’ and not register it as such. One could then ask if the concept of encroachment as opposed to that of entanglement gives us a different sense of selves, their relationships and perspectives that might be worth considering especially in work that is interested in looking at forms of selves such as both the human and the dog that are similar in that when both, “run the animal moves its legs; [as opposed to] when a sea urchin runs, the legs move the animal” (Von Uexküll 1957: 32).

In some senses, entanglement, like encroachment also takes some of its cues from different forms of catching and snaring, as well as a hampering, obstructing and overgrowing of both plant and human worlds. And similar to encroachment, to entangle can mean to fight, disagree or be in conflict. However, to entangle also points to a sense of confusion and a muddle that encroachment does not gesture towards. An entanglement then can be a “mass of confusedly interlaced or intertwined threads or strands” and a “confused jumble snarl, labyrinth, [or] maze.”<sup>100</sup>

At issue is what it might mean to be graspable, approachable, recoupable, situated or opaquely caught as a confusion, jumble or snarl of threaded entanglement as opposed to understanding grasping, and becoming caught as forms of seizure, stealth and advancing beyond usual or proper limits. And if the paradigmatic form of entanglement is the thread or strand then what would Wittgenstein’s concern about how “one human being can be a complete enigma to another” make sense in an entangled framework?

Or in other words, can we think about entangled enigmas and what would be the point of doing this? Wittgenstein frames enigma in terms of a “strange country with entirely strange traditions” at the same time that he makes enigma and understanding a particularly human problem. And yet, some limitations in making an interest in the entanglements of all forms of life reside under the rubrics of ‘multi-species ethnography’ or the ‘anthropology of life’ would be the concept of enigma or understanding and the forms of life that could be included in any sensical discussion of enigma and understanding. I wonder if issues of enigma and “finding one’s feet with another” are not also interspecies problems to some extent, but yet they probably cannot be a problem of every species or form of life. Are there thresholds of considering enigma as a possible problem of an entity and is that threshold the human or a subset thereof? Questions of enigma and the ‘strange country’ have been a very comfortable milieu of anthropology historically. Surely, we cannot foreclose questions of understanding and enigma to the human only, at the same time that to extend them to all forms of living without inquiry would seem foolish.<sup>101</sup>

My point so far in this discussion is to point out how an overly enthusiastic entanglement framework inclusive of all forms of the living makes some questions especially those of proper limits inchoate. And especially at issue in locations sometimes classed as post-colonial are exactly what the limits of entanglements, entities and borders might be. In encroachment type thinking as opposed to that of entanglement issues of proper and improper limits, seizures and possessions are always at the fore.

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<sup>100</sup> Entangle (Merriam-Webster 2013).

<sup>101</sup> And the pesky problem of the individual still haunts these discussions of alterities, countries and kinds.

And the question of enigma, just as that of being caught in provincial configurations of relationship, also brings us exactly to some other difficult questions entanglement tends to avoid, which is the psyche, mind or motivations of others. If the opposite of an enigma is being explicit, certain, clear or lucid, then how would it be possible to make claims about these possible states among a networked or rhizomic self?<sup>102</sup> It may be that this assembled self's advantages for some might be to foreclose questions of mind, motivation, and strategy, as well as a micro-politics of possibly extremely petty power exchanges and infinitesimal territorialities.

Anthropologists have been chastened for attempting to get into the mind of the 'native,' and yet the problem of other minds continues to, I think, methodologically haunt anthropology. The turn to complexity and entanglements might mark somewhat this discomfort both with a retreat from subjectivity, as well as an uneasiness with an analysis of kinds and categories. An anthropology of human and dog must run doubly into the problem of other minds both categorically and individually, as well as the possible understandings, enigmas and abductions in play.

John Borneman and Abdellah Hammoudi in their introduction to essays about the importance of fieldwork discuss the scene of encounter between anthropologist and interlocutors in the practice of ethnography.<sup>103</sup> For Borneman and Hammoudi, what they term "co-presence is also a source of knowledge that makes possible a transformation of what we know, specifically of the anthropologist's own self-understandings" (2009:14). At the heart of the question of co-presence as a mode of knowledge and experience are the contours and configurations of the 'whos' that are meeting. And I would have to ask how Borneman and Hammoudi's call for co-presence is similar or different from Haraway's investigation of species meeting and contact zones? For all these encounters are these 'whos' shot through or enveloped in discourse, essence, evolutionary development, lineages of disinheritance, atomistic and selfish genes, alterity, microbial colonies, attachment sites, social facts, umwelts, grammars that guide actions, abjectness or a sense of belonging, just to name a few options? The concept of co-presence as what transpires between the fieldworker and his or her interlocutor does bear specifically on differences between an analytic of encroachment as opposed to that of entanglement.

And if I am interested in the relationship between enigma and understanding both within and across species, within and among commitments to systems of reference and among individuals as configured in provisional relationship then I must think about critiques and uses of an analytic of presence, both in the history of anthropology, as well as in milieus marked by histories of the abductive violences that Chakrabarty (2000), Mehta (1999) and Skaria (2002) are all attempting to deal with in their differently positioned promotions of an analytic of belonging in the aftermath of colonialism.

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<sup>102</sup> Yes, this self is mostly unconscious, of many voices, unsure and configured in relationship, but it still has a history and motivations that a networked, discursive or entangled approach often tends to ignore.

<sup>103</sup> I will examine the concept of co-presence, as well as the problem of *being there* as discussed by Borneman and Hammoudi (2009), Geertz (1988), Heidegger (1962) and Kosinski (1999) at length in chapter five; however, I mention co-presence here to point out how a methodology which insists on the presence of another in anthropology is quite different from approaches that consider attempts at co-presence as delusional at best. In contradistinction to Borneman and Hammoudi, I would not insist that this encounter is what makes or breaks definitions of what is or is not anthropology given this discipline's penchant for experiment and reinvention.

It seems that in Delhi, the concept of encroachment is a popular analytic precisely because it addresses issues of proper constraint, limits and strategies that entanglement would not be able to mark. Wittgenstein in framing enigma in terms of “the strange country” is running straight into colonial histories in which attempts to decipher the motivations of sharply delineated categorical others in order to intervene and dominate have framed understandings of enigma, clarity and most importantly practices of abduction. At issue in encroachment especially as a multi-species analytic in the ruins of culture is the possibility of paying attention to how a sense of enigma or understanding among entities is not an entangled confusion, but often an at least partially abductive enterprise of making sense.

### **Selfless Service: To Judge and to Act “Friendly and Easier to Handle”**

I will now turn to look at human and dog interactions in Delhi keeping issues of encroachment, entanglement, co-presence, meeting and contact zones in mind. In the following, I will pay particular attention to both juridical decisions and animal rights activists’ proclamations about proper human and dog occupations in Delhi. I am particularly interested in how different experiments in self-making influence understandings of proper dog and human sociality and how different analytic and authorial selves become graspable, approachable (or not) in some juridical and activist formulations about the proper living of dogs.

In the neighborhood in which I was caught in scenes of dog love, hate and indifference in Delhi, neighbors sometimes argued with each other about the appropriate inhabitation of dogs in the city in general and their neighborhood in particular. More importantly they talked with specific allies in the neighborhood about suspect others or ignored people completely because of how they interacted or did not with dogs. However, in this neighborhood physical attacks or threats of violence on dog feeders did not occur to my knowledge, although there were fears and rumors of possible dog poisonings, as well as threats to call the municipal authorities to pick up dogs, some plans to rid the entire neighborhood of dogs and the actual disappearance of dogs.

In 2009, the issue of feeding dogs was brought to court in Delhi when plaintiffs from seven different neighborhoods sued in order to demand police protection from their neighbors. These plaintiffs accused their neighbors of threatening violence or actually attacking them because of their dog feeding activities.

The case was decided in 2009 in favor of the dog feeders; however, this ruling also restructured understandings of proper encroachments between dog and human according to the law. This ruling particularly evacuated the milieu, environment or understandings of provincial configurations of dog feeding. In its place, this court decision created an imaginative, assumptive and wildly abductive world of the dog and the human in Delhi.

“Feeding dogs makes them friendly and easier to handle.” This categorical statement is part of the 2009 opinion handed down by Justice V. K. Jain of the Delhi High Court in deciding the cases of seven petitioners. Justice Jain in his decision in favor of the dog feeding plaintiffs also declared that “feeding dogs is both lawful and helpful

and assists the municipal animal birth control programme in which dogs are sterilized and vaccinated area-wise” (Jain quoted in Anand 2009).

The use of adjectives in this juridical opinion is quite significant. The feeding of dogs is considered to be both lawful and helpful in seemingly absolute terms and this practice of feeding categorically creates the fed dog in general as “friendly” and “easier to handle.” In these declarations a certain kind of juridical dog is called into being by pronouncements that are quite spectacularly contradicted by the actual feeding regimes of just a smattering of dog feeders in one corner of one small neighborhood in Delhi which empirically produced a much more varied dog and human behaviors and affects.

Unlike the dog socialites that different feeding regimes engendered in terms of those of K, the hotel owner, the hostel boys, the homeowner L, the neighborhood guards or my own, the ‘friendly’ and ‘easy to handle’ juridical dog is not caught in any particular neighborhood pack or scene of feeding. Justice Jain’s legal pronouncements had nothing to say about the ways in which Pinky, Ana or the white dog did not lead interchangeable lives or even occupy the same milieu or umwelt of sense in what this judge would most probably designate as the same locale. Instead, in the categorical distinctions of dog and dog feeder in this court decision, there is an absence of any questioning about the sociality of dogs and humans in their particularity.

In a secondary ruling, the court decreed that designated feeding sites be set up for the feeding of dogs in neighborhoods in which the feeding of dogs had become a contested activity. Through the activities of the dog feeders and their petitioning the court for police protection from their neighbors, the feeding of dogs became an institutional activity now regulated by the Animal Welfare Board, the Residents Welfare Associations, SHOs and NGOS. These organizations became responsible for setting up centralized feeding areas with rules about the timings of feedings. The Animal Welfare Board of India made the following recommendation in 2010:

The guidelines say that stray dogs should be fed at places which are not frequented or less frequented or sparingly used by the public. The other features of the guidelines are: dogs should not be herded at a particular spot for the purpose of feeding; public causeways, public streets, pedestrian paths and footpaths are to be avoided; common/public area immediately abutting the entrance to flats/homes must be avoided; feeding should be undertaken at a time when the density of human population is minimal; feeding should be undertaken no more than twice a day and in a hygienic manner (Staff Reporter. 2010).

So this judgment posits a generic topologically or uniform milieu or environment in Delhi and a possible public space for dogs imagined as the less frequented, the sparingly used and the low density.

### **Selfless Service and Becoming a Task**

Those who are bringing suit and making pronouncements about the proper living of dogs in Delhi in newspaper and court documents are generally defined interchangeably as activists and animal lovers. In one newspaper article, Jasmine Damkewala, one of the

plaintiffs in the dog feeding case is identified as a self described “animal rights activist” and a lawyer. She is quoted as saying that “we face resentment from every quarter for feeding dogs” but “we don’t want people with such mentality to hamper our task” (IANS, 2010).

In both the language of Judge Jain’s “helpful and friendly” fed dogs and that of the above mentioned dog feeding plaintiff who will not be “hampered in her task,” there are echoes of what Thomas Blom Hansen has identified as “the construction of the political as a “virtuous vocation” in nationalist and post-independence [Indian] politics (1999:7). According to Hansen:

Upper caste notions of selfless duty and purity were inscribed into the construction of the ideal citizen. Politics and the affairs of the state were constructed as the realm of enlightened men of superior moral fiber (1999:7).

Hansen sees this politics as basically pedagogical in its form, as it denies all politics except for its own and defines all other claims as an “amoral vocation.”

The belief that religion and culture were elevated to an ostensibly apolitical level, above the profanities of the political. This institutionalized notion of culture and religion as apolitical, and the derived notion of selfless “social work” as ennobling and purifying by virtue of its elevation above politics and money, provided an unassailable moral high ground to a certain genre of “antipolitical activism” conspicuous among social and cultural organizations but also invoked in agitations and in electoral politics in India (Hansen 1999:12).

Defining people who object to the feeding of dogs as “hampering a task,” as this self described activist does, seems to fit with understandings of encountering disagreeing others from an assumed position of occupying a spiritual and moral high ground of selfless service that reduces conflict to an “impurity that needs to be cleansed.”<sup>104</sup>

So it is interesting when we consider dog activism in Delhi and juridical and activist discourse about it to question whether, or to what degree, the dog may be considered to be an impurity and for whom. It is upon the pariah or street dog and not on pet dogs more generally that the animal lover or animal rights activist practices their service, which seems to have some relationship to this lineage that Hansen marks of attempting to become selfless.<sup>105</sup> From different vantage points, the street or pariah dog could be classified as a vector of dangerous fertility, violence, disease and pollution, as well as a privileged space for some humans to practice this “selfless” purifying service or seva in the forms of feedings, vaccination programs, sterilization and the running of shelters.<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>104</sup> Hansen’s discussion of the history of “apolitical activism” in India is made in reference to analyzing the growth of the Hindu Right. In this political movement according to Hansen what needed to be cleansed and purified from the perspective of Hindutva understandings was the presence of the Indian Muslim among others (Hansen 1999: 13).

<sup>105</sup> Of course, these categories are not stable and the pet dog can always become of the street.

<sup>106</sup> One could define these incursions on the Delhi dog as a mimicry of regimes of sterilization and hygiene on human populations. I however, would like to avoid the ironic mode or that of parody. What worries me

Understandings of dogs as possibly polluting or dirty are not stable historically or geographically in India (Bibek 2008, Cohen 1998, White 1991). Indeed, although considered by some to be polluting due to their food choices, sexual habits or association with cremation grounds and the gods of those sites, some also position the Indian street dog, as I have mentioned, in larger projects of creating a particularly Indian citizenship. To “have compassion for living creatures” is one of a list of “fundamental [human] duties” outlined in the Indian Constitution.<sup>107</sup> And it is just such a justification of “performing their constitutional duty of showing compassion to all living beings” that Jasmine Damkewala is said to have used to welcome Justice Jain’s verdict in the Indian Express article (Anand 2009).

And yet in the case of this animal rights activist who will “not be hampered,” it is the dog ‘hater’ who she seems to refuse as an actual political entity. The person objecting to the feeding of dogs does not seem to be met in Haraway’s terms or able to be a co-presence in Borneman and Hammoudi’s. Instead, the person objecting to the feeding of dogs in a neighborhood is dismissed outright as a ‘mentality’ that will not be considered or allowed to affect.

In a similar way the dog in this formation is reduced from a possibly loving or possibly violent entity to a mere task. The dog and its specific milieu is absent from any specific understanding of human and animal engagement or entanglements here. This self-less servant then leaves herself beyond any form of critique either from her irritated neighbors who might dare object to the feeding of dogs or the dogs in whose name she self-lessly encroaches upon them.

I very well could be accused of using Justice Jain and the animal rights activist Jasmine Damkewala as caricatures in this discussion and to some degree I would agree with this assessment. Am I not denying the other in a similar way to what I just pointed out that this dog feeder might be doing to her annoyed neighbors? This is true, but I also want to think a moment about the work that caricature might do. Donna Haraway in her work is very attentive to the figure and all that inheres within its form, practices and all that it gathers together (2008).

In this chapter, I am particularly interested in thinking about figures of selflessness and what is at stake in different attempts to escape the self. What is a self-less mode of encountering others and the world? Are all experiments in ditching the self the same? Especially in reference to an analytics of encroachment and various calls for co-presence in anthropology or meeting and contact zones among species, how should we think about different attempts to lose the self?

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about making this comparison possibly prematurely would be the concern that already having categories to slot dog sterilization practices into would stop further inquiry as if we already know what is going on.

<sup>107</sup> (Ram 2009). This admonishment for compassion is one of the defenses of the 2001 policy outlawing the killing of dogs in Delhi and the promotion of Animal Birth Control policies to control dog populations instead. So the dog may be constructed by activists and the court as a being ‘who’ that just needs to be controlled and made a good citizen through pedagogies of sterilization and vaccination. That being said, from my own experience in Delhi I found that many people think of street dogs as dirty or categorically polluting. Just as a side note, a friend from the United States doing research on Urdu poetry in Delhi, would constantly joke with me saying that I should tell people that I have come to study the pig in India because that project would probably unnerve people even more than my dog project. Upon meeting, he would routinely shout, “I study the pig!” at me and laugh.



The self-less servant seems to be a significant figure with which to think about encroachment since issues of duty, purity and the refusal to ever recognize becoming caught in configurations of relationship or conflict seem to define this figure's primary modes of engagement with others. The selfless servant or *sevik* as ideal citizen does not acknowledge either its own encroachments, its self as an encroacher or the logics of those who engage in forms that do not also attempt to dissipate the self as their locus of engagement.

### **Ungraspable and Untraceable Legacies of Losing the Self**

Hansen in his argument about legacies of a-political activism in post-independence India is careful to make the forms of upper caste and class "anti-political activism" that he identifies absolutely historical in their emergence in India. Any reference in his argument to the wide swath of human practices that might fit into the category of cultural forms are specifically linked to what he diagnoses as emerging specifically from colonial and post-colonial practices of governmentality (1999).

This emphasis on historical emergence is countering any vestiges of eternal essence type understandings of culture, specifically as they relate to India (Inden 1990). Hansen, like others, points out that the primary technology of rule of the British Empire was the codification of cultural difference (Cohn 1996, Hansen, 1999, Dirks 2001). However, this determined un-doing of versions of culture as timeless and unitary tends to then place all forms and practices marked as cultural under the rubric of (post) colonial governmentality. In so doing, this framing, in its negation of timeless and unitary cultural forms, can be seen as putting seemingly all processual understandings of phenomena under the rubric of colonial governmentality, which then becomes a limit or horizon beyond which forms of encounter seemingly cannot be traced.<sup>108</sup>

So then to think about this animal rights activist's promotion of self-less service and her engagement with the world as a task, would it be possible to think about any traces of particular lineages of desires for selflessness from which her new form has been fashioned? Specifically, in terms of this figure of the self-less servant of duty, purity and enlightened moral fiber, should we look to understandings of British military stiff upper lips, transgressions of pollution or some kind of renunciation of the world? In other words, what are the actual contours of this proposed selflessness and service that might be stake in the particular care of dogs that this plaintiff desires to do in an unhampered and selfless way?

*Seva* is the Hindi word for service and it is often invoked in reference to practices of self-less duty.<sup>109</sup> In this formulation of the promotion of selflessness through *seva*, the self is considered to be burden and through service the self can be overcome or outgrown with the ultimate goal being liberation from being trapped in a self. However, in this quest for a release from a self, this same self needs to act upon an other, but without referencing or having a regard for this self who acts.

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<sup>108</sup> Borneman and Hammoudi mention this inability to define any horizon to the post-colonial (2009).

<sup>109</sup> Many proponents of a particularly Hindu self-less service would align the truth that they seek under the realm of an eternal verity that is probably not interested in defining the eternal or essence as a historical emergence of colonial rule. I think we should attempt to understand these claims as more than just error.

At particular issue in practices of selflessness, be they those of imperial army officers or those who desire liberation from the self, is the fact that those who become entangled with or encroached upon by this desiring selfless actor are left without an antagonist. The self-less sevik, in a quest to dissolve the self and self-interest, does not engage (he or she will not be hampered) and therefore encroaches upon others without registering any effects from them in turn. It is in this way that those who are annoyed with dog feeding and dog feeders in a neighborhood are not engaged by the self-less feeder as exemplified by this activist/lawyer.

As I have pointed out, it is most probably an impossible task to attempt to trace the lineages from which the encroacher of self-less service and “a-political” activism fashions its disappearance.<sup>110</sup> More at issue for this discussion is to think about what changes if the encroacher or the encroachee is construed as illegal, a not original inhabitant, excluded from political participation, of divine providence, a state entity, human, animal, in the guise of another or this being desiring to lose its self.

### **Abduction and the Absent Milieu**

Both what I am calling the juridical dog of Judge Jain and the selfless servant of a-political animal rights activism are marked by radically abductive logics of encounter. The “friendly” and “handable” dog exists in an overconfident assumptive form of engagement that already always knows who and what it is dealing with in advance of any particular encounter.

These are actually fantastic spaces of experimentation and intervention that do not seem that dissimilar to one of the glosses of wonder that Stephan Greenblatt gives for early European contact literature. In the introduction to *Marvelous Possessions: the Wonder of the New World*, Greenblatt presents an amazing excerpt from Columbus’ journal in which Columbus narrates an encounter with people who do not speak the same language:

I saw that he was pleased with a coverlet that I had on my bed. I gave it to him and some very good amber beads that I wore on my neck, and some red shoes, and a flask of orange-flower water, with which he was so pleased that it was a marvel. And he and his tutor and counselors were very troubled because they did not understand me nor I them. *Nevertheless I gathered that he told me that if something from this place pleased me that the whole island was at my command.* I sent for some beads of mine on which, as a token, I have a gold excelente on which your Highnesses are sculptured, and I showed it to him; and again, as yesterday, I told him how your Highnesses commanded and ruled over all the best part of the world, and that there were no other princes as great. And I showed him the royal banners and the others bearing the cross, which he esteemed greatly. *What great lords your highnesses must be, he said (speaking toward his counselors), since from so far away and from the heavens they had sent me here*

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<sup>110</sup> So in this discussion of the self-less sevik of a-political activism, I will bracket a genealogical approach that would make its sense by positing post-colonial governmentality as adequate to the understanding of this form.

*without fear*; and many other things passed between them that I did not understand, except that I saw well that *they took everything as a great wonder* (my emphasis 1991:13).

Greenblatt is “fascinated by the move, here and elsewhere, from knowing nothing (‘they did not understand me, nor I them’) to assuming an absolute possession (the whole island was at my command’)” (Greenblatt 1991:13).<sup>111</sup>

Perhaps it is the maniacal self-assurance of Columbus’ performance of possession in the New World that read like an exemplar of what some have defined as particularly Western experiments with difference from Bacon to liberalism through to post-modernism (Bajaj 1988, Chakrabarty 2000, Mehta 1999, Nandy 1988). Should we trace the same or similar form of abduction from Columbus to paternal enactments of certainty of colonial liberals or social scientists that Chakrabarty and Mehta discuss in their attempts to provincialize Europe and liberal theory and empire?

The assumptive imaginative logic of a city full of all fed and friendly dogs inhabiting “sparingly used public spaces” or the total possession of an island, as seen in the declarations of Justice Jain and Columbus respectively, besides for being a symptom of particular forms of colonial governance, might also partake of a form of thinking that needs to posit categories in order to infer in novel situations.

When reading the declarations of either Columbus or Justice Jain, I cannot help but also think of Peirce’s exploration of abductive reasoning as a particular aspect of the human mind *qua* human. Leaps of inference can produce both creative and wildly assumptive causal chains such as the proclamations of Justice Jain and Columbus. Yet we should probably ask if practices of abduction always have a particular politics in terms of their assumptive leaps and positing of categories? In other words, must Justice Jain’s ‘friendly’ fed Delhi dogs, be read in terms of a particularly Western praxis, parody of Western praxis or “revenge of colonial governmentality” that is ultimately traceable to Columbus’ incredible acts of interpretive ventriloquism (Hansen 1999: 9)?

In juridical battles over what it might mean for the human to intervene into the living of the dog or the dog into the living of the human, questions about the sociality and the mind of the dog (or the dog hater) seem to be very few. I am reminded of a practice of autorickshaw drivers in Delhi. There is a tale of foreign visitors to Delhi, even after communicating in passable Hindi their destination to a driver being brought to the Paharganj neighborhood in Delhi which is full of cheap hotels frequented by foreigners. This is definitely logical abduction; however, whether the rickshaw driver, the judge or the activist are partaking of an assumptive legacy of Columbus or recreating paternal re-enactments of certainty of British Imperialism is another matter. This example is also a caricature; however, my point is that both abduction and radical assumption as modes of

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<sup>111</sup> This assertion of transparency and possession is just one of the forms of contact that Greenblatt identifies in his account of what he calls wonder. Greenblatt offers the form of wonder in which the unfamiliar is imagined as a complete possession. He also offers other forms of wonder as encounter in the New World in which all previous understandings of wonder do not rely on maniacal assumptions of possession or are not completely pre-determined. It is interesting to note similarities to Skaria (2002), Mehta (1999) and Chakrabarty’s (2000) examinations of liberal engagements to this form of complete imagined possession underscored by a maniacal certainty and not those that locate a sense of wonder that disrupts all previous cognitive categories of understanding, such as in Greenblatt’s other examples of wonder (1991). I discuss these different forms of abduction and experiment more in (George 2007).

thought exceed the legacy of Columbus and are part of the everyday of human and possibly dog experience.

### **Umwelts of Aspirational Selflessness**

Self-less service, animal rights activism, juridical abduction and attempts to absolutely possess seem similar in the ways that they assume an understanding either without encounter or from reduced interactions or projections. Do these three figures of the self-less sevik of dog activism, the abductive judge and the maniacal possessing Columbus all reduce to a post-colonial governmentality? I will now examine a few common figures of what could be termed experiments of self in modern science to see where some of the possible fault lines among these forms may lie.

My questioning here is to wonder what would happen if, instead of collapsing all abductive experiments and the assertion or denial of a self to one figure, we instead examine what kind of self, other and milieus of encroachment or entanglement appear in each of these imagined and performed encounters.

My point in these juxtapositions is to entertain what may be at stake in self-consciously holding a place for encroachment in anthropological practice and to think about how this mode may be similar or not to Borneman and Hammoudi's call for marking co-presence as significantly anthropological (2009). How might either the multiple registers of encroachment in use in Delhi, as well as calls for co-presence between the interlocutor and the "engaged ethnographer" in Borneman and Hammoudi's language figure with Haraway's understanding of the meeting of species and contact zones (2008)?

One could ask if the selfless servant of dog activism or the marvelously abductive Delhi judge are similar to the ways in which the self of Baconian science has been discussed to different effects by Jatinder Bajaj (1988) and Donna Haraway (1988). Bajaj in his essay employs insights gleaned from a colonizer/colonized type critique.<sup>112</sup> He states that the epistemological field that Bacon promoted always needed an "other" to be known in order to produce its power. According to Bajaj the "known" object of Baconian science, whether it be "man" or "nature," will eventually strike back. It is worthwhile to imagine for a moment what kind of subject this known "nature" or "man" would be. Is the impossible subject position of a noncreature/instrument available to occupy and could this reversal that Bajaj seeks be enacted in any other formulation than the subject position of "Baconian science"? If "Baconian science" permits only objects in its epistemological cosmology, how, if we are to accept Bajaj's critique, can these objects engage with this subject without occupying this position themselves?

Haraway's version of the naïve view of Baconian science is the famous "view of infinite vision" which she states "is an illusion, (or) a god trick" (1988:582). In his *Novum Organum*, or search for a new method of knowledge acquisition, Bacon himself declares his desire to be an instrument or a non-creature of instrumentation that will transcend limited human experience. The metaphor of the compass figures prominently

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<sup>112</sup> This tradition is much larger than Memmi's Colonizer/Colonized critique (1991); however, my point is that Bajaj is partaking of a legacy of thinking about active subjects and passive objects in his critique of both science and colonialism.

in Bacon's desire to be the machine that can draw the perfect circle which would be impossible for the human (Bacon 1960: 27).

Vinciane Despret, the philosopher of ethology, in her version of the experimenter, gives us not a subject making others into objects, the god trick of infinite vision, or Bacon's desire to be an self-less instrument, but the figure of the automaton:

The automaton is the one who is moved by itself, and only by itself, that is the one who will not be moved, put into motion by others. In sum it is the one who will not be affected and therefore will not affect, his object of study: an indifferent autonomous experimenter collecting indifferent data (Despret 2004: 118).

The automaton then is the one who refuses to be affected or to affect.<sup>113</sup> While the self-less *sevik* needs to act upon the other in order to deconstitute the self and the judge adjudicates, at least in this case, abductively between two absolutely affected and affecting parties, as it leaves its own self and its histories of encroachments beyond consideration. Bacon, like the self-less *sevik* desires to be another kind of creature other than a limited embodied human self and both act upon the other without acknowledging this other or the particular problems that their very different calls to selflessness present to others.

My question in all of this is to ask what kind of ethics of encroachment might emerge from paying attention to the differences in these figures of selfless experimentations and abductive encroachments. They all seem to be audacious attempts to shed bodies and become uninhabitable to oneself and un-encroachable to others. However, the terms are quite different in this imagined selflessness, which are all intense engagements with the imaginative-material fields of becoming a creature and a non-creature that conservatively seem to exceed an analysis that must always make its sense in terms of a uni-valent modern and post-colonial or governmentality.

We see this lack of matching again in Favret-Saada's discussion of the different modes of becoming ungraspable of positivism and post-structuralism, which have some similarities but one would have to say also very different effects in the world.

And how would we think about possible desires to lose the self or become ungraspable or un-encroachable creature in methodologies that propose an analytic of entanglement or dissipated networks? In other words, could we ask similar questions of assertions of rhizomorphic *zeitgeists* and any associated desires to become selfless and ungraspable possibly being in play?<sup>114</sup>

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<sup>113</sup> I think it is significant that Despret develops the figure of the automaton in relationship to practices of ethology and its particular parsing of subjects and objects versus other forms of experiment.

<sup>114</sup> Some would align all of these different modes of either attempting to be selfless or extending the self to include the whole world under one sign of Western culture or modernity (Mehta 1999). However, my point is that to collapse all these modes into one would not let us see what is very differently at stake in each venture. It would also occlude the specific problems organizing these different forms of selflessness.

## Showing Up in the World

If we return to thinking about co-presence, meetings or contact zones, we might want to also think more about how attempts to lose, find or absent selves influences the emergence of ‘whos’ in encounters whether these are acknowledged, denied or refused.

The hotel owner who fed all living creatures indiscriminately for god might be closest to understandings of service as a means of becoming self-less; however, his feeding was also entangled with ensuring both merit and the prosperity of his hotel business. Therefore, he does not fit exactly Hansen’s figure of the a-political activist who is most marked by selfless duty. The hotel owner mainly acknowledges non-human others as an abstraction and in so doing he might seem not that dissimilar to the activist/lawyer. However, in the concreteness of his encroachment on a neighborhood in which he does not live, he helps produce the singular white dog and scores of bitten construction workers.

The hostel boys fed just one dog without thinking about how this activity might affect their selves, their dog or other humans and dogs in the neighborhood, while at the same time advocating for the removal of dogs in general from the neighborhood to protect a generic disabled subject from the street dog imagined as a kind. The hostel boys took care of one dog in a ratio of many humans relating to one dog at the same time that some hostel residents attempted to reduce the overall population of dogs in the neighborhood for the protection of the disabled. Here both categories of intervention—the human and the dog— were conceived in terms of kind while the particular human and dog relationship was one of obsessive care for one dog and the dismissal of all others of a kind.

And K was not at all interested in the promotion of a politics of encroachment that maintained self-less service as its rationale for existence. Instead, her interest in maintaining a non-intrusive sociality that could keep human and dog in relationship to each other but not completely dependent one upon the other admitted specific conflicts between individuals and groups of both dogs and humans in her neighborhood. K’s relationships with dogs were specific, engaged and distant all at the same time and she permitted her dog encroachments to be particular and limited. She was not engaged in a task feeding all dogs or all entities and she was not attempting to deny her self or the scene of encounter with her pack, other packs in the neighborhood or neighbors who did not agree with her form of encroachment in the neighborhood.

However all of these engagements even if they attempted an absence created very different milieus of the dog and therefore the human in Delhi.

## Part 2: Despotic Packs and Cooperative Families

In the first part of this chapter I looked at some juridical and activist understandings of dog and human encroachments in Delhi that tend to absent milieus and evacuate the self of the judge, the animal rights activist, the dog and the dog hater in different ways. I paid particular attention to overlapping attempts to become ungraspable and unapproachable in relationship to legacies and lineages of becoming self-less that may or not sit comfortably under specific signs of post-coloniality, science or modernity.

At issue in these discussions are the contours of what encroachment, co-presence or meeting might consist of. How should we account for the ‘what’ or the ‘who’ that is encountering, congregating, entangling or dissipating? And so, when I mention my own attempts at encroaching upon or attempting a co-presence with dog sociality in Delhi or the ‘pack’ of dogs that I shared with K, what sort of configuration of relationships am I actually talking about and what relationships to abduction and self-(un)making are at stake among these particular dogs, K and me?

The understanding that dog sociality is pack-like stems from the idea that the dog is descended from the wolf. And exactly what this form of a wolf pack sociality is has been under revision. John Bradshaw has synthesized current biological work on the wolf pack and he offers these insights:

In the past, the wolf has been portrayed as the quintessential pack animal, and its packs have been portrayed as being essentially despotic, rigidly and aggressively controlled by an “alpha” pair. Logically, therefore, as a descendent of the wolf, the dog was thought to be the same under the skin, undoubtedly less aggressive in nature but nevertheless born with the expectation that it must eventually seek to dominate all those around it, canine and human alike (2011: 14).

Until recently wolf packs have been wrongly thought of as competitive organizations. It’s now known that the majority of the wolf “packs” are simply family groups. Typically, a solitary male will pair up with a solitary female—either or both will most likely have recently left a pack—and raise a litter together. ... Contrary to many notions of wolf behavior, cooperation, not dominance, seems to be the essence of the wolf pack (Bradshaw: 2011: 16).

So the turn here is away from despotic and coercive behavior and the will to dominate as being particularly wolf or dog like, and towards an understanding of wolf, and therefore dog sociality, as being basically cooperative.<sup>115</sup> And the paradigm of cooperation for Bradshaw is his concept of the family that seems so self-evident that the “majority of wolf ‘packs’ are *simply* family groups” without more commentary being needed on his part (2011: 16).

This dissertation about dog and human interactions in Delhi, India is actually predicated on the notion that there is nothing simple about family and their lineages of inheritance and disinheritance that would permit the siphoning off of the despotic to reside in the erroneous interpretation of the pack only, while permitting the cooperative to

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<sup>115</sup> In biological terms, the wolf to dog correlation is made due to a homological association of descent.

comfortably dwell in this notion of family. Bradshaw seems to think of family as a general sense of belonging to a group in this discussion of the pack. In his dualistic and abductive parsing of tyranny from family, there does seem to be some correspondences to the general promotion of belonging as a counter to legacies of British Imperialism that Chakrabarty (2000), Mehta (1999) and Skaria (2002) discuss in their very different works on this topic.<sup>116</sup> I will address understandings of belonging and family in reference to this work more in chapter five, but I briefly mention it here.

Although, Bradshaw deploys the highly assumptive division between the family and power and control for the wolf and dog in his discussion of their sociality, his discussion of the milieu is much more grounded in at least a categorical particularity. He states that the archetype of the alpha-pack emerged out of studies of captive wolves, while the pack as cooperative family is a product of studying wild packs of wolves:

Wolf biologists originally based most of their ideas on captive packs, which were easy to observe. Some of these packs were random assemblies of unrelated individuals, while others were fragments of packs, usually with one or both of the parents missing—basically composed of whatever individuals available for the zoo to make an exhibit. What almost all of these packs had in common was their structure had been irrevocably disrupted by captivity, so that the wolves were thrown into a site of confusion and conflict (Bradshaw 2011: 18).

Wolves from different packs have no common interests; they compete for food and are probably only very distantly related if at all... Only in artificially constituted “packs” kept in zoos, do submissive displays come to be a standard response to a threat. Presumably, the younger weaker wolves learn by trial and error that such displays (sometimes) work under these unnatural circumstances, where pack loyalties have been totally disrupted and there is nowhere for them to escape to (Bradshaw 2011: 19).

In Bradshaw’s discussion here between configurations of relationships in dog packs, he offers the incarcerated pack, which is an “artificially constituted ‘pack’” whose “structure has been irrevocably disrupted by captivity” (2011: 19). This produces “confusion and conflict” that would normally be seen only in skirmishes between members of different packs in what he defines as that of the wild type due to a “non-existent pack or a severely disrupted” pack ‘identity.’”<sup>117</sup>

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<sup>116</sup> It is significant to note that in two conferences that took place at Berkeley in the same month of 2013, the suggested curtailment of the use of the word pack for the dog due to its association with dominance was discussed in a conference dedicated to funny animal and human love, while the assertion that the family is the first site of tyranny was mentioned in a workshop on Critical Psychiatry. It is my partial aim in this dissertation to put topics discussed in both conferences in dialog with each other to think about the petty everyday violences of being in a body be it dog or human and therefore to not assume that tyranny and dominance are always elsewhere.

<sup>117</sup> “In the wild, even though relationships within packs are usually congenial, aggression toward outsiders, though infrequent, is unrestrained and potentially fatal. In captivity, however, pack “identity” is either nonexistent or severely disrupted, resulting in the expression of behaviors that would normally be seen only in skirmishes between members of different packs” (Bradshaw 2011: 22).



As opposed to Justice Jain's friendly and helpful public dogs that have no particular environment, Bradshaw offers the wolf with the categorical milieus of either captive or the wild. This differentiation of milieu between the captive and the wild, even if we accept its dualism, cannot be extended to dog sociality since the dog as a co-constituted or co-domesticated creature of the human, is also similar to the human in its ability to adapt to multiple environments.

As I mentioned in chapter one, the dog, like the human in biological terms is considered to be a de-differentiated organism, meaning that there is a wide variation in possible responses to situations or to what some might call stimuli. In other words, the dog's umwelt, or what it focuses upon from a generic environment can be quite singular, particular and individuated. Therefore, we have to deal with the issues of being configured within specific relationships out of which emerge individual responses, as well as the capacity of becoming caught within opaque scenes of encounter with others for both human and dog. Thus, an imagining of generic milieu for either human or dog particularly avoids the creativity of carving out an umwelt and a world for both.

Thus the issue of whether or not the word pack is an appropriate term for dog groups and can be used for specific configurations of dogs is actually a question that can be thought of from more than one angle. There is the issue that the dog is not the wolf and is quite changed from its co-constitution with the human. Then there is a backing away from understandings of domination and submission as being the dominant social action among wolf pack members due to a shift in focus on the milieu of study. There is also the problem that dog sociality in its co-constituted domesticated form must be configured in multiple experiments in living, configurations of relationship and their lineages.

If I now return to the problems of co-presence, encroachment and meeting across species in anthropological practices exactly how should one engage with a pack of dogs as engaged ethnographer and informants? What can I say about my claim of becoming caught in relationship with a group of dogs that I still insist on calling a pack that would not be immediately subsumed into abductive logics of assumption now tinged with possible anthropomorphic projections?

As I have said, I became enrolled in this group of dogs through Sundar's attack on one of Pinky's puppies. However, although this injury might have started my association with these dogs, I continued because there was something of interest between us. As I have also said, I did not consider myself a dog lover before being enrolled in this pack and my association with dogs to this day is imbued with the characteristics of these particular dogs.

Bradshaw offers us a wolf world which he holds up a possible analogy with that of the dog. However, he also offers us two absolutely different wolves and their umwelts, which are so different from each other that any possible insight that they may have for dog sociality are severely tested due to the issue that both visions are inversions of each other. We have the natural milieu of family harmony in the wild and the combative environment of the captive, decimated and atomized wolf individuals who can only form a pathological pseudo-packs of tyranny and fear in the other. And if we add the judge or activist's vision of the dog's sociality to Bradshaw's packs of ether tyranny or cooperation, we would have happy and helpful fed dogs and the selfless service of unhampered activist feeders as options for understanding dog sociality.

In all of these discussions, I in no way recognize the co-presences of certain individual dogs that in my own estimation actually did, in Borneman and Hammoudi's words permit a "a transformation of what [I] know, specifically of the anthropologist's own self-understandings" (2009: 14). And yet at issue with humans as well as dogs is the issue of how this change in self understanding may be related to truth or more akin to Columbus' declaration of complete possession. Dogs also seem capable of the kind of fabulous claiming of which Greenblatt writes.

However, as I became more caught within this group of dogs, my encroachments upon their living did offer a changed milieu for them. As I become enrolled in this group, I started to think about what I owed these dogs and in so doing I radically changed the milieu of the pack. I decided to get Pinky and her two fawn-colored offspring spayed.

All of these dogs come back from a dog sanctuary where the surgery was performed and in the next few days they become very ill from kennel cough that they had all contacted at the dog sanctuary, which functioned as an intensifier of disease. They give this illness to the older male offspring and soon there are four very sick dogs lying on the floor of my room. Of course living inside and being all sick was a new milieu for this pack. In the course of their recovery all the offspring start to claim space and growl at each other if another dog moves near them at all. Even after all of the dogs are cured of the kennel cough, they tend to spar with each other on more than one occasion. This behavior and the looks that each dog gives the others I start to call a "I think I could take you" look. So instead, of a harmonious family, there were dynamic power relations that from day to day were neither a despotic hierarchy, nor a family of belonging where everyone already knew their place. Instead, configurations of relationship were reconstituted, but not completely, with each encroachment upon the other.

Even though my pack and I were only five members all told, I still need to resist making a type out of the encroachments upon each other in this micro-milieu. If I extrapolate from this miniscule sample, I can make my pack into the pariah dog or the Indog, but this would be a fallacy. However, when self-described Indog owners declare that their Indog is particularly jealous or suddenly aloof I feel a recognition, a pride and a love for dogs that in their invasive encroachments and sneaky behavior, ability to skulk, sensitivity, sudden aloofness quick reflexes and what I can only call independence captivated me.<sup>118</sup> And the particular traits of dog such as Pinky's obsession with grooming her puppies for hours in what I could only interpret as the loss of other puppies brought me more into the neighborhood as configured by this pack of dogs.

It is also through them that I experienced some of what could be called paranoia in terms of dog politics in the neighborhood. When I brought Pinky and her offspring to be spayed at the dog sanctuary, it was a time of heightened tension between supporters and detractors of dogs in the neighborhood. One day a pack of about four or five black dogs that were particularly associated with a family originally from the foothills of the Himalayas disappeared. At around the same time, while K was on vacation, the two male dogs that were part of her pack, but not mine, also disappeared for a few days. When they returned one was neutered, while the other was not. These incidents affected the way in which I interpreted the realization that all three of the dogs that I had brought to

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<sup>118</sup> The category of the Indog imagines a 'pure' kind of dog. People responding to internet sites about this category of an indigenous Indian dog, tend to ask a lot of questions about kinds. "Does your Indog do this or do that," for example?

be spayed had had their left ears cut. Instead of thinking that this must be some mark or sign from the dog sanctuary and the sterilization procedure, my first thought was that some neighbor must have done this because these dogs have started to be particularly associated with me. It is embarrassing now to recount this, since I soon found out that this cutting of ears is a mark of sterilization given to street dogs so that they are not picked up again for surgery by the Animal Birth Control program. From starting to learn about this complicated dog politics of rumor, suspicion and actual disappearances of dogs in this neighborhood, my first thought was that this sign of cut ears was particularly directed towards me. This paranoia actually ushered me into the neighborhood in terms of how fears about dogs and what a neighbor might do to the dogs that one loves or “props up” created particular configurations of becoming inexplicitly caught in scenes of Delhi dog love and hate in a way that would be too near for academic knowledge in Favret-Saada’s terms (1980).

From living with this grouping of dogs that was not in a rigid family or hierarchical configuration and was not imposed upon by human regimes of training, I became interested in the just enough sociality that developed between me and the dogs. This made me appreciate even more K’s formation of propping up a pack and not exerting too much of her will on their sociality.<sup>119</sup> From her and other neighbors’ particular experiments in dog and human living, I became very interested in how both dog and human could be studied in these exceedingly provincial configurations of relation.

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<sup>119</sup> I mentioned at a conference organized around the study of human and animal interactions in the Humanities and the Social Sciences that I like untrained dogs and I was met with some horrified reactions, as if this statement could have only one valence, milieu or ethic.

### Chapter 3 Sanctuary

As soon as it exists at all, it wants to consist of *more* people: the urge to grow is the first and supreme attribute of the crowd. It wants to seize everyone within reach; anything shaped like a human being can join it.<sup>120</sup>

In this chapter to continue thinking about milieu, I explore some different forms of keeping dogs in Delhi, focusing specifically on the spatial logistics of the dog shelter or sanctuary. My emphasis here is on the configurations of dog and human living that emerge within specific shelter experiments. I am concerned with how the sanctuary environment is distinctly influenced by individual founders of dog protection institutions and how each particular project of dog protection has created specific milieus for dogs. A detailed examination of the Delhi dog shelter or sanctuary as an experimental milieu that produces different dogs and people helps us think about the relationship between organisms and their environments. How does the dog as both a particular kind of living creature and as an individual dog distinguish its environment in the animal sanctuary? An exploration of this question will help think about the possibility of becoming an individual—either dog or human—in the experimental domain of the animal sanctuary.

The concept of a sanctuary is primarily organized around ideas of safety, protection or refuge.<sup>121</sup> The word in English is tied to understandings of the sacred which authorize the protection from the outside world that the sanctuary provides. Those that reside in the shelter or sanctuary are by definition displaced from another locale or milieu that, in contradistinction must be categorized as dangerous or threatening for the shelter to exist. However, the displacement from this original locale of danger is also constructed as a loss in the logic of the sanctuary, thus marking its inhabitants not only with a new home, habitat, or environment, but also with a state of permanent homelessness, refugee status, abandonment and victimhood.<sup>122</sup>

In the dog shelter or sanctuary, there is a construction of a new milieu for the dog, which differs from the original environments specifically in terms of its ability to provide safety as defined by those who set up the shelter. However, in providing what is understood as protection by the creators of the shelter, a novel environment is also created for the dog. We cannot say that the dog shelter or sanctuary is the same milieu for the dog minus just the danger or risk of the original environment. In placing so much emphasis on safety, the actual milieu of the dog shelter or sanctuary is not thought of explicitly by the human ‘designers’ of these spaces. In both the sanctuary and the shelter, there is an understanding that the basic requirements for the support and maintenance of life will be provided to residents. However, it is interesting to note how the dog shelter or sanctuary differs from attempts to create a wildlife preserve or what is known as a plant sanctuary in which there is an attempt to maintain or recreate an ecosystem or milieu in which a particular organism is habituated. In other words, in dog shelter or sanctuary practices in Delhi, there is no attempt to mimic a “natural ecology” of the dog.

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<sup>120</sup> (Canetti, 1962).

<sup>121</sup> (Merriam-Webster.com 2013)

<sup>122</sup> (Merriam-Webster.com 2013)

Instead, these sites are organized around the problem of safety for the dog from the human.

R, a founder of a one of these dog protection institutions in Delhi wishes that she could provide sanctuary for all the dogs she finds on the streets. She feels sorry for neighborhood dogs that must be returned to the streets after they have been spayed or neutered at her institution even though this is the agreement that she has with the government as an NGO that provides sterilization services for the ABC program.<sup>123</sup> Many street dogs pass through R's organization, getting sterilization operations and vaccinations against rabies. However, other dogs become permanent residents of the sanctuary. These two categories of dog, those temporarily sheltered and released back into their "original" neighborhood or milieu and those who become permanent sanctuary residents bring out the difference in the temporality of dwelling of the concepts of the shelter as a place of temporary duration and of the sanctuary as permanent abode for those displaced from the original milieu. The categories of the shelter dog and the sanctuary dog are sometimes mapped onto the categories of the indigenous pariah dog and the European breed dog respectively.

When a dog arrives at R's organization and is a possible candidate to be a sanctuary dog, R tells me that he or she "is home now and will never have to worry again." A very small trembling white dog that cannot move its back legs lies in a small mobile cage in the reception area of R's sanctuary. It will become a sanctuary dog, as opposed to a dog that will be sterilized and released. R tells me that this dog is safe and will never be abandoned again. R has said that the sanctuary is the end of each dog's trials. R repeats the word safe many times when talking about dogs that come to the sanctuary. In R's talk I get a sense that she is thinking about the milieu of the street as a space of abandonment and sickness.<sup>124</sup> R is especially concerned about dogs that once lived with humans and, because they got sick or old or their humans lost interest in them or were fickle-natured, have been thrown out of the space of human domesticity.<sup>125</sup> Similar issues of safety and domesticity came up in the discussions I had with or about two other animal sanctuary founders. E who runs one of the most prominent animal welfare organizations in Delhi, according to one of her shelter workers, said that she felt very happy and contented especially at night when she thought about all of the dogs safely tucked into their cages. D, another sanctuary founder, is more pragmatic with his understandings of the protection that the animal sanctuary can offer. He tells me, "It is not ideal, but it is what we must do (for the dogs), given what people are like."

It might seem odd to entertain, or at least mark the absence of any attempt to mimic a specific ecology for the dog in Delhi shelter or sanctuary practices. The dog of course, as both a domestic and feral animal, is considered to be de-differentiated in biological terms (Fratkin, Jamie L et al. 2013). This means that the dog has the capacity to habituate itself to many environments and its repertoire of behaviors is quite plastic, allowing for creative forms of individual difference. In his essay, *The Living and Its*

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<sup>123</sup> [www.abcindia.org.in](http://www.abcindia.org.in)

<sup>124</sup> R's understanding of the street as an unsafe locale of danger, violence, sickness and abandonment for dogs follows Lawrence Cohen's description of the interstice as that which lies between domiciles or the home (1999). For Cohen, the interstice is a locale populated by dogs, widows, old women and sadhus.

<sup>125</sup> This classification of the abandoned dog or the formerly-domestic dog in need of permanent sanctuary maps onto the category of the European breed dog, while generally speaking the capture and release sterilization dog coordinates with the pariah dog.

Milieu, George Canguilhem traced the history of the concept of a milieu from its birth in Newtonian physics through geographical and biological understandings of the term. For my purposes here, I would like to call attention to his juxtaposition of the activities of “imposing a milieu upon” and “composing a milieu for itself” for what he terms the “living being”:

To study a living being in experimentally constructed conditions is to make a milieu for it, to impose a milieu on it, yet it is characteristic of the living that it makes its milieu for itself, that it composes its milieu (2008: 111).

The key question here is the limits of what “experimentally constructed conditions” could mean.<sup>126</sup> Canguilhem’s “experimentally constructed conditions” focus on the difference between an imposition from another living being and the “for itself” compositional characteristic of a being as being. Of course the dog sanctuary or shelter is not a formal experiment and its purpose is not to study the dog qua living being, but the form of the shelter or sanctuary becomes an experiment in living for the dogs and humans in each case I examine.

There is definitely a sense that a particular and sometimes idiosyncratic milieu has been made or imposed upon the dogs in these settings. As an institution, the dog shelter cannot help but bring up comparisons to Michel Foucault’s regimes of discipline. Donna Haraway has discussed the “birth of the kennel” in her work on dogs (2003, 2008). However, at least in the Delhi cases I discuss here, I do not see evidence of structural rationalizations written on the body of the shelter dog, especially in terms of self-policing or work.<sup>127</sup>

The dog as a domesticated animal shares with the human capacities of composition that are, as I said before, de-differentiated, meaning that both the dog and human ability to compose or register an environment and a self have been in a sense widened by their co-domestications. As both the dog and the human enter the experimental space of the shelter or sanctuary they already carry in the organization of their being specific solidified histories of composition and capacities to register a milieu, a self and an other.

### **Impossible Ethnography: The Bad Shelter and the Disappearing Dog**

The most mysterious of the institutions dedicated to the care of the dog are what could be termed disappearing dog shelters. These institutions are interesting since the dog shelter’s rationale for existence is generally organized around dog protection or safety above any other value. A critic of one particular “bad shelter” claims, “Per an eye

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<sup>126</sup> By marking Canguilhem’s distinction between an imposed and composed milieu, I do not want to overly distinguish between the concepts of the artificial or natural which are easily collapsed into one term or the other.

<sup>127</sup> It is also significant to consider the ability of Foucault’s historical argument for a particular discursive emergence to extend geographically or across the capacity for different organisms to create their own milieus and histories. Dog discipline in a Foucauldian argument does not make sense to me without actually obliterating the point the Foucault was attempting to make.

witness, the dogs [at this shelter] are dragged to the first and the second floor of the building and visitors are not allowed there and that is the last you see of them.”

There is a circulation of doubt about what happens within these spaces and to any dog brought to this type of institution. The main form of human exchange outwards from the “bad shelter” to other humans is through the organization’s website which publishes stories about animals rescued. At the same time, concerned “animal lovers” publish warnings about this type of shelter and horror stories about botched sterilization surgeries, and disappeared dogs on internet forums. Since the actual space of this kind of shelter is not open to the public, to either “animal lovers” or “ethnographers”, the main evidence of this experiment in dog and human living and dying comes from these internet stories and the dogs released from the actual “bad” shelter. The animal welfare NGOs that do not permit visits from those outside of their shelter community are of course as intriguing as they are an impossible object of anthropological inquiry.

The following are two different forum accounts of dogs that ‘disappeared’ into a ‘bad shelter’. The first story is about a dog that might become a permanent sanctuary dog and the second is about a dog brought in for sterilization and expected to be released back to its original milieu:

#### Sanctuary Dog

I used to feed a female dog whom I called Ginger. One day she suddenly went missing. I was informed by the guard that a lady from my complex had Ginger picked up. On enquiring, this lady told me that she was a dog lover and she thought that since the residents did not like dogs, she had Ginger sent to [this ‘bad shelter’]. I contacted them to get my dog back. I told her that I would come and take her back and would like to adopt her since I had become very attached to her. [The founder of this organization] refused to release Ginger on the same day and said that she would release her after a day or two. On the same day in the afternoon, I got a call from the [shelter] telling me that they had changed their mind, they had decided to release Ginger on the same day, however Ginger had choked on the chain by which she had been tied & had died immediately.

#### Sterilization Dog

They released only one of the dogs back to the area, saying that the second dog was still undergoing operation. Despite my repeated calls to them over the next few days, the organization was unable to tell me why the operation was taking so long. They finally said that they had operated upon my second dog, but for its release they demanded a payment of Rs. 600 more, which I did. Without giving me an opportunity to see and identify the dog, they made me sign a receipt saying that the dog had been operated upon successfully and was being returned. However, I was shocked to find that they had brought a different dog coloured with gentian violet and insisted that this was the same dog. This was not true. Also, the substitute dog that was released was badly bitten and driven away by other dogs of my area. Dogs by nature are very territorial and alien dogs are never accepted. I do not know what happened to my dog. Did it die during the

operation due to some negligence or was it mistakenly released in some other area?

Some make sense of these ‘bad shelter’ experiments as cynical operations making money on some people’s emotional connection to other animals. One forum post about what I am calling the ‘bad shelter’ states “Sorry state that sick people even earn their bread from Pariah dogs (Stray Dogs).” Another forum poster trying to figure out what possible commodity might be produced at this kind of institution wonders, “Are they into organ selling of dogs? Just a thought.....lol.” The same poster notes the incomprehensibility of such a place, “Whichever dog goes there dies due to either meat or a bathe... strange.....” Yet another poster compares the “bad shelter” to a concentration camp, “Very very sad situation. It breaks my heart every time I think of there being a 'concentration camp' like place for the poor dogs.”

However, the question could be asked: if the ‘disappearing dog shelter’ is not just motivated by profit, an odd and elaborate sadism or spectacular incompetence then why does it exist in this form? Or more specifically for the problem of experiments in human and dog living, what relationship does the ‘bad’ shelter’ have to the ‘good’ or ‘so-so’ dog shelter’?

Among the organizations dedicated to the dog, there are many very small organizations, what could be termed mom and pop NGOs dedicated to the care of the dog. Lawrence Cohen in conversation has identified this fascinating form of the exceedingly small NGO made up of barely more than one person as part of the landscape or institutional culture of Indian NGOs. Therefore, if we are talking about the ‘birth of the dog shelter’ in Delhi, then we have to pay particular attention to the founder of each institution.<sup>128</sup> Did the organizational structure of the ‘bad’ NGO exceed the ability of one or a few people to care for the exponentially multiplying dogs under its auspices? When we look at the ‘bad shelter’ and its trail of dead, dying or disappeared dogs then we might want to investigate the founder’s relationship with dogs. This one person may have hundreds of dogs in their sanctuary and tens of thousands more that have traveled through their surgery for sterilization, but who was a shelter founder’s first dog?

### **The Sanctuary: Founders and Forms**

In this section, I will introduce two founders of dog sanctuaries that are definitely not disappearing dog institutions. One is R, the woman who wants to keep all street dogs safe in her shelter and then there is D who looks at his dog sanctuaries as necessary evils that are the only way that he can think of protecting dogs from humans. R started taking care of dogs in her South Delhi home and then volunteered with different animal welfare organizations before setting up her own sanctuary on the outskirts of Delhi with government help. Her sanctuary is affiliated with the Animal Birth Control (ABC) program and therefore performs sterilization surgeries on dogs that are captured and

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<sup>128</sup> I am of course here both referencing Foucault (1973) and “The Birth of the Clinic” while at the same time insisting that in specific methodological situations a focus on specific individuals such as founders of institutions can glean insights that an attention to discourse would not always make available.



released back to the specific neighborhood that they were taken from.<sup>129</sup> D started taking dogs into his small North Delhi home and then also built a sanctuary for dogs on the outskirts of Delhi. However, D in both his home and sanctuary locations prides himself on not being an NGO, not taking donations or charity for the maintenance of the dogs and not being affiliated with the government in any way.<sup>130</sup>

### **First Dog Encounter: Recognizing Kinship R's Dog Finds Her**

“I am doing it for them (the dogs). I have to say that I am doing it for you, for people...to clean the streets, reduce rabies. I have to put it in that language, but I am doing it for the dogs.” R's involvement with dogs started decades ago. She narrates the first dog encounter that set her on a path that turned first her home and then a whole new three story building into a dog sanctuary. It is a tale of recognizing kinship. In this case the dog recognized R. R told me that a female ‘street’, ‘pariah’ or ‘Delhi ka dog’ adopted her. One day this dog wandered into her house and sat down watching her as she was sewing. For many years after that, their relationship was of quiet companionship and the outlines of this first meeting and subsequent relationship is I think the template that R uses to make sense of dogs and humans: a quasi-Gandhian scene of quietude, industriousness (R was sewing) and gentleness. This first dog died of distemper.

Many more dogs moved into R's house in South Delhi and when I met with R about 17 dogs lived in the four rooms of the first floor apartment of the family house and a couple of hundred dogs lived permanently at the shelter that she had founded with the help of the government and other animal welfare organizations.

### **D Cannot Avoid the Eyes of a Dog**

“Why is it that I feel a dog's pain?” D is taking the opportunity of our interview to explore the possible reasons why he has devoted lots of himself and his resources to the care of dogs. D is amazed that others can avoid the eyes of a dog. D is a successful businessman who is running five enterprises at one time with the help of his son. To spend any time with him, it is obvious that he has a very direct style of interaction. He is an entrepreneur and he seems very comfortable being in charge.

It started off with just a few dogs. But D now lives with more than thirty dogs in a small house without a yard in North Delhi and he has built a “farmhouse” specifically for another sixty dogs in the Northern outskirts of the city.<sup>131</sup> The “farmhouse” in Delhi parlance is better known in the popular imagination for debauched parties of the smart

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<sup>129</sup> [www.abcindia.org.in](http://www.abcindia.org.in)

<sup>130</sup> D's opinion of NGOs is similar to a common critique of the “bad” dog sanctuaries. D thinks the founders of many animal welfare NGOs are either incompetent or using animals as money makers.

<sup>131</sup> A “farmhouse” usually refers to an upper class often secondary home set in a large yard that has been walled off from its neighbors. This is usually an illegal construction due to the fact that the land has been zoned for agricultural purposes only. Therefore, many “farmhouses” have small gardens and of course gardeners to make a gesture towards farming and thus a legal occupation, although they are tolerated illegal constructions of the wealthy in Delhi.

and powerful set, but D's farmhouse is occupied by 60 dogs, a few freaked out cats and two families of servants that have a historical relationship of service to D's zamindari family.<sup>132</sup>

### **I Meet the Dogs at D's House**

Meeting D at his home, I am greeted by more than twenty dogs in a small entryway. D invites me to sit in the living room; I can hear him in another part of the house talking business on his cell phone. In his living room are another ten dogs. The space is immaculately clean, which is quite impressive given the number of dogs in such a small space. The main evidence of the dogs' habitation is the sofa. Both armrests have been completely chewed off.

Most of the dogs at D's house are very healthy, but two of the dogs in the living room are paralyzed and scoot themselves across the floor with their front paws; one is a puppy. D got the puppy from his vet. The puppy is a Labrador. It fell off the second floor balcony of a middle class family and the vet, who vaccinates all of D's dogs at a reduced price, called D to see if he could take the puppy. D said that he took the puppy because it had "a lot of life in it," but it died a few months after this meeting.

Another dog enters the living room from D's bedroom and comes up to me demanding affection. He has a skin condition that has turned the entirety of this dog's body into a mass of purplish rashes, welts and boils. I have a hard time figuring out if I can touch him or not and give him a few half-hearted pats on the head, but I really want him to go away. For the duration of his (short) life this dog that I can barely bring myself to touch lived mainly in D's bedroom because it needed the air conditioning due to its skin condition. D let him sleep in his bed.

### **I Meet the Dogs at R's House**

Most of the dogs are tethered to the wall with a few feet of rope. They are lying under or on simple furnishings that can best be described as an early independence import-substitution style. Many of the dogs in the room are breed dogs, instead of the witnessing pariah dog that had been the catalyst for this whole vocation and way of life. R and a volunteer, a man in his thirties who had been a very successful architect until a life-threatening type of migraine had made him substantially alter his life and world-outlook, are sitting close to a small dog with only one eye who is lying motionless on a padded chair. There is an IV drip attached to a hook in the wall flowing into the dog. This dog has been the mascot of the organization. For quite a few years he has slept every night with R in her bed, even though R's daughter has tried to stop this. All three of us humans, R, the founder, the volunteer, and me, the anthropologist sit for quite a while, all of us unable to make small talk, quietly watching the shelter mascot die. I am petting a small Spitz mix who is sitting on the chair next to me. R tells me that this dog

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<sup>132</sup> D's family is from a hereditary wealthy landlord class and the people who take care of his dogs in the sanctuary "farmhouse" are from families that have been "in service" to his family for generations.

has cancer as does a sprawling white dog that is lying on the floor. R now houses the sickest dogs in her home since she created the sanctuary space.

### **The Home and the Pack D's Superpack**

In D's house I cannot help but notice the ratio of dogs to people favors the dogs by at least ten to one. D lives here with his son and one servant, a woman who has worked for the family for decades and basically raised D's son since D and his wife divorced. The house is quite immaculate and the dogs are generally very healthy minus the two with paralysis and the one with the skin condition. A few of D's dogs are three-legged, the results of accidents or human or dog aggression, but they get around quite well. When I first went to D's home, we arrived together, so I was able to see how the dogs that live in his house greet him and they were all very excited and made him the absolute object of their affection and interest in greeting. What I found most interesting was that in D's experiment of dog and human living in this small house in Delhi, there seems to be only one pack of thirty dogs. Compared to the numbers of dogs in a dog pack living on the streets of Delhi, D has created a super pack in his home, a pack of 30 centered on his person.

### **R's House: Every Room is a Pack**

In R's home there are at least three, maybe four distinct packs of dogs living in this one house: the front, middle, back room and maybe the hallway pack. There is a narrow hallway that connects the living room in which R and I watched the shelter mascot dying to a small kitchen and then another small room at the back of the house. If anyone walks past the kitchen the four dogs in this space start barking and snarling. They are actually completely caged in what looks like a cell built into part of the kitchen. R calls this group "stupid" and "the dummies" because they bear their teeth and froth aggressively, each time any human walks down the hall.

In the hallway in front of the "dummies" kitchen cell," three small dogs reside. They all have a specific syndrome of shortened and bent legs that is not uncommon among dogs in India.<sup>133</sup> In the back room are another eight dogs. One's hind legs are paralyzed and the back of his body is supported by a wheeled cart. Two dogs get around on three usable legs. A few others in this room have extremely advanced cases of mange and therefore they have been dyed purple from the medication used to battle their skin conditions.

The humans move through the territory of all the packs in the house. R has the help of family, servants and volunteers. There are two servants and one volunteer in the house. A couple from Bihar move through the space taking care of various tasks. It is feeding time so they are delivering individual bowls of rice and dal to each dog. The

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<sup>133</sup> This syndrome is due to a lack of calcium and hard cement or stone floors according to one veterinarian in Delhi.

servants' two year old daughter seems very comfortable transiting all three rooms, holding on to dogs for support at times.

R tells me that the dogs are usually not tethered to the walls. This is a precaution for my visit. I ask her if the dogs ever change rooms and she tells me no. I am completely fascinated by this territorialization, which seems to be a spatial co-production of the dogs and the humans. It seems obvious that R has followed some schema of categorization for the dogs in her home at this time. Dogs with life threatening illnesses in the living room, psychotic dogs sequestered in the kitchen, doggie dwarves in the hallway, and dogs with non-life-threatening skin and ambulatory conditions in the back room. It must be noted that the snarling dummies' movements have been restricted, but all the other dogs that could move rooms do not and have essentially become separate packs even though their space of living is separated by only a few feet.

### **Sanctuary Configurations D's Farmhouse Mega Pack**

Although D uses the term "farmhouse" his dog sanctuary is not located in the typical farmhouse zone of South Delhi, but an urbanizing North Delhi village whose residents subsist on very modest means and do in fact farm a bit of land in between the multiplying cement structures built by people who are not originally from this village.

When I first entered the farmhouse with D all the dogs were very excited. They all rushed D and were very affectionate with him. There are 60 dogs and one D. A few small skirmishes break out between a few of the dogs in all of the excitement and jostling for a position to be close to D. The scale of dog and human interaction in the sanctuary is doubled in terms of numbers from D's house, but the intensity of the encounter is I think exponentially increased due to the amount of dogs. However, the form of one pack centered on D is consistent with D's home pack.

The other lodgers of the farm house are a few cats and the human caretakers. The cats are kept in enclosures at the back wall of the compound. I assume for their protection from the dogs. The adult caretakers of the dogs are not excited in the same sense as the dogs to see D. However, they are very attentive to him in a reserved way. These workers come from the same ancestral village as D. His family is from the zamindar or colonial landholding elite. The workers are from families that have been in a relationship of service for generations. However, the care of dogs in such large scale phenomena, is probably a novel formation of this pattern of hierarchal interaction between the families of the servants and D. The caretakers live in the house more or less with the dogs and have a tiny bit of dogless space on the roof. There are three caretakers and one lives in the farmhouse with his wife and two young children.

The sanctuary building is a cement structure of two and a half stories enclosed by a tall brick wall. It has the look of a structure permanently under construction: unpainted, with cut outs for doors and windows that have not had glass installed.<sup>134</sup> On the first floor, there are four rooms. Only one is occupied with human artifacts like a double bed. The other three rooms are mostly empty except for dogs. The floor plan leads through

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<sup>134</sup> The sanctuary is roughly three times larger than D's house in Delhi proper and by its construction it looks like a three-quarters built upper-middle class typical South Delhi home.

the rooms in a circular pattern that connects the back area where the cats are kept to the front porch of the house that faces a quite expansive yard.

After the initial greeting of the dogs and D, D starts discussing some projects with the sanctuary staff. The dogs are still excited and as a pack of sixty they start tearing through the circular path of the first floor, through the one room with evidence of human occupation, the empty rooms, the porch, the yard and back through the cat space at the back of the property. The pack follows this route a few times. It is both awe inspiring and frightening to be in the midst of sixty excited and running dogs. Most of the dogs at D's sanctuary are the standard medium to large size hound with a curly tail-that is the pariah type dog. This many dogs of this size even just frolicking through the house is an astounding grouping of animal muscle and movement. As the majority of the pack moves through the house and yard, smaller configurations of dogs break off from the pack and then rejoin the main group. There is some nipping and little skirmishes between dogs in the group, but no major dog fight breaks out. I am a little concerned about being swept off my feet by these waves and whirlpools of dog action, so I retreat to the corner of the porch where the five year old-daughter of one of the servants is interacting with three dogs. I try but I cannot imagine what it would be like to be five years old and to live within a dog pack of sixty. From the way that the dogs occupy the space of the house it does indeed seem that the house is mainly for the dogs. The servants do inhabit the one room of the downstairs, but the dogs have complete access to this space also. The overall impression I got was that the humans in the case of the servants live on top of, or more aptly, in service to the dogs at D's sanctuary. If D has created a super pack in his home, then in his farmhouse he has provided the conditions for the flourishing of a mega pack.

I actually first met D with the goal of assuring some kind of sanctuary for the dog pack that I had become part of during my time in Delhi.<sup>135</sup> D was most receptive to taking the two then seven month old dogs into his farmhouse sanctuary. However, he was less enthusiastic about taking their four year old mother or a two year old sibling from another litter. He told me that he had found that he could only bring dogs into the group when they were young in order for them to be accepted by his mega pack. D had tried bringing older dogs into the sanctuary, but it had always ended very badly with the newcomer being killed or wasting away and ultimately dying from what D termed "a psychological disorder". D did suggest that he would try taking the mother and the older son as a group since they might do better if they had another familiar dog for both physical and mental support. Therefore, D's configuration of dogs in his shelter may have sub-groupings of dogs in terms of affinity, but there is no absolute territoriality between groups of dogs and they generally live as one massive pack. Both of D's experiments in human and dog living are interesting in terms of the possible upper limits of the number of a pack. And the intensifications that such numbers may pose for both dog and human living.

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<sup>135</sup> I ultimately decided that I did not want any members of my pack to live their lives in the milieu of D's mega pack.

## **R's Geometry of Sanctuary**

The building that houses R's dog sanctuary looks like many other modern cement upper-middle class compounds.<sup>136</sup> It could be either a home or an organization headquarters. The architecture is the same. The main differences between the structure of D's and R's sanctuaries is that R's building is more finished and there is not an open grassy yard space in R's shelter. But in terms of form, the most important difference in human and dog living at R's sanctuary is the fact that the dogs do not have the run of the place like at D's. Just as D's sanctuary is a repetition of the form of the one-pack configuration of dogs that he imposed in his home, R's sanctuary continues the configurations of sorting dogs into specific architectural environments according to categorical divisions of dog types that is evident in R's home experiments.

### **The Rectangular Pariah Dog Cage**

To the right of R's main sanctuary gate is a large rectangular wire cage filled with dog body. Or to put it another way, well over a hundred dogs in this pen have only double, maybe triple the space that their body occupies to move in. There are continual altercations between dogs in this enclosure and the sound of barking and whining punctuates the space of R's shelter. These dogs are all permanent sanctuary dogs. They will not be adopted and they will not be released back into a neighborhood pack like the sterilization dogs. This is their home, habitat and existence.

### **The First Floor: Home at Last**

The main building is across from the rectangular dog cage. Up a short flight of stairs is the reception area where some recently-arrived and very sick dogs lay immobile in mobile cages. These are a category of dogs that will "never be abandoned again" in R's terminology.

### **The First Floor: Circulating Sterilization Cages and Vats**

Off to one side of the reception area are the surgery prep room and the operating theater. Near the operating theater is a storage closet in which two very large circular vats are dedicated to storing dog uteri and testicles, physical proof that the stipulated quantity of sterilization surgeries has been performed per government contract. Along a hallway from the surgery is a series of cage-like enclosures in which batches of neighborhood or street dogs are circulated through the operating room, recovery and release.

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<sup>136</sup> The building is marked by the sharp angles of its outer walls. I have always been struck by the 'harshness' with which these angles meet the surrounding landscape in this type of construction.

## **The First Floor: The Smaller Breed Dog Room**

On the other side of the reception area is a medium-sized room which houses some smaller mostly breed or part breed dogs that are also permanent sanctuary dogs, although being breed dogs gives them a slight possibility of being adopted by a human visiting the shelter. R tells me that these dogs get very upset if she brings any new dog into this room to live. “They don’t want any more dogs.” She says. The dogs in this room have possibly twenty times the space of their own body to move around in so I can’t help but notice that she does not mention the desires of the hounds in the large enclosure.

## **The Second Floor: The “Empty” Room and the Circular Balcony**

The second floor landing ends in front of a heavy door. Through this door, one enters an immense room. The main part of the room has many human waist high L-shaped walls built into it. The purpose of these walls is not clear and their overall effect is to suggest that the building might have had some purpose other than the keeping of dogs. The completely closed series of doors that one needs to go through to enter this room and the odd infrastructure gives the effect of an abandoned factory or the creative re-use of architectural space built for a different purpose. There are a few dogs in this space but not that many, especially compared to the enclosure in the front of the sanctuary that keeps many Delhi hounds. Along one side of the room are cage like enclosures. Most of the cages along the wall are empty, but one houses a particularly psychotic dog, that manages to exceed the Pavlovian aggressivity of the “dummies” in R’s kitchen.<sup>137</sup>

Off to one side of the main room is the bedroom of a couple from Bihar who are the main caretakers of the shelter. Smaller part breed dogs are in this space also and the couple’s toddler son holds on to many of the dogs and plays on the bed with them.

The second floor has an outer balcony on three sides of the building. One can access this balcony from the bedroom of the caretaker couple or through doors that lead off the huge main room. This balcony is about a meter wide and has an iron railing up to waist height on a human. It might seem surprising that most of the dogs on the third floor are housed out on the balcony at least during the day. There are nearly thirty dogs on the balcony. Most of these dogs have a tendency to run from one end of the balcony to the other, almost as if the dogs are running a maze or labyrinth. However, since the form of this enclosure is an interrupted circle, dogs are perpetually going in one direction and some in another and the pace is frenetic with some altercations, but not nearly as many as in the rectangle pen that is actually directly in front of the balcony enclosure.

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<sup>137</sup> The female worker who is showing me the second floor puts a inch diameter stick through the cage and this dog bites down on the stick. I wonder how many times this woman has put the stick through this cage and how many times this dog has bit down. The image of a crocodile with a less differentiated repertoire of behaviors than a dog comes to my mind.

## Forms of Living in D and R's Sanctuary Experiments

D's experiment in dog and human living creates huge packs with himself as the focal point when he is around. The entire space of his house or his sanctuary is available for movement and the relationship of one dog to another and the constellation of the pack in general has space to create and sort itself out.

R's orchestration of dogs varies. The sterilization dogs circulate through the sanctuary hopefully just leaving behind their reproductive organs. Then, there are the hyper-territorialized category packs, such as in R's house or the small dog room at the sanctuary. There is the physical confinement of the "dummies" in the kitchen and the isolation of the one "dummy" at the shelter. Finally, there is the agitated circulation of the balcony configuration of dogs and what might seem like a huge pack in the crowded rectangle enclosure.

However, one cannot say that the hundred or so dogs in the rectangular cage form a pack in the sense that they do not move or circulate as a unit or as detachable groups of dogs. Instead, the movement of the dogs in this enclosure has less the aspect of the pack as circulating predator group, but as a standing mass of animals that more resemble a crowd of atomized individuals or a herd of prey animals without the space to flee or kick up their hooves, such as might be seen in factory farming. These dogs nip and snarl at the dogs in their near vicinity, without much actual circulation of bodies. The overall pattern of their movement is of rippling waves through a fabric or the flickering of lights on a seemingly uniform background. Instead of being a mega dog pack, they are just tightly packed dogs. However, in this case, as opposed to factory farming or puppy mills, it is hard to figure out what kind of commodity this dog could be.

The dogs on the balcony of R's sanctuary do have the ability to move. However, the long and narrow form of the balcony seems to promote a pre-determined maze-like path for the dogs. The dogs have not just the capacity, but seemingly the requirement to circulate due to the form of their milieu. This movement is not that of D's mega-pack that demonstrates a general forward thrust with whirlpools breaking off and rejoining. Instead, the overall effect of the balcony could be described as a three-quarter circular accelerator of dogs. These dogs are hastened to follow the path of the balcony, yet the lack of completion of the circle forces each dog's forward movement back upon itself in the opposite direction and the rapid meeting and separation of dogs going in opposite directions makes the dogs bounce off each other, but they are kept both atomized and within the limits of the balcony space.

In Canguilhem's terminology, both D and R have imposed or at least facilitated the creation of multiple experimental milieus upon the dogs in their shelters. The possible consequences of R being watched by one particular dog or from D not being able to avoid the eyes of any dog has resulted in multiple experiments in dog living. One could look at D and R's insistence on multiplying dogs in finite space as a classic example of the phenomena of humans hoarding animals. Although there might be some value to the notion of hoarding, I don't think it is the most insightful concept to think about R and D's experiments in dog living and the composition of their own selves, let alone attempting to ponder the ways that the dog as a kind of being or individual might register these idiosyncratic milieus or compose a life in one.



Both D and R have organized their homes and sanctuaries around the issue of safety of the dog from the human. This protection has foisted on the dog different milieus, which have varied particularly in terms of territoriality, scale and what I am calling different geometric forms of living. These specific configurations have produced very different packs of dogs, and I would like to turn specifically to how the concept of the pack has been used in philosophical and sociological inquiry in order to think about the problem I set up at the beginning of this chapter, which is the question of an organism composing or imposing a milieu and the possibility of becoming an individual dog or human.

Canguilhem in developing his distinction between imposing and composing a milieu for the living being relies on the works of the biologist Jacob von Uexküll. As I mentioned in chapter one, Von Uexküll is famous for taking a Kantian obsession with thinking about how the faculties of perception organize human thought and applying this concern to imagining (from a necessarily human perspective) how a particular non-human organization of sensing organs arranges a world for different creatures. Von Uexküll's important insight is that different forms of living beings do not share or even divide a general environment as much as compose a specific milieu according to the faculties of their bodily organization. The particular milieu or world of a kind of being, Von Uexküll calls a "phenomenal world," "the self-world of the animal" or the creature's *umwelt* (1957).

Questions of perspective and the organization of sensing bodies is crucial to exploring R and D's composition of particular environments for dogs and the emergence of different packs. In outlining D's mega packs focused on him as leader, and R's hyper-territorialization of packs in specific architectural configurations, from what perspective do these phenomena emerge? In the use of the concept of a pack in philosophical inquiry the problem of perspective has been a consistent focus, although the issue of perspective or discernment of a milieu has also sometimes been flattened to either recuperate the practical human power of aligning with the knowledge/power of objectivity or expanded so that a human type consciousness becomes the entire world.<sup>138</sup> This tendency to ignore the organizational limits of a particular consciousness or organization of sensing in the world is evident in the philosophical deployments of the concept of a pack that I explore below.

It is just such fascination and repulsion for the concepts of perception and human subjectivity that is important to understanding the similarities and differences in the projects of "becoming animal" of Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari (1987) and "becoming with" companion species of Donna Haraway (2008) and the becoming with of ethologists and their animals of study for Vinciane Despret (2004). For Deleuze and Guattari a pack is a multiplicity. They trace this idea to Elias Canetti and his work on the phenomena of the mass or crowd. For Canetti, the pack is one type of multiplicity that is distinguished from the multiplicity of the crowd.<sup>139</sup> It is important to note here that this

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<sup>138</sup> As I have mentioned, discussions of the use of the concept of a pack for wolves, dogs and in philosophical inquiry is complicated and I cannot import the pack into this text as a concept without running the risk of subsuming the specific Delhi sanctuary packs that this ethnography has attempted to outline into discussions that have other aims, targets and systems of reference.

<sup>139</sup> One of two types of multiplicity that are sometimes opposed but at other times interpenetrate" mass (crowd) multiplicities and pack multiplicities. Among the characteristics of a mass, in Canetti's sense we should note large quantity, divisibility and equality of the members, concentration, sociability of the

thinking about packs from Canetti comes from the specific problem of human mass culture and the possibilities of what could be considered freedom in a specific historically-situated human political terms.<sup>140</sup>

As Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari take on the pack as concept they claim a lineage with Canetti so they carry some sociology into their pack, yet they explicitly reject any easy correspondence of their concept of the pack with biological thinking about packs declaring that “we do not wish to say that certain animals live in packs.”<sup>141</sup> Instead, their point is that “every animal is fundamentally a band, a pack” (thus a multiplicity) and it is from this “fascination” with multiplicity that humans have the potential of a human “becoming animal” or realizing the multiplicities running through (their) existence (1987:239).

In examining Deleuze and Guattari’s attempt to “become animal,” Donna Haraway seems to wish that D and G would have been a little more concerned with the empirical pack living of actual different animals and not the conflation of all phenomena with the pack as concept (2008). Caraway dismisses Deleuze and Guattari’s “becoming animal” with the charge that their philosophy is “fantasy” and “sublime ecstasy” and that they are more interested in the “exceptional” as they disdain the “daily, the ordinary and the affect ional” (2008: 29). Haraway’s evidence for these claims is Deleuze and Guattari’s valuation of “a series of primary dichotomies figured by the opposition between the wild (positive value) and the domestic (negative value) exemplified in the “wolf/dog opposition” (2008: 28-29).<sup>142</sup>

Haraway makes an important point here in identifying a set of scorned values in *A Thousand Plateaus* that I think partly stems from a similar problem that Canetti has. Trying to think about humans in mass societies and attempting to imagine a form of human living that is not completely controlled by bureaucratic forms is burdened by the process of inverting what are originally considered the negative terms in common dualisms. Both Haraway’s dismissal of fantasy and the sublime and Deleuze and Guattari’s depreciation of the domestic as categories beyond redemption could be read as processes of inversion of dualistic terms in which for some reason the goal and ground of

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aggregate as a whole, one-way hierarchy, organization of territoriality or territorialization, and emission of signs. Among the characteristics of a pack are small or restricted numbers, dispersion, nondecomposable variable distances, qualitative metamorphoses, inequalities as remainders or crossings, impossibility of a fixed totalization or hierarchization (Deleuze and Guattari 1987:33).

<sup>140</sup> In other words the pack here is a sociological concept geared towards a particular understanding of the human and the emergence of industrial bureaucratic systems and the idea of the individual as an atomized unit.

<sup>141</sup> This anti-biology sentiment is explicit in the next sentence where they call Conrad Lorenz “ridiculous” for outlining an evolution as progress scheme of different types of societies. However, they also deploy biological forms such as the rhizome as an inspiration for politics so their relationship to biology cannot be characterized in one register only. At issue for Deleuze and Guattari as well as for Lorenz it would seem would be the proper domain of a concept and when extensions push ideas such as evolution to milieus in which their meaning cannot hold.

<sup>142</sup> Her evidence for this are statements such as the following from Deleuze and Guattari: “Individuated animals, family pets, sentimental Oedipal animals each with its own petty history” (Haraway 2008: 29). The ultimate object of scorn in the value system of “becoming animal” according to Haraway is the elderly woman and her pet cat or dog. I can’t help but try to imagine what Deleuze and Guattari might say about R and D’s different kinds of pack living in their sanctuary experiments in Delhi (2008: 30). Haraway makes a similar move in admonishing “Western” pet owners for treating their pets like children without a detailed examination of what a child might be in different formations and milieus (2003).

thought has to be trying to imagine what might be meant by human political freedom.<sup>143</sup> However, this kind of categorical thinking through the process of inverting dualistic categories almost necessarily produces ever more elaborate codings of the good and the bad in which the old lady and her dog become clichéd collateral damage—the enemy as Haraway points out.<sup>144</sup>

### The Persistent ‘Who’

However, my main point in wading through previous conceptual thinking about the pack, especially focusing on Haraway’s disagreement with Deleuze and Guattari is to emphasize the primacy of place of the problem of perception and its boundaries in this work.<sup>145</sup> As I stated previously, this is an uncomfortable focus in which discernment is continuously occupied, extended and evacuated all at once. Haraway (1988) in her seminal essay on situating knowledges of course tackles the issue of perception, yet the charge and subsequent dismissal of Deleuze and Guattari’s ‘becoming animal’ using the categories of “fantasy” and the “sublime” as if they are obviously unredeemable ignores the meditation on perception at the heart of Deleuze and Guattari’s “becoming animal” and the necessity to think about perception in attempting to understand these Delhi dog sanctuary experiments<sup>146</sup> The sublime as a philosophical concept is primarily an aesthetic one and therefore related to human perception. In a sublime appreciation of external forms there is a mixture of emotional responses in the perceiver that includes horror and fascination for some external feature of the world (Burke 1968). In an attempt

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<sup>143</sup> Canguilhem also points us towards always thinking about how dualisms tend to invert their value as they transit among different disciplinary traditions (2008).

<sup>144</sup> One of the main problems for Deleuze and Guattari in *A Thousand Plateaus* are unmediated dualisms. The targets of *A Thousand Plateaus* to name just some are: dogmatic psychoanalysis, dualisms or binary logic, the subject and object, trees, lineages, genealogical filiation, interiority of substance or subject, mimicry, structuralism, analogy, tracing, the ready-made, imitation, models, the good and the bad, higher unity, organs, the State, representation, subjectivity, the family, the unity of the person, Freud, “overconscious idiots” the professional, the conjugal, the oedipal, reterritorializations, little dogs, resemblance, and the molar. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) quite astutely point out that rearranging dualisms might possibly be a condition of thinking for the human. They almost make the claim that dualistic thinking is part of the human *umwelt* in von Uexküll’s terms (1957). Canetti’s dualism of crowd and pack multiplicities or Deleuze and Guattari’s famous distinction between the tree and the rhizome, are too easy to make into a system of opposed models of the good and the bad even if their authors adamantly insist that they are not creating “opposed models” or “a new or different dualism” (Deleuze and Guattari 1989:20). Yet attempts to perceive the world differently all too often end up just one more claim too confident about who or what the enemy is.

<sup>145</sup> This is evident in Canetti’s (1962) multiplicity or Deleuze and Guattari’s (1987) attempt to “become animal” and Haraway’s (2008) “companion species” and hope of “becoming with” (inspired by the ethnopsychologist Vinciane Despret 2004), as well as Canguilhem’s (2008) insistence (inspired by the biologist Jacob von Uexküll) on the organism’s composition of its milieu.

<sup>146</sup> The use of heart here might be a bad metaphor for Deleuze and Guattari since they always seem to value the periphery similar to work highlighting borderlands (Anzaldúa 1999). So to honor them I will then say that considerations of perception are possibly at the foot of what Deleuze and Guattari are up to in *A Thousand Plateaus* (1987).

to elucidate the concept of “a multiplicity dwelling within us,” Deleuze and Guattari recount a story that is nothing if it is not a rumination on human perception.<sup>147</sup>

Randall Carter...feels his “self” reel and experiences a fear worse than that of annihilation: “Carters of forms both human and non-human, vertebrate and invertebrate, conscious and mindless, animal and vegetable. And more there were Carters having nothing in common with earthly life, but moving outrageously amidst backgrounds of other planets and systems and galaxies and cosmic continua...Merging with nothingness is peaceful oblivion; *but to be aware of existence and yet to know that one is no longer a definite being distinguished from other beings,*” nor from all of the becomings running through us, “that is the nameless summit of agony and dread” (1987:240) (my emphasis).

So we are possibly in the realm of the sublime here. There is fear and dread, yet it is not about the emotional state that external forms can produce in an interiorized subject, but more about the boundaries between perception and what is perceived. These so very human imaginings of proliferations of experiencing Carters are at play in multiple fascinations for perception and the organization, extension and limit of a particular awareness.

In another case, Deleuze and Guattari discuss Freud’s famous distinction between a neurotic and a psychotic and the neurotic’s ability to perceive what the “normal” human would consider to be a common object versus the psychotic’s propensity to disintegrate the boundaries of this everyday object into smaller entities than what Deleuze and Guattari consider to be the molar normal that they want to destabilize.<sup>148</sup> What is in question is the capacity and that capacity’s meaning for the perceiver to distinguish a sock or “an aggregate of stitches” or to see skin or “a multiplicity of pores.” Deleuze and Guattari claim that Freud thinks that:

It would never occur to a neurotic to grasp the skin erotically as a multiplicity of pores, little spots, little scars or black holes or to grasp the sock erotically as a field of stitches. (1987: 27).<sup>149</sup>

At this point in my discussion of how concerns about the proper boundaries of the perceiver and the perceived run through the use of the pack as concept, I do not want to lose sight of R and D’s sanctuary dog packs in Delhi and how specific sensing bodily organizations are imposing and composing milieus for both dog and human as kind and individual alike in these experiments. The form of the packs that I have outlined in this

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<sup>147</sup> It is possibly significant to note that Deleuze and Guattari use this story of multiple Carters to think about why “every animal is a pack” and “the point that the human being encounters the animal,” as well as the pack being “a fascination for the outside” (1987: 240).

<sup>148</sup> The distinction between the molar and the molecular are one set of dualistic terms that Deleuze and Guattari use.

<sup>149</sup> In this discussion, Deleuze and Guattari are bringing Freud to task for an overly rigid interpretation of what differences in perception might mean or diagnose about the perceiver (1987:28). “Comparing a sock to a vagina is OK, it’s done all the time, but you’d have to be insane to compare a pure aggregate of stitches to a field of vaginas, that’s what Freud says” (1987:27).

chapter are described by a consciousness (for lack of a better word, me) who is looking at the packs from a slightly distanced spatial, temporal and financial position of a being who does not have to permanently reside in these sanctuaries as a specific kind of dog, servant, volunteer or founder, and who can, so to speak, see a viable outside to the enclosures of the farmhouse, or the half-circle balcony, for example.

Haraway uses Deleuze and Guattari's own words to chide them for continual use of I, me and my: she notes that "'My becoming' seems awfully important in a theory opposed to the strictures of individuation and the subject" (2008: 30). It is true that Deleuze and Guattari often promote the perspective of a perceiving 'I' in their discussions of the phenomena of crowds, packs and multiplicity:

I am on the edge of the crowd, at the periphery;...I know that the periphery is the only place I can be, that I would die if I let myself be drawn into the center of the fray, but just as certainly if I let go of the crowd (1987)

Deleuze and Guattari firmly hold on to this 'I' while at the same time emphasizing an assembled character of all individuation that is mostly dependent on what they call "relations of movement" and speed:

Unformed elements and materials dance that are distinguished from one another only by their speed and enter into this or that individuated assemblage depending on their connections, their relations of movement. (1987: 255)

At the same time that they stress processes of movement and speed that can both aggregate and disaggregate, they highlight one plane upon which what could be conceived as a "single abstract animal" performs and unperforms itself:

A fixed plane of life upon which everything stirs, slows down or accelerates. A *single abstract animal* for all the assemblages that effectuate it. (1987:255)<sup>150</sup>

At issue in Deleuze and Guattari's attempt to think about "becoming animal" as a play of indivisible multiplicity in the world are two different versions of the pack that I am calling attention to here. What I am calling pack one refers to this persistent 'who' that even in an attempt to complicate any simple notion of internal or external and subject and object, continually demonstrates a relentless need to refer to an "I" of perception.<sup>151</sup> And then there is pack two in which a continual emphasis on movement, speed, disaggregation, the indivisible and the immanent is referenced. If one dismisses pack one

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<sup>150</sup> "Unformed elements and materials dance that are distinguished from one another only by their speed and enter into this or that individuated assemblage depending on their connections, their relations of movement. A fixed plane of life upon which everything stirs, slows down or accelerates. A single abstract animal for all the assemblages that effectuate it" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 255). In some sense this is not a completely fair quote to demonstrate this promotion of speed and movement as having some favorable political value since Deleuze and Guattari are specifically discussing the similarity between how a vertebrate and a cuttlefish develops in this example. However, throughout this text, there is a promotion of movement and rate as seemingly self-evident goods.

<sup>151</sup> It seems that Deleuze and Guattari hold on to their names from a habit that cannot be so easily dismissed. (1987: 1).

or the persistent ‘who’ in Deleuze and Guattari, if one makes fun of their I, as even they do, then the terms of analysis of pack two are more likely to be deployed as seemingly self-evidently positively valued inversions of dualisms that then can too easily exist disconnected from any kind of reference to any specific threshold of perception, organization of sensing or milieu. And discussions of movement, speed or immanence, if there is no specific blood supply of the one who can get cut in question then we might be lulled into assuming that every reference to a “a single abstract animal” has a positive generic ethical value sans thinking about milieu. An assumed ground of a generic body or milieu is always lurking in attempts to think all of life at once and if the question that one must always be compelled to ask is what the possible meaning of human freedom could be, then many other inquiries are limited, especially the question of for whom that is more than categorical?

I would like to stress that what I am calling this persistent ‘who’ in Deleuze and Guattari’s attempts to “become animal” is not evidence of bad faith or some special European disease of the I, but of evidence of thresholds of individuation and subjectivity that are particularly important to the problem of becoming an individual dog or human. I could have deployed the conceptual repertoire of pack two as multiplicity to try to make sense of the formations of the rectangle enclosure or the three-quarter balcony in R’s sanctuary. Both experiments in dog living could conceivably be described by using version two of Deleuze and Guattari’s concept of a pack:

Unformed elements and materials dance that are distinguished from one another only by their speed and enter into this or that individuated assemblage depending on their connections, their relations of movement (1987: 255)

I would then most probably (and quite rightly) be accused of deploying Deleuze and Guattari as caricature instead of thinking about multiplicity as an “infinity of modifications that are part of one another on this unique plane of life” (1987:254). But in this deliberate exaggeration of multiplicity type thinking, it becomes more obvious that there is a danger in attempting to think of any form or concept as necessarily having a positive political value, especially while ignoring the insights of Von Uexküll’s examination of different configurations of sensing bodies and their milieus or umwelts.

I am not sure if a sea or carpet of dogs is the right descriptor here for the rectangle dog pen, but at close intervals among hundreds of dogs there are disturbances in this field of dogs. In this experimental configuration, more than a hundred dogs’ movements seem to form patterns or waves from the perspective an outside observer. And the balcony dogs are the definition of connections that depend on relations of movement. My point here is that it would be ludicrous to claim some new way of seeing or potential for a better human politics in a multitude of many molar dogs made mass performing a biting and yelping dance at various speeds in these different geometries of sanctuary. None of these terms for movement or speed can offer anything in themselves without thinking about specific perspectives of particular organisms and thinking about how a milieu is sensed or distinguished.<sup>152</sup>

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<sup>152</sup> Deleuze and Guattari do continually make the claim that their more valued terms are not always positive, but these assertions, at least for this reader, are not that convincing. And more importantly as this

When thinking about dog and human sanctuary experiments in Delhi, I continually find myself returning to the persistent ‘who’ that organizes thinking about the pack as concept. The fact that this persistent ‘who’ is framed in thinking about multiplicities as both an enemy and an ally in philosophical and sociological pack thinking is indicative of why centers of perception and consciousness cannot be easily dismissed when writing about humans or dogs. Who is this persistent ‘who’ that feels comfortable at the periphery and will die in the center of the pack, this who-the vertebrate and invertebrate Carters- that can imagine “ ‘no longer being a definite being distinguished from other beings,’ nor distinguished from all of the becomings running through them,” the ‘who’ that can dissolve in the pores of its own face, and even the ‘who’ that for some reason needs to imagine a better life in “movements [that] are unpredictable and follow no rhythm?”

### **In Defense of Individuation**

In many currents of anthropology and sociology the individual is regarded as only a “sad product” to borrow words from Andrea Mubi Brighenti (2010). In an interesting paper looking at thinking on multiplicity in the work of Tarde, Canetti and Deleuze and Guattari, Brighenti exemplifies this disdain for the concept of an individual that I am highlighting here. I will quote Brighenti at length to demonstrate a case of condescension for the notion of the individual and a promotion of the crowd or mass:

The point with such large numbers is that they destroy the principle of individuation. They become countless. If the number is small, say three or four, one can still perceive it as a sum, an aggregate of single units; but when it comes to thousands, or millions, single units necessarily get lost and what remains is a state of proliferation, a sense of thriving. This is exactly what a mass is. (Brighenti 2010: 299).

The question I would have to ask would be from what perspective does individuation become a state of proliferation only and why is the disappearance of individuation or the question of immense numbers always associated with the concept of thriving as in a sense of prospering or flourishing for the living being in this understanding?

The individual is what remains when the tide of the crowd withdraws and people remain trapped into power. From the point of view of a multiplicity, the individual is what remains *after* the dissipation of the crowd – when the wave, so to speak, retreats. It is a sad product, though, far from the glorious image of the rational subject capable of responsible action depicted by modern Cartesian dualists (Brighenti 2010: 305).

The individual is a creature of hierarchies and distances who fears being touched. He or she is made of power, imbued with commands, subdued to power

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vocabulary has been deployed this disclaimer of terms not carrying a positive value often seems to have gotten lost.

differences. Only by merging again in the crowd can the individual get rid of the stings of past commands that endure in his or her flesh (Brighenti, 2006). Admittedly, though, to destitute the subject without becoming (or turning it into) an object is a difficult task; it is a matter of pushing oneself towards one's thresholds. ... The impossibility of achieving such liberation alone is described by Deleuze (1981: § III), in his book on Bacon, as 'hysteria' or 'spasm'. One will never be able to do that alone, for '[o]nly together can men free themselves from their burdens of distance' (Brighenti 2010: 305-306).

So in this discussion of the individual, the general and the necessary ground of the discussion is some kind of particularly human liberation and the individual can only be imagined as a "sad product." One gets a glimpse of this sadness only when the crowd or wave retreats. And it is only this miserable individual as opposed to any other formation of the living being that is particularly produced through a power that is somehow mitigated by the dismal individual's merging with the crowd or pack. If concepts such as the crowd, the pack, movement, speed, absolute aggregations or complete disintegration are generally valorized then it becomes difficult to mention that in some situations it might be prudent to figure out the extent of one's I in order to maintain a certain distance or to suggest that not all touch is beneficial and to figure this out the extension of the touched and the touching has to be sorted out. And possibly even as a metaphor for multiplicity, ocean waves may suffocate an organism that cannot figure out how to breathe salt water or if the wave retreats those who do not move on land or breathe air may not thrive or flourish.

If I now return to the different experimental dog sanctuary environments in Delhi, can I say that the dogs in R's rectangle pen, the balcony, or even D's mega pack are in a state of proliferation and thriving? By what metric would I assess this? And how would merging into a pack of hundreds of dogs be evacuated of power or commands? The different forms of geometric proliferation of dogs in the Delhi sanctuary experiments, if they are read against an overly enthusiastic embrace of the concept of multiplicity as human centric liberation in which one pole of an inverted dualism (the one that makes fun of the persistent 'who' and sees 'liberation' as a merging with no concern for milieu) is continuously valorized then the cartoon images that emerge could open up some space for thinking about perception and individuation that is not completely occupied by identifying and denouncing the individual as always only overly rational or neo-liberal either as a dog or a human.

### **Thresholds of Perception: Becoming an Individuated Sanctuary Dog The Denouncing Hound**

In R's sanctuary a large brown hound is laying under the plastic chair that R is occupying. R is talking on the phone doing the business of the shelter and having tea. Whenever a particular male shelter worker enters the room, the large brown hound starts barking, snapping at the air and thrashing around aggressively enough to make R and the chair she is sitting in vibrate and move around on the floor. In between phone calls R offers a commentary on top of the denunciations of the dog. "The dog is telling me what



goes on when I am not here. He (R gestures towards a short and thin young man from Bihar, let's call him B) beats the dog when I am not here. I tell him not to." So it seems that this particular hound has a reason to be afraid of being touched or more specifically to rationally fear the touch of another particular individual.

Whenever B comes through the reception area of the shelter the dog's barking and snapping commences again. R makes no move to get up from her chair even though there is enough commotion going on under it to make her chair look possessed. From all of their demeanors (R's, B's and the dog's), I guess that this scene is one of routine, this particular dog barking, snapping and thrashing about under the chair and V admonishing the worker for abusing the dog when she is not there. B gives something between a smile and a smirk and laughs a little upon hearing the indictments of the dog and the founder, yet no alternative to this status quo seems to be proposed by any of the involved parties.

One question I had was wondering how this dog became THE dog that can sit under the founder's chair. How did this particular dog's complaint have the ability to register with the founder? Deleuze and Guattari ask the following question when thinking about multiplicity, "What is a cry independent of the population it appeals to or takes as its witness (1987: 239)? In the case of the snarling whimpering dog under the sanctuary founder's chair my question would be who or what kind of creature can be the witnessing population? Does it matter what kind of creature could register an appeal or act as witness if the cry could be acknowledged, ignored or used to take advantage of by this population at the very same time? Is it worse to have no population to hear one's cry or to live in a population that does nothing or worse when they hear your cry? Since the scene among the denouncing hound, R and B seemed habitual in nature, it might take more than a concept of the individual as being necessarily plural or invaded by multiplicity to think about the capacity of an Other to register an appeal either as human or dog in the milieu of the sanctuary.

Earlier, in the day, I had been watching B's interactions with dogs. When he cleaned the large covered rectangle enclosure, he raised his arm as if to hit the dogs many times, a very common gesture of interaction between man or especially boy and dog in Delhi. Without a human in the enclosure every few minutes, there is some kind of altercation between different dogs with barking, snapping and whimpering. When B must enter this space to clean the floors, he is one human to more than one hundred dogs. B chases most of the dogs into a back enclosure in which absolutely all of the space is taken up by dog. The dogs that remain in the main enclosure because they did not fit in the back room are now milling about in this cage which is suddenly spacious. As B mops the floor, he many times intentionally splashes different dogs in the face with water, in what reads to me as harassing behavior that also seems like an amusement to B.

In the dog and human politics of the rectangle enclosure the denouncing hound does not seem to be an "exceptional individual" in any of the clichéd roles that Deleuze and Guattari offer such as the leader of the pack, the old deposed head, the loner, the demon, the favorite (1987: 243).<sup>153</sup> However, the question of how this snarling and snapping dog is not part of the rectangle wave pack or isolated in a cage, the fate of a the

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<sup>153</sup> For Deleuze and Guattari the "exceptional individual" in a multiplicity can offer an "alliance with the unique" that can best facilitate a human 'becoming animal'" (1987: 243). Haraway critiques the promotion of the unique (and presumably the stereotypical categories mentioned above) as the ground of "becoming with" animals and instead promotes the everyday of companion species and "becoming with."

“dummy” category of dog at R’s sanctuary is worth considering in relationship to thinking about the concepts of multiplicity and individuation.<sup>154</sup> At issue is thinking about all of the dogs in the rectangle enclosure as necessarily living life from each one’s own particular individuated perspective, even if each one must also have “multiplicity dwelling within [them]” (1987: 240). Each dog in the rectangle pen distinguishes the features of their crowded milieu. In some aspects they must do this as a particular organization of bodily sensing, but in other aspects they could distinguish aspects of their milieu as individuals. The sheer quantity of dogs in the rectangle pen of R’s sanctuary makes this harder to see from a perspective outside of the pen. A celebration of “merging again in the crowd” in an attempt eradicate the “sad product” of individuation and its “commands that endure in the flesh” does not seem to correspond to the most effective strategy for either dog or human to think about the thresholds of living a life in R’s rectangle pen.

### **“The Greatest Tragedy of My Life” Balcony Jumper 1: Suicide?**

After R constructed her sanctuary, she decided to move the twelve dogs who were living in her home at the time to the sanctuary. These dogs were generally healthy dogs since it was before she had started using her home to house the sickest dogs under her care. R told me that her decision to move these dogs to the sanctuary was “the greatest tragedy of my life.” When R told me this story, she repeated this sentence a few times. The twelve dogs did not survive very long in the sanctuary. Very similarly to D’s account of older dogs wasting away and ultimately dying from a psychological disorder if D tried to bring them into his mega-pack, R’s house dogs failed to thrive at the sanctuary and died within a few months of being moved. “I had no idea that they would react that way” R says. R also repeated this phrase while telling the story of “the greatest tragedy of her life.” I was reminded of someone telling a story that requires some kind of pardon that the speaker knows is impossible, which is possibly the definition of tragedy. I really believed R when she told me that this was in fact the greatest regret that she has in her life. This new experimental milieu that R had set up at her sanctuary was not one in which these twelve dogs could compose a life. Instead from this environment each one composed a death. One in particular, R’s favorite at the time, was put into the milieu of the three quarters circle balcony. As I have described it, dogs in this space have a tendency to run frenetically from one end of the balcony to the other, going in one direction and then reversing course.

R’s favorite dog chose a different trajectory. R tells me that this dog jumped from this balcony and died. R defines this action as a suicide on the part of the dog and blames herself. At the very least it is possible to say that this dog made an individual (possibly rational) decision that was unique in terms of the other dogs whose home was the three quarters circle balcony. Whether this dog was attempting to end its life or to compose a

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<sup>154</sup> The denouncing hound looks generally like a Delhi pariah type hound in size, yet he has a coat of fur that resembles that of an Irish Setter. Maybe this dog has a different status than those of the hounds in the rectangle shelter due to this feature, or possibly some relationship with the owner that exceeds particular features?

new environment for itself by stepping off the balcony is not really an answerable question. However, the emergence of a unique perspective of a creature that is organized qua individual is I think less in doubt. Liberation in this case was not a question of merging into the crowd or pack. The “retreat of the wave” of frenetic movement of the crowd of the three quarter balcony produced something that cannot just be dismissed as a “sad product.” This rejection of the individual misses the point of the organization necessary to become a living being with thresholds of perceiving a self and other and composing a milieu. If individuation can only ever signify the neo-liberal or Cartesian individual then the question of a dog or human capable of rational action in an experimental milieu imposed upon them becomes unable to be asked.<sup>155</sup> The “rational subject” need not be completely evacuated to think about how organisms are connected to the nested organizations of their body or to other bodies with similar solidified histories of nested organization.

### **Balcony Jumper 2: A Tower of One’s Own**

When I visited the three-quarters balcony, I was accompanied by a female sanctuary worker and her toddler. This woman, let’s call her O, carried a large stick or laathi for defense in case force might become necessary against any dog or dogs. The dogs on this balcony seemed too preoccupied by the compulsion of the form of distracted running that the balcony seemed to impose to properly greet me. Instead of being some celebration of molecular becoming and freedom from the dualisms of subject and object, this form of life and milieu of becoming dog seemed tragic to me and I could not help but think of the solution of leaping off the balcony that R’s favorite house dog had devised whatever the ultimate rationale of this action.

Just as I rounded the corner of one side of the balcony, I saw another individual dog’s solution to the problem of composing a milieu for a living being. Quite a distance from the balcony stood an old train tower with a platform. With the setting sun in the background, I saw a dog laying down on this tower platform. He had his head up and was looking over to the space of the sanctuary’s balcony with all of its frenetic activity. O told me that the dog goes to the platform every day and returns just for feedings. The distance between the tower and the balcony looked like a possibly suicidal distance to jump, definitely for me but also for most dogs. However, this particular dog could distinguish and include this platform as part of his milieu and he made the jump a few times each day. For some reason this dog has declined to participate in running the labyrinth of the three-quarter balcony. In this case, this dog’s mode of composing a life in the milieu of the three quarter balcony was not a matter of “pushing [himself] towards one’s thresholds”-towards multiplicities of the very small or the very large which

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<sup>155</sup> Despret makes a distinction between an animal or human ‘being available’ or ‘being docile’ in its engagements and experiments with others. For Despret “an apparatus that does not have a stake in docility is an apparatus that is designed to give the opportunity to the ‘subject’ of the experiment to show what are the most interesting questions to address to him; what are the questions that make him/her the most articulate. By contrast, as we see, each of Harlow’s rhesus monkeys is articulated by the apparatus in such a way that there is no one to raise the question of the ‘point of view,’ the question of what ‘makes sense’ for a rhesus monkey, the question of how the experiment itself constructs a ‘monkey-without-anyone’.” (2004:123).

Brighenti recommends to overcome the strictures of the “sad product” of the individual. Instead, this particular dog has inhabited a tower of his own and no other dog of the three-quarter balcony has followed him. It may be true that this dog stays attached to “the edge of the crowd [of the three quarter balcony], at the periphery; but [he] belongs to it. . . .And possibly [he] knows that the periphery is the only place [he] can be, that [he] would die if [he] let [himself] be drawn into the center of the fray, but just a certainly if [he] let go of the crowd” (Deleuze and Guattari 1987). This dog will be back for dinner.

### **Pariah, Female and Thriving**

As I returned from the balcony, I returned to the main hall of the second floor: a huge space with the fewest dogs in it. As I said this room has human waist high L shaped walls placed at regular intervals throughout the room. O was leading me to one of the cages along the far wall. She wanted to show me a very aggressive dog that needed to be locked up for everyone’s protection. O put the stick she was carrying inside the cage to show that the dog would latch on to it with its jaws and not let go. The response of this dog to the stick reminded me more of an alligator’s repertoire of behavior than a dogs. In this sense this particular dog did not seem like a very de-differentiated organism.

As we turned our attention away from the dog in the cage, an exemplary version of a pariah type female dog came bounding up to me. She looked ridiculously healthy, more robust than most of the dogs one finds on the streets in Delhi or in homes. As I walked away from this dog, she attempted to engage me by running and leaping on to the nearest L-shaped half wall. Sitting on the wall, she towered over me. I patted her and then continued my walk towards the exit. This female pariah dog checked me again by leaping to another wall nearer me, forcing an engagement. She continued this behavior multiple times leaping from wall to wall in an exuberant game. I couldn’t help but try to put some personal meaning into her behavior. “She is trying to get me to take her out of here,” I thought. However, what would I do with her? I already had my hands full with the dogs that I had made a commitment to in Delhi. Should I take her and let her go on the street? Why would that be a better milieu for her since she was obviously thriving here in the environment of the sanctuary? I could not make sense of what to do. She was definitely engaging me specifically; however, what this dog meant by her game, I don’t think can be decided. I did leave her at the sanctuary, but I think of her often.

## Chapter 4

### Servitude: Domesticity and Domestication

In the previous chapter I looked at how particular *umwelts* can be brought into focus by the sensing capacities of particular bodies and lives, paying particular attention to different milieus in dog sanctuaries in Delhi. The purpose of this was to explore the possibility of having a conversation about individuation or particular selves that is not defined exclusively as a Cartesian or neo-liberal form or conversely evacuated by a celebration of movement, assemblages and networks without attention to the problems of perception and selves.

I will continue to explore issues of perceiving selves and individuation within specific provincial configurations of relationship in this chapter through an examination of the concept of the domestic. I am particularly interested in thinking about the domestic as it intersects a common configuration of human and dog interaction in some parts of Delhi, namely the triad of the master, servant and dog.<sup>156</sup> This trinity is apparent especially in the practices of animal shelters and sanctuaries, as well as in large-scale neighborhood dog feedings and lower-middle to upper-class pet dog ownership. To think about how this trinity of dog and human love and work functions, as well as some possible uses and limits of the concept of servitude, I will explore in this chapter some intersecting meanings of the domestic in terms of family, kinship, training, breeding, and service.

In the first part of this chapter, I will look at how the domestic in some human and dog interactions in Delhi is articulated as a space of sanctuary or protection, as well as a locus of proper propagation and generation or its refusal.<sup>157</sup> In the second part of this chapter, I will more explicitly address understandings of love and the contours of what might be considered servitude in the triad of the master, servant and dog.

### Problems of Scale

I admit that the focus on either the dog or the human as an individual in my explorations of the domestic in multiple registers might seem odd or even perverse given how many interactions between humans and dogs in Delhi seem to be refracted through different regimes of aggregation and massive numbers.<sup>158</sup> Certainly different metrics and methodological encounters such as those used in specific dog sanctuary milieus or massive feeding programs help produce different forms and scales of living for particular dogs and humans in Delhi.

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<sup>156</sup> In exploring this triad, I am not suggesting that all human and dog interactions are part of master and servant relationships. However, the figure of the servant is prevalent in some milieus of dog and human interaction in Delhi.

<sup>157</sup> Both of these modes of the domestic intersect with divisions between the domestic or household and the interstice or the space between households as outlined by White (1991) and Cohen (1998). Partha Chatterjee makes a slightly different division between the space of the home and the profane outside world of the modern and the colonialist (1989).

<sup>158</sup> These massive aggregations are possibly also an issue of trying to think about a city as massive as Delhi all at once.

As I have attempted to demonstrate in the previous chapter, practices of enumeration and the logistical configurations of space and type in animal sanctuaries, or their refusal, create different densities and masses of dog and human living. And yet, there seems to be tremendous variation among these densities. Furthermore, even in a seemingly cramped habitat, or a milieu that seems to more easily mass, crowd, swarm and pack, individual dogs, dog shelter workers and dog shelter founders configured their own milieu of perception and action in a specificity that an overly enthusiastic focus on either regimes of coalescing masses or making part or molecular could not completely account for, or possibly be perceived exclusively through these analytics. Therefore, I will mark my interest in the particular dog and human in this chapter, but also recognize that I will be continually pulled into other scales of engagement, particularly that of the categorical in this discussion of multiple domestics.

Then methodologically how should I go about attempting to think about the concepts of servitude and domestication in what some would call an interspecies and post-colonial context? And if I am in pursuit of these multiple domestics in terms of a particularly demarcated space of the home, forms of interspecies interaction and co-constitution, and a kind of work of human serving, then what is the relationship of these domestications to distinct practices of aggregating organisms into masses or dividing them into parts in dog and human encounters in Delhi?

### **Part I: The Domestic: Sanctuary and Proper (Anti-) Propagations Who is Serving Whom?**

To start to think about the concept of servitude in this interspecies context of humans and dogs in Delhi, the question of who is serving whom comes to the fore. This query brings us back to the question of the “persistent who” which I identified in the previous chapter as an often ignored preoccupation of Deleuze and Guattari that belies understanding their work as completely discounting individuation or perceiving entities, especially in terms of their explorations of possible and impossible scalings of what or who can be perceived or be a perceiver. From their work it seems that even in imagining either mass or dispersed actants in the express purpose of provincializing the ‘who’ of psychotherapy, this persistent ‘who,’ of dare I say human perception, seems to stubbornly persist.

And yet any discussion of servitude must also grapple with thinking about understandings of domination, subordination, dependency and inequality all concepts that to maintain their sense must posit strong boundaries between entities and the dualisms of self and other. Whether these boundaries are marked as individuals, communities, nations, species, kinds, structural positions or castes, their complete refutation in a dispersed, networked, or assembled form would preclude marking servitude as such.<sup>159</sup> It would need to be asked what servitude or social justice might concretely mean, for example, if the metric of analysis consistently maintained in a discussion were a

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<sup>159</sup> It is Marilyn Strathern I think who follows through most explicitly on the experiment of trying to think about what terms such as exploitation would possibly mean in a world where the individuated or the boundaries of a self were difficult to ascertain as such (1988).

population, a crowd, a multitude, a pack, a gene, a testicle or a uterus, just to name some possibilities in play in dog and human relationships in Delhi.

In order to think about the marking of boundaries and encroachments, as well as programs of aggregating and making parts in some Delhi dog practices, I will now turn to some cases of counting and numbering the dog, as well as some opportunities and foreclosures of relationship in play in human and dog service.

I will start with an examination of the number 25,000. This is the number offered to me by a veterinarian in Delhi as he was extracting the uterus of a female dog in the operating room of a dog shelter NGO in Delhi. 25,000 is the quantity of sterilization surgeries that, by his own count, this veterinarian had personally performed for animal welfare NGOs enrolled in the Animal Birth Control program.

This number was not an estimate, but a tactile threshold of a cutting, an extracting and a sewing up of dogs that this surgeon had already exceeded before this particular utterance of the number 25,000. 25,000 as benchmark might have also exceeded the expectations of even the veterinarian making this claim, since my impression was that this was one of many times that this surgeon had offered this immense number and its corresponding material aggregates of parts and masses as a statement of both introduction and figure of wonder to a new acquaintance: 25,000 dog sterilization surgeries, two hands and one surgeon.

This ratio of 25,000 dog sterilization surgeries to two human hands and one human surgeon becomes a more complicated problem of dog and human interactions if we add another instance of the number one, this time in relation to the number two as both numbers are deployed in the counting and accounting regimes of dog sterilization in the ABC or Animal Birth Control program as it is practiced in Delhi. During each surgery, this veterinarian places either one uterus or two testicles in two different metal kidney-shaped bowls. One bowl quickly multiplies with testicles in a times two fashion. And in the other bowl uteri accumulate one by one.

These parts are not just interrupted dog multipliers or surgical waste. At the end of the day the contents of each bowl will be transferred to one of two large vats of either testicles or uteri that will be made to account to the government for numerical claims of surgeries and contractual obligations of this dog welfare NGO to the government. In order to count these surgeries the state does not use the individual dog, but tabulates the particularly sexed parts that each individual dog leaves behind. For females, one part stands in for one surgery, and for males, two parts are equivalent to one surgery.

I will now turn to another number that I mentioned in the introduction to this dissertation to think about relationship and service among dogs and humans in Delhi. 20,000 is one more number that connects the dog to the human, not just in Delhi, but for all India in terms of estimated human deaths per year from rabies in India. As I have mentioned, the dog is considered to be the main vector for the rabies virus in Asia and the number the dog helps produce is the distinction of “the most” cases of rabies in the world or more than one third of total cases worldwide.

So what could this surgeon’s relationship to 25,000 dogs, 25,000 uteri, 50,000 testicles or the possibility of 20,000 human deaths per year from rabies be? Or how about the government dog testicle and uteri counter? Should we think about either’s engagement with masses of dogs and dog parts in terms of service or servitude? And if so, who is being served or serviced in these arrangements?

These dog sterilization practices could be understood in a purely human calculus of saving strictly human lives in an analytic that would reduce the dog to a vector of human disease. However, most at issue for the sanctuary founders R and D are questions of what it takes to protect dogs specifically from people in the milieu of the city street.<sup>160</sup> So the framing of what does result in the massive housing of dogs in both of the shelters of D and R, and participation in government sterilization programs in R's shelter, is the issue of dog safety and protection from a particularly human street space that both D and R consider especially violent towards dogs. R and D's desires for protection and safety for street dogs coalesces in the form of a sanctuary, the name of a place that invokes sacred locations, shrines, safe havens or an almost magical protective inside.<sup>161</sup>

As we saw in chapter three, D and R come to be sanctuary founders through inviting more and more dogs to encroach upon their homes or domestic spaces. Therefore, the birth of the dog sanctuary in both of these Delhi cases emerges from an augmentation and institutionalization of domestic family space and both the categories of home and sanctuary have a sense of protection from a threatening outside.

It is this sense of the domestic that Lawrence Cohen has marked as a profound classificatory divide between the domestic as household and what he terms the interstice or the space between human domiciles in India (1998).<sup>162</sup> Onto these spaces of the domestic and the interstice are mapped certain understandings of respectability, family order, and proper generation and propagation, as well as that which does not fit into these orders, respectively.

The interstitial as a word or concept is defined as "empty space or gaps between spaces full of structure or matter."<sup>163</sup> However the interstitial space that Cohen writes about for a certain temporal Varanasi is jam-packed full of categories of persons broadly speaking that will not fit into the space of the domestic conceived of as respectability and proper family order, lifecycle, succession and the transmission of lineage. These entities of the interstice in Cohen's analysis include old women, crazy women, widows, sadhus and dogs (1998).

It is significant to keep in mind for both R and D, that the home or sanctuary functions in their lives as a protective space for the dog and the bringing in of the dog from non-domestic space protects it from what could be termed a violent interstice. For R though, the street or interstice maintains its sense of family abandonment that Cohen marks especially for elderly and crazy woman in his work on aging in Varanasi. Reading R's sanctuary activities through this lens, I could interpret R's laments about having to release sterilized dogs back to the neighborhoods where they were picked up from as a fear of their abandonment to an uncaring interstice. As I mentioned in chapter three, R

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<sup>160</sup> One major difference between the sanctuary practices of D and R is that D rejects all government help and programs and does not participate in government sterilization programs.

<sup>161</sup> Therefore, D does not release his dogs back into neighborhood environments and R does return the dogs she picks up for sterilization, but she laments that she needs to put them back on the streets in what she considers to be an environment of abandonment.

<sup>162</sup> David Gordon White defines the dog specifically as a creature that marks the boundaries of human and not human terrain or that which has not been domesticated or brought in from the wild. White's analysis about the status of the dog in relationship to domestic space is for what he would define as Indo-European culture.

<sup>163</sup> (Merriam-Webster 2013).



repeatedly tells all her sanctuary dogs that they are home and will never have to worry, suffer or be abandoned ever again.

D, on the other hand, regrets having to build and maintain sanctuary space as an extension of his home expressly for the protection of dogs. He wishes that his sanctuary did not need to exist and that dogs could live on the streets without being subjected to what he considers to be a degree of human violence that he cannot bear. D is even sometimes ambivalent about the creation of his over-sized 'farmhouse' just for the protection of dogs.<sup>164</sup> On one occasion D told me that his sanctuary was a vocation and on another, that he was a bit mad for undertaking such a project, but that it was too late because he had already created his dog sanctuary, and so he had to tend it.

The proper place or milieu for certain categories of dogs in relationship to the domestic and what could alternatively be defined as the street, public or interstitial space in Delhi is a source of conflict and these understandings are not uniformly distributed to say the least. For both D and R and their sanctuary practices, their primary focus is to bring street dogs into the space of the domestic defined particularly as sanctuary and protection.

Given the need to bring dogs into domestic space in these two sanctuary projects, it is significant that the respectability of, or duties towards, the family are not the most pressing issue of the dog sanctuary.<sup>165</sup> Even though dogs are sterilized in both the sanctuaries of D and R, it is important to note that the reduction of the capacity of dogs to propagate in these locations does not originate in the organizational logic of the sanctuary for either D or R. Similarly, the aggregations and masses of dog that result from this desire to protect the dog from a particularly human violence of the interstice are not the primary interface of either D or R with dogs. We can see this especially if we turn to the narratives of first dog encounters that both tell about being set upon a path of becoming sanctuary founders. Both R and D become captivated by the gaze of a dog upon them that makes them extend the protective space of the domestic to successive individual dogs and each of their corresponding gazes which results in this crowd or mega-pack of dogs. R and D in their interactions with dogs have also extended the domestic into a super domestic space of sanctuary in which the dogs may be made mass, part or sterilized almost as a by-product of, or afterthought to, as D recounted, his not being able to avoid the eyes of a dog.

Therefore, D, R, the surgeon and the counter of sex organs, are possibly all in the end protecting the dog from the fecundity of its own species being through their practices of sterilizing dogs.<sup>166</sup> However, R and D's invocation of the domestic as the proper milieu for dogs does not particularly stem from the domestic's association with controlling appropriate human fecundity, but as a way to invite the dog in from an

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<sup>164</sup> As I mentioned in chapter three, a farmhouse in Delhi parlance is an illegally built house on land that is zoned for farming only. These houses are usually constructed at the outskirts of Delhi by the wealthy and are often portrayed in the Delhi media as sites of upper class parties and debauchery.

<sup>165</sup> I should note that some understandings of different kinds and categories of dog and their corresponding need to be enveloped in the domestic are indeed refracted through understandings of what a 'good' or 'bad family' and the proper propagations of certain categories of dogs and humans should be. Cohen writes on the 'bad family' in terms of aging and understandings of proper care and duty (1998).

<sup>166</sup> D does not participate in the Animal Birth Control program or any other government program. However, he does have each of his dogs sterilized by a veterinarian. He pays for all of these surgeries.

interstice that is understood as a particularly abject milieu of human generated interspecies violence.

### **Propagations of Shape and Sort: The Limitations of a Politics of Aspirational Forms**

The domestic, even if constructed as a safe haven or sacred site of protection, is also of course rife with discussions of the proper boundaries between individuals and kinds as well as issues of service and servitude that these separations tend to manifest. The domestic of sanctuary must grapple with the well-worn problems of the extensions of who can be family and what is considered right, respectable, natural and even cosmologically self-evident in terms of what particular entities, individuals and kinds owe in service and servitude to others in, outside and between what people consider to be family in different milieus of human thought and practice.

In terms of service or servitude and understandings of family and the domestic, perceptions of what is proper or just can change quite considerably if the rubric engaged in is that of different kinds—of species, nations, races, or communities, for example. This is probably one reason why the examination of how different organisms and their socialites have been discussed in biology has been such a productive site for cultural anthropologists and students of science, philosophy and culture broadly speaking to think about how different particular conceptions of family or the impossibility of the concept are at stake in different formulations of the natural.<sup>167</sup>

In the following discussion of different human and dog interactions in Delhi, I will put some understandings of servitude used in biological discussions of propagation and kind in dialog with studies of servitude as particular human and colonial form of domestic human labor to think about how understandings of domestic space and its dualistic opposites such as the street, the interstice and the public influence dog and human sociality and the creation of kinds and individuals in Delhi. By juxtaposing some understandings of servitude, domesticity and domestication from arguments produced out of different evidentiary and empirical inquiries, I am particularly interested in how arguments can be extended or collapse from these transpositions from different disciplinary conceptual milieus or habitats.

You can then consider this chapter to be organized as a romp through different understandings of servitude and domestication in reference to particular practices of dog and human encroachments in Delhi. In addition to considering specific provincial configurations of the domestic and servitude in an interspecies framework in Delhi, I am, like many others, interested in thinking about how some arguments refuse to look at potential political outcomes of forms embedded in certain scientific, cosmological or natural understandings of the proper configurations of relationship of different forms of the living, while at the same time thinking more about how many critiques of biological accounts of living and sociality also then make certain forms or relations of life assume a

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<sup>167</sup> At issue in understandings of family are what is considered normal geographically, culturally and historically, as well as how these formulations are used to make sense of other forms of life than the human. Instead, of marking extensions of normalized family relationships into other realms as anthropomorphism, it might be more helpful to think about what is gained or lost in each instance of these borrowings and extensions of relation.

certain metaphysics or gestured towards aspirational politics. In chapter two, I alluded to this problem in conceptual critical work attempting to operationalize as a human political and social form the rhizome, Deleuze and Guattari's concept that emerges for them in a habitat of a critique of paternal lineages which these authors associate with arboreal forms (1987).

For example, S. Eben Kirskey and Stefan Helmreich talk about the emergence of "multi-species ethnography" as "a new genre of writing and research" in anthropology and discuss how this new form of thinking can "displace studies of animal behavior used by social conservatives and sociobiologists to naturalize autocratic and militaristic ideologies" (2010: 553). In this discussion they are specifically referencing Anna Tsing's engagement with mushrooms that attempts to "imagine a human nature that shifted historically along with varied webs of interspecies dependence" (2010: 553). It is in this context that Deleuze and Guattari's rhizome invented to critique the daddy lineage tree shifts and becomes a human "aspiring to mimic the "rhizomic sociality" of mushrooms" (2010: 553).

At issue is how the sociality or biology of any living form or relationship could possibly ground a politics, especially in absence of thinking about specific milieus, umwelts and scenes of provincial and historical configurations of relationship. It would be necessary to think about who this 'who' is that mimics the rhizome. In other words, the problem that I have mentioned previously of the "persistent who" of human perception would need to be thought about in terms of the rhizome.

Another predicament is imagining that biological forms or relationships can always be critiqued in terms of how they might be considered to be politically conservative or progressive from quite specific historical and geographical mapping of these terms, which are also left more implicit than explored. Even in E. O. Wilson's formulation of socio-biology, which has been critiqued from within experimental biology and ethology since its publication, there is an immense divergence from what Wilson thinks his favorite ants are doing from how he discusses the sociality of elephants in the same text, for example (1980). The modes of sociality of the elephant and the ant cannot both "naturalize" these same "autocratic and militaristic ideologies," especially absent questions of milieu that should be a preoccupation in attempting to think about particular forms or configurations of relationship of the living as either a utopia, a dystopia or an indeterminate muddle. One would also have to ask how a politics could be 'libratory' from absolutely all perspectives, scenarios, and environments, as well as the possibility that some forms of military defense or autocracy might exceed ideology.

It seems that a critique of the naturalizing potential of biological disciplines and facts should also be alert to how what is being discussed as the "new microbiological facts of life" (Kirskey and Helmreich 2010) should also be aware of desires to extend insights gleaned from what is currently understood as a new biology. Furthermore, what is being understood as an anthropological goal of studying relatedness among "the making and remaking of biological knowledge and substance" (Kirskey and Helmreich 2010) should also think about possible limitations and constraints in extending philosophical ruminations in political or ethical registers.

It might be helpful, but also I admit very difficult, to think about exactly when in the same text an author is either critiquing a naturalization of a particular disciplinary insight from a specific tradition of methodology and when he or she is deploying a new

biological fact gleaned from an experimental discipline in an aspirational mode of human political yearning made possibly pan human, as well as pan species.

I would resist making any form or configuration of relationship into a zeitgeist in anthropological work. The celebration of the rhizome or blurry boundaries between people, dogs or classifications of species in an understanding of a “rhizomorphic zeitgeist” seems to then set up a dualistic opposition with what is then configured as a “Darwinian orthodoxy of linear descent” (Kirskey and Helmreich 2010). It would seem that an overenthusiastic dismissal of Darwin might be a bit premature of a conclusion.

The points here are: 1) the rhizomorphic as a conceptual tool should not and does not wipe out the conceptual tools of what in this argument are being referred to as Darwinian concepts. 2) No biological form can anchor a better particularly human politics especially as imagined from a pan-human or pan-life perspective-less position. 3) The proposition of boundaries or constraints or their strength or permeability between entities has no predetermined political or ethical value, especially if what is being bounded or constrained is not specified. We must first always think about specificity in terms of perspective, milieu and history in terms of a ‘who’ and a ‘where’.

For example, discussions of lateral versus linear gene transfer cannot ground a politics of human living or reproduction (Margulis and Sagan 1995). A science fiction writer could make any form beautiful or hideous depending upon the perspective from which the story is told, as well as how the milieu is constructed. For example, a celebration of lateral gene transfer could make a world in which all genes are considered to be absolutely interchangeable in a mix and mingle fashion that completely disavows an evolutionary development perspective. This would effectively elide how a gene can be considered to be a solidification of previous organism and environment interactions. This perspective would also ignore the importance of timings in gene expression, as well as the importance of actual organism and environment interactions.

One such place to look at the impossibility of making all inquiry into the living into a search for better political forms, however obliquely defined, are the issues of propagation and understandings of both family and species boundaries. Once again it is the drawing of boundaries and the claiming of perspectives that makes a politics or an ethics emerge at all. Similarly, understandings of servitude and proper propagation to make sense need divisions of families, species, castes and breeds. And it is this boundary work that makes interspecies relationships particularly significant sites for thinking about service and the domestic, as well as the impossibility of attempting to have the different forms of living beings, ground discussions of human meaning.

### **(Anti) Propagations**

So to return to R and D’s two sanctuaries, their dominant rationales for existence were not to diminish the reproduction of dogs, but to provide shelter from an interstice conceptualized as a space of abandonment by R and a space of excessive human violence by both R and D. Thus, the sterilizations of dogs at these sites were in some senses beyond the charter of the founders of both sanctuaries. From both R and D, I got more of a sense that the possibly fabulous propagation of dogs in the auspices of a mega-city such

as Delhi was more of a problem of too many begging canine gazes and not enough sanctuary to protect them, than an issue of over-population per se.

R participated in the ABC sterilization program, but also ran an absolutely no kill shelter in her interpretation of what the constitution's "having compassion for living creatures" would mean. She did not even kill dogs with diseases like distemper. D, as usual, was pragmatic about the lives of his dogs and was concerned about quality of life, as well as duration, although he tended to not intervene in the life course of even severely sick dogs. It might seem surprising that the sheer quantity or fecundity of dogs in Delhi was not a common mode of discussion for either R or D in terms of what they understood themselves to be doing in each of their shelters, which was supporting and being of service to particular dogs.

### **Domestication as Dependence and Species Benefit**

A traditional definition of domestication involves humans selecting for traits in an organism that make some aspect of it more beneficial to the human with attendant issues, this organism then becoming dependent on humans to propagate and survive. In this kind of account the domesticated is doing the bidding of the human in some sense.

Given this particular definition of domestication that focuses on species dependence, it is probably not surprising to anyone that Michael Pollan did not select the dog as one of the organisms that he used to show how some entities designated as domestic may actually be 'getting' the human to propagate them and do their bidding in fabulous forms and amounts (2001).

The role of the human as a dog pollinator, or "human bumblebee" in the apt named Pollan's terms, would probably have been too obvious of a co-constitution of species and domestication to develop the surprise necessary for Pollan's argument to have become so popular (2001). But yet I am including this discussion of the human as bumblebee, which is an inversion of more traditional understandings of domestication as being organized around a predominately human benefit to highlight the kinds of divisions between species that must be emphasized in order to discuss benefit, service or servitude in this kind of argument.<sup>168</sup>

However, R, and to some degree D, could possibly be considered some sort of accidental, anti-dog pollinators. Dog sterilization projects such as the Animal Birth Control program in which many dog sanctuaries, (but not D's) participated, would complicate what definitions of a cultivator of the dog genome in accounts of domestication or interspecies co-constitutions between the human and the dog might mean.<sup>169</sup>

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<sup>168</sup> These arguments of species benefit are predicated on a logic of evolutionary adaptation, an important paradigm, which can also become excessive in terms of making all phenomena, including ones that do not seem dependent on genetic information, have to make sense in terms of adaptation. This kind of excessive use of a paradigm reminds me of a story about a social worker contracted by the a military that insisted that every single program had to be justified in terms of its contribution to being prepared for battle.

<sup>169</sup> Questions of cultivation and propagation as well as anti-pollination bring up issues of eugenics, sterilization programs and who should breed that are obviously echoed through classifications of dogs, breeding and Animal Birth Control programs in Delhi, India and worldwide. For more information on the Animal Birth Control project in India see <http://abcindia.org.in/>.

Similarly, institutions like the World Health Organization could also be defined as anti-dog pollinators. For the WHO, the dog, that for D is primarily an entity that he cannot avoid the eyes of, becomes “the problem of surplus dogs” (Karlekar 2008: 6).<sup>170</sup> This surplus dog according to the WHO is a creature that reproduces so fantastically that killing it will actually not eradicate it because even endless extermination “has no effect on the root cause of the problem, which is the over-production of dogs (Karlekar 2008: 6). In this version of the dog, we are presented with an incredible, yet quite powerful aggregated multi-generational creature that human killing cannot eradicate. This WHO dog is specifically un-killable because of its density, composition and turnover” (Karlekar 2008: 6).<sup>171</sup> In the formulation of the WHO the most real form of the dog is this dog of turnover. Turnover is a combination of the concepts of life expectancy and replacement at population and species levels.

This dog of turnover is not the dog that held R and D in the thrall of its gaze and yet a hint of its densities, as well as its composite and regenerative forms enter D’s sanctuary specifically through the Animal Birth Control Sterilization program.

### **Pet Dogs: Overwhelmingly Male and European**

The Delhi dog whose eyes D cannot avoid and the Delhi dog of turnover—or the un-eradicateable dog—are both quite different creatures from each other, as well as both being distinct from the pet dog, which I will discuss in this section.

In Delhi, pet ownership, particularly dog ownership, is on the rise. From three different veterinarians who deal with a range of a working, lower, middle and upper class human clientele in particular neighborhoods in Delhi, I have been given estimates that ninety percent of these pets are some semblance of a European breed dog and not a dog originally from the street or classified as a pariah or In- dog.<sup>172</sup>

It would be quite easy to make sense of the keeping of the European breed dog as an imported Western consumer practice, a sign of elite distinction, an object of post-colonial desire, an example of neo-liberal economic liberalization or an artifact of modernity. These claims would not be untrue, but their broad contours would most probably lead to a usual suspects division of categories and kinds that would most probably derail this investigation and take me a bit off the scent of trying to think about questions of servitude in both intra- and inter-species relationships in and through different disciplinary approaches to domestication, domestics and service.

The same veterinarians, as well as a dog trainer and two pet store owners estimated that these European breed dog household pets are also ninety to ninety-five percent male. Thus, the European breed dog in its male form tends to occupy the space of the domestic or home in many cases of dog ownership in Delhi. The maleness of the

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<sup>170</sup> (WHO Guidelines for Dog Population Management quoted in Karlekar 2008).

<sup>171</sup> (WHO Expert Committee on Rabies, Eighth Report quoted in Karlekar 2008: 6)

<sup>172</sup> Of course, this grouping of people whom these veterinarians have identified bring their dogs to an animal doctor. The high incidence of European breed dog pet ownership in Delhi does not mean that there is not a robust group of people quite diverse in their own demographics that take pariah or Indogs into their homes as pets. There is also the common human practice of feeding community or street dogs that are of all types. These dogs often travel among a group of homes for sustenance, as well as forage on their own.

pet dog in Delhi would actually require a whole investigation into its contours and the meanings of propagation and sex, which may go with it, which is as yet to be done, but there are resonances with preferences for male human children. However, I will now return to the boundary of species and understandings of domestication as a form of species benefit, service or servitude to explore the pet dog and human master relationship in Delhi a bit more.

### **Kleptoparasitism: Analogies, Perspectivism and the Problem of Kind**

The archeologist Peter Rowley-Conway has compared the puppy to some species of cuckoos, brood parasites practicing a form of what is known as kleptoparasitism.<sup>173</sup> Some species of Cuckoos lay their eggs in the nest of other birds, pushing out the original inhabitants' eggs and then getting these birds to raise the kleptoparasitic birds' offspring after they hatch. The analogy being made for dog and human relationships is, not only getting the human to help propagate it, as is the main point of Pollan's work, but also reducing the human's fertility due to this care of puppies.<sup>174</sup>

Certainly, this claim is making broad generalizations across time and space, as well as being predicated on ideas of a zero sum game of passing on the genes that a particular creature most specifically animates as a necessary assumption for entry into the most dominant evolutionary frameworks. However, discussions such as kleptoparasitism and the pollinations of others as a kind are significant expressly in terms of thinking about the categorical divisions that are needed to make interspecies service or servitude legible in the first place. The concepts of service and servitude always mark a boundary of otherness as well as the limits of what are due as a kind, member or organ. And yet failure to mark these borders would result in not being able to parse difference and all would become an entanglement, mass or total system.

In addition, some may be offended that I am discussing dog and human interactions in the 'post-colonial' city of Delhi in this register of an evolutionary argument. However, my point in doing this is to make clear the structural arguments necessary to posit benefit, disadvantage, service or servitude at all.

Of course this evolutionary argument of kleptoparasitism as the primary relationship between human and dog conjures up a particular childless and Western (human) dog owner and maintains a biological logic that assumes a curtailment of human breeding just as it highlights that in this logic reproduction or more specifically specific gene frequencies must always be that which is the ultimate metric.

As I mentioned, there is a danger of bringing in universalized Darwinian arguments about reproduction and survival in evolutionary terms into a discussion that looks at practices located in a particularly non-West place, since thinking in terms of this

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173 "I think we can think of little puppies brought home as parasites. They don't do anything useful, they're not perceived as a food source, they're not perceived as a guard dog. They are simply brought home for fun. The cuckoo is perhaps quite a good analogy because the baby cuckoo, of course, being planted in somebody else's nest, prompts mother bird to look after baby cuckoo, even though there's nothing in it for the mother bird at all" (Peter Rowley-Conway quoted in *Dogs Decoded* 2010).

<sup>174</sup> This argument is a problematic analogy but it does bring up the issue of both biology's interest in propagation and the limits of always making this rubric the metric that matters in terms of engagements between life forms.

kind of biology has also marked divides of who is more under its logic. However, this trepidation keeps a certain divide of thinkable and categorical boundaries. It is in fact the Western pet owner who is being thought of explicitly in Rowley-Conway's argument of dog and human kleptoparasitism.

Although limited arguments, dog and human kleptoparasitism, and human dog pollinators and anti-dog pollinators, if dismissed outright might not help us see how thinking about understandings of service and servitude in terms of propagation have to always delimit what proper encroachments and boundaries are. At issue is how Darwinian, species, breed, cultural, colonial, or rhizomorphic logics, just to name a few in play, would change what kinds of service or servitude are at stake, and most importantly, for whom.

### **Male Breed Dog 'Marriage' Advertisements**

In this section, I will attempt to think about the practices of people who own European breed dogs posting advertisements soliciting mates for their overwhelmingly male pets on pet store windows in Delhi. These announcements self-consciously mimic matrimonial ads as they highlight the breed of a suitable mate for each dog in lieu of the caste designations often used for human marriage advertisements.

It needs to be emphasized that absolutely all of these advertisements are for female dogs of the same kind of European breed. The question that must be asked is why are these male European breed dog owners so keen on propagating their dogs, especially in the broader milieu of Delhi in which there is in the words of the World Health Organization a "surplus of dogs"?

It is quite significant that it is not at all common to neuter these male European breed dog pets. Estimates given to me by veterinarians in Delhi are also in the ninety percent range for having a non-neutered dog. Given the massive undertaking of taking street or community dogs from the streets, sterilizing them and then returning them in the Animal Birth Control program, this dog owner pollination of specifically male European breed dogs in Delhi is part of a different understanding of the domestic and domestication then that of sanctuary for D and R or the interstitial surplus dogs of the WHO.

In Delhi, this image that certain evolutionary biologists have imagined of a dog owner limiting its own procreation due to its entanglement with raising a dog is even more nonsensical than it would be even in the U.S., for example. The promotion of select male European breed dogs does not seem to actually be impeding humans from being born. However, what is this motivation to breed the family pet and to do so with a female of the same kind defined as a breed dog? Is this desire to breed one's pet monetarily motivated? This would be a possibility to consider since European breed dogs can be quite expensive.

However, upon talking to several pet owners who have placed these "marriage" ads for their dogs, their answers have more to do with the responsibility that one has to secure the rightful procreation of their kin, especially their children. I was told by an economist who had posted an ad for his Labrador, "We think that it is only right that the dog has at least a litter of puppies."



Therefore, the practice of denying procreation to a pet dog in a language of population control is not that legible in these practices of the male European breed dog as pet in Delhi. And the manner in which the dog owner helps his dog procreate with obvious references to human marriage advertisements that emphasize appropriate kind in a mate, is I think evidence that a specific form of kinship is being extended to the dog across species boundaries at the same time that distinctions of breed, caste and gender are being maintained. However, the male European breed dog and its human in Delhi in their encounter have resonances for thinking about the domestic as a space of kinship in terms of how definitions of who is family and what is an offspring are decided. This particular relationship is also part of a myriad of practices and situations that help decide how understandings of proper care and the boundaries of entities enfold particular configurations of who is servicing whom.

### **The Impossibility of Colonial Canid Revenge: The Canis Soupous of Breed, Pariah and (In)dogs**

And in the parsing of boundary divisions suggested by the concepts of human bumblebees, anti-dog pollinators, and dog kleptoparasites, certain understandings of what service, servitude, the domestic, and domestication could mean across species lines emerge. Yet in the practices of taking out advertisements for the appropriate breed mate for male European breed dogs, as well as in the extension of the protections of the domestic shelter space to street dogs, should we say that these human and dog encroachments are operating under any sign of ‘colonial revenge’ that Hansen used to talk about post-colonial innovations and the figure of the selfless servant in Indian politics (1999)?

Should I mark as some form of irony that the male European breed dog is brought into certain families in Delhi in a relationship of specific responsibilities of kinship similar to the responsibilities of making sure that certain groups of kin propagate? Once again, this analysis is not so much wrong as it would be too sure about categories of the appropriately foreign, the assuredly native, and the obviously child or kin to really question what else could be at stake in human and dog encroachments between pet, owner, sanctuary founder and dog in Delhi.<sup>175</sup> My question would be if the European breed dog can really be marked as European, colonial or participating in any kind of revenge from its own perspective, if we could attempt to imagine it?

The inversion of the inappropriate European breed dog is the declaration that there is a particular indigenous dog for all of India that some have named the Indog.<sup>176</sup> Discussions of the Indog often are about ascertaining whether or not a particular animal is a ‘pure’ indigenous dog, or if a particular animal is mixed with other dogs that are not considered native due to narrow considerations of a visual phenotype or ideal type.

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<sup>175</sup> Haraway has critiqued dog pet owners in the United States for treating their dog like a child and thus ignoring the dogness of their dog, as well as making the relationship between the two about commodities (2003, 2008). The kleptoparasitic dog and human argument, for all of its evolutionary assuredness, takes seriously treating a dog in a common relationship of kinship across species boundaries. I would suggest instead of marking a type of relationship that is considered out of bounds or inappropriate, it might be more interesting to explore the child and its inclusions and exclusions across historical divisions of this category.

<sup>176</sup> There is a Facebook site under this name with members from around the world.

These arguments for assessing what purity could mean among dogs do not address the propagation proclivities of dogs themselves in terms of the canid family's generally enthusiastic tendencies to procreate without attention to human breed distinctions, as well as the porous boundaries among many canid 'species.' In contradiction to the marriage ads searching for absolute kinds and the promotion of a particular indigenous Indian 'breed' of lovers of the 'pure' Indog, some researchers in biology refer to a great percentage of the canid family to be pure 'canis soupus,' a term used to discuss the possible propagations of Golden Jackals, Domestic Dogs, Wolves, Coyotes and Dingoes with viable young (Bradshaw 2011).

In this investigation into servitude, service, the domestic and domestication, I have been flagrantly mixing categories from understandings from both biological and social registers, just as human and dog encroachments in Delhi are enveloped in struggles over both re-formulations and re-entrenchments of enduring formations of kind that play out in both registers, of what for lack of better terms, we could call the social and the biological. And these uncomfortable correspondences and complicated histories of the categories of species, breed, caste and class as they interpolate both dog and human can help us think about ways in which these dog and human practices exceed colonial forms and categories and any sensible formulation of what 'colonial revenge' might mean in an interspecies context.

### **Propagations of Valuation and Abjection**

Some in Delhi, unlike the dog marriage advertisers, are more interested in reproducing European breed dogs for profit. Some of these enterprises are large scale and heavily capitalized. However, since certain kinds of European breed dogs, if their visual phenotype can be believed as such, can be sold for considerable sums of money, some people of limited means have also begun to dream of pure-bred puppy profit in Delhi. The desire for an exceedingly small scale puppy mill might have a generative logic that might have some correlation to Michael Taussig's classic exploration of the magic of capital (1980); however in this case, the dog qua dog, at least in its street version, reproduces itself so rapidly that nature itself might proliferate at least as fantastically as capital according to the World Health Organization and its concept of un-eradicateable dog. It is instead, the European breed dog that requires more care in its cultivation as a cash crop.

The categorical divide between European breed dogs and pariah or In-dogs is in many ways a human fiction, but it has powerful effects. Dogs in their own reproductive logic and sociality absolutely ignore this divide, not that they don't have their own criteria for inclusions and exclusions, as well as the milieu of Delhi configuring which dogs and their genetic inheritances will become the next generations of its street dogs.<sup>177</sup>

That being said, breeding European breed dogs for profit, if undertaken on a small scale by people of limited economic means can present a classed revulsion on the part of the upper-class dog rescuer that is articulated as caste, class and breed distinctions.

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<sup>177</sup> Another factor affecting breed dogs in Delhi is the small breeding populations of particular types of dogs which have lead to founder effect and genetic bottlenecks.

A huge dog greets me at the home of an “animal lover,” in Delhi parlance, who takes many sick dogs into her spacious home. Its skin is a purple-grey color and it has sores all over its body in different stages of both possibly healing and openly weeping. It does not have much hair on its body. I am told by the “animal lover” that it is a Great Dane, but I can only see a resemblance in terms of its immense size. It is disfigured by the amount of sores on its body. It was found mostly dead in a dumpster. The “animal lover” tells me that the person who brought the dog to her had taken it from some people on the street who were discussing taking this dog, that at the time more resembled meat, and breeding it to make some money selling European breed dog puppies.

Even as mostly meat, the Great Dane has a human value either in terms of its at least imagined income earning potential as a reproducer of a class of European breed dog or as a particular form of abused life particularly worthy and rewarding to save. And the telling of this tale by an upper-class person about lower-class people places the balance of care and concern for sentient beings on the side of this “animal lover.”

In the discussion of the “animal lover” the Great Dane is rescued from the street and from the people and dogs of the street as well. The story that the “animal lover” tells about poor people wanting to start a small business producing European breed dogs is not unique. I have encountered other such tales even told by dog lovers of limited economic means.

However, both desires to make male European breed dogs procreate in order to fulfill family obligations and hopes of participating in the fabulous wealth gains of the re(production) of the dog as commodity are practices that entail a reworking of configurations of caste, breed and class. However, instead of rendering these human engagements with the dog in Delhi in an analytic of the foreign intrusion of a global form, I would prefer to think about how understandings of proper kinship, service and servitude are being negotiated by both human and dog in these relationships.

## **Part 2: Delhi Dog Love: Master Servant Dog**

In the rest of this chapter, I will turn more specifically to the triad of the master, servant and dog and issues of love across distinctions of kinship and species. In practices of pet ownership and animal welfare in Delhi, the encounter between human and dog is often centered on the emotion of love and affection.

N, a veterinarian in North Delhi with a mostly lower and middle class clientele of novice dog owners and in his own words, the former “secret Dr. Death” for a dog sanctuary in Delhi, told me, “The dog has to make the woman of the house feel for it. If the dog does not [do this], its time in the house will be limited. It is the child that pushes for the dog...and usually gets it if they do well on an exam...but to be fed and stay in the house the dog has to make the woman have affection for it.”

In the case of the “animal lover” the common term for animal rights activists or people that feed neighborhood dogs in Delhi in a very deliberate or massive way, the relationship of affection is built into the moniker. There is not really much doubt that the human “animal lover” has affection for animals and that the dog is specially placed in terms of this general fondness for animals.

However, in both instances the contours of what this love and affection is and what its obligations and refusals are is less clear. A self-described environmental activist originally from Delhi and now working in the Northeast of India told me that, “The dog is the environmentalist’s first animal. We all practiced first on the dog.” However, what this urban budding environmentalist did practice with or on the dog to prepare to be an environmentalist or an activist versus its unnamed opposite did not seem obvious to me. So I asked this activist what exactly was practiced on or with the dog and I was told that the logic of this comment was that the dog is the animal upon whom the activist learns to care for other living non-human creatures since the dog is the ubiquitous animal of the urban scene, the original milieu of the many urban middle or upper-class environmental activists. Therefore the dog could in this case be thought of as a kind of “model organism” for interspecies training in love.

### **Domestic of Servitude**

Love is often the expressed idiom in which “animal lovers” such as sanctuary founders, neighborhood dog feeders and pet owners talk about the dog in Delhi. And as we have seen both R and D have defined their sanctuary practices in terms of a domestic of protection and sanctuary and some pet owners have often related to their dogs in terms of special gendered filial love and duty of assuring procreation of a lineage.

Yet the contours of this love among the possibilities of it being about dependence, kindness, compassion, concern, benevolence or pleasure just to name a few possibilities needs to be explored. When the dog makes the woman of the house love it or fails in this effort, what is it doing? And when the animal lover or the environmental activist practices nascent environmentalism on the dog, what is the form of this affection? And does this love divide among species, kinds or individuals in terms of its requirements?

Circulations of affection are also in play in some understandings of the proper relationship between servant and employer according to Ray and Qayum (2009). In their

work *Cultures of Servitude*, the authors define three assumptions of employers that define service culture specifically in Kolkata, but their interpretations are, I think, germane to Delhi also (Ray and Qayum 2009).<sup>178</sup> The first assumption is that servants are essential for a [middle or upper class] household and that having a servant is the definition of being middle class and that a household would be impossible without servants. The second is that servants are “‘part of the family’ and bound to it by ties of affection, loyalty and dependence. And third, servants constitute a class with distinctive lifestyles, desires and habits” (Ray and Qayum 2009: 8).

So among the assumptions and requirements of love and affection required between different classes of dogs and different classes of people in this discussion of dog and human love and service what it means to be dependent, part of the family and at the same time a distinctive class of creature is in negotiation among practices of pet ownership, ‘animal lovers’ and servitude. It is significant to note the correspondences and discrepancies between the place of the servant, the pet dog, the sanctuary dog, and the street dog in relationship to understandings of the domestic and its requirements of loyalty, affection and belonging. The servant, the pet dog, and the sanctuary dog are “‘part of the family,” and yet considered as a separate class in terms of their distinctive “‘lifestyles, desires and habits.” And for both the servant and the dog, there is an understanding in this formulation that affection, as well as dependence, are the particular bonds that tie them to family. Understandings of family are of course incredibly varied, but even in this particular understanding of family in which becoming a ‘part’ is by definition also a categorical exclusion, those who are less marked as being distinctive in their belonging also do not make a uniform consistency of family belonging. In the next chapter I will discuss in more detail some configurations of relationship within understandings of family, both as sites of proper propagation and lineages of both inheritance and disinheritance; however, in this section I will focus more on exploring the relationship between the master, servant and dog in Delhi.

If we return to some traditional understandings of domestication in a biological disciplinary framework, the domesticated one is defined by a particular dependence in its co-constitution, which renders it subservient in this logic at the level of both species form and ability to propagate. This understanding of dependence in terms of domestication has resonances with understandings of servitude as dependence in a sociological register. At issue with the marking of dependence and service of a species, a dog or a servant are the ways in which, as Hegel (1977) and Fanon (1967) have shown, the master is dependent upon the servant for his or her constitution. The figures of the servant and the dog do seem to be different in this regard since the servant is considered absolutely essential to the household, while the dog must, according to the imaginative interpretation of the veterinarian, worry about the fickleness of interspecies love in the domain of family. At issue is the ability to mark the proportioning of expectations and limitations of what is due according to the parsing of different entities.

In this chapter I am attempting to think about how one could write about multiple domestications of human and dog in Delhi. Hegel, Fanon, Darwin and Marx all give us different glimpses of how the domestic, domestication, service and servitude might be

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<sup>178</sup> I am using employer in this sentence, but there is a sense of a servant having a master, just as in traditional understandings of dogs having one also. In thinking about the triad of the master, servant and dog, the master is in a similar relationship to both dog and servant in some respects.

intertwined. In terms of the understandings of servitude that Ray and Qayum discuss, servants are essential to the very existence of the domestic, which would be an impossible space without them. L, the homeowner who I introduced in the first chapter of this dissertation and who will return in chapter five, attempted once to sum up India to me by saying, “the main concern of everyone in this country is who is going to bring them their bed tea in the morning.” This is a slightly cynical statement in which L is impossibly attempting to sum up the truth of a whole country to someone other to that country, a strategy which always seems to result in error. However, this sentiment does highlight how dependent the master, the employer of the domestic or the “receiver of bed tea” would be on servants, service and being served if this desire was indeed one’s ultimate daily concern. A similar declaration that gets at a “structure of feeling” of the absolute necessity of the servant to multiple understandings of the domestic in Delhi was one informant who declared that, “My servant has a servant.”

The loyalty of servants seems to be more questioned than that of dogs though. As evidence for this are multiple media stories of murderous domestic employees in Delhi newspaper accounts, as well as a popular novel, Adiga’s *The White Tiger*, in which a soon to be employer-murdering servant reluctantly takes care of the pet dogs of this soon to be killed employer.<sup>179</sup> In this triangulation, Adiga does get at what Ray and Qayum discuss in terms of the servant being expected to have actual affection for the family, which in this novel, and in some understandings of pet ownership in Delhi, includes the male European breed dog.

In addition to being considered absolutely essential to the running of a home, in terms of massive feedings of neighborhood street dogs undertaken by ‘animal lovers,’ the servant is typically also considered absolutely essential to this form of work and feeding. A woman, let’s call her P, administers the feeding of almost two hundred dogs in an exclusive part of central New Delhi. P is not the person who goes everyday to actually dispense food. Her servants who also do the domestic work in her home do this. P stops by every few weeks to make sure that the dogs look alright and to check if any of them need medical attention. The scale of this operation and its necessarily daily schedule would consume her life if she dedicated her own finite body and limited hours in the day to this project.

P took over the administration and financing of this particular mass dog-feeding project upon the death of a Rajasthani prince who was well known in Delhi for his own love of fine food and socializing, as well as his penchant for feeding street dogs. P told me that the prince would finish a night of many social engagements and then in the early hours of the morning go with his driver to feed dogs. The prince actually did much more of the work of feeding dogs than P currently does.<sup>180</sup> In another interesting experiment in feeding and milieu, P told me that these central New Delhi dogs ate so much food under the care of this prince that they had become quite obese and some had a bit of a fatty liver

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<sup>179</sup> The many articles in Delhi newspapers about murdering servants point to an unease about current configurations of servitude in Delhi that Ray and Qayam also mark for Calcutta (2009). Some might dismiss Adiga’s *The White Tiger* as an upper-middle class fantasy about servitude and servants in Delhi (2008). However, this would I think be problematic in terms of assuming that all truth of authorship resides in the categorical life of an individual. This mode of inquiry seems to make abductive declarations stand in for all inquiry.

<sup>180</sup> P said that if anyone critiqued him for feeding dogs and not humans, the prince would get irate and tell the detractor to figure out what their own charitable acts in the world should be first.

syndrome. The prince's creation of a milieu among dogs in Delhi is as singular as those that I discussed in chapters two and three. After the prince died, P told me that it took a couple of years for these dogs to deflate under a changed feeding regime.

### **Delhi Dog Hate: The Dog and Servant as Proxy**

So, the master servant and dog triad seems to be organized around classificatory divisions and inclusions of family, as well as expectations of love, loyalty and dependence from both dog and servant.

And, as we have seen in chapter two, not everyone in Delhi is in a relationship of love, propagation or sterilization of dogs. The person angry about their neighbors feeding dogs can be violent in their reaction towards public, street or interstitial Delhi dog feedings and care. In neighborhood battles over the feeding of dogs, it is sometimes the body of the servant on the line as a proxy for the "animal lover."<sup>181</sup> In battles between human "animal lovers" and what could be termed specifically human 'dog haters' in Delhi, the body of the servant is exposed in large scale feeding projects in a way that the employer or family members who are less (a)part of the family than the servant are often not.

"That is the "worst neighborhood" in Delhi for violence against dogs," the former "Dr Death" for a Delhi dog sanctuary and now neighborhood veterinarian said to me while examining a dog in his clinic. In this "worst" neighborhood, known more generally for the selling of books, people opposed to the feeding of dogs have specifically attacked servants for doing the job of feeding dogs as outlined by their employers. This vet, who I will call N, also said that this particular neighborhood was "hopeless" for its human-generated violence against dogs and dog feeders.

N tells me about an incident of violence against servants while attending to the injuries of a street dog from this "worst neighborhood" for human violence against dogs. N speaks in English since the servant accompanying the dog from "the worst neighborhood" does not and therefore the servant will not know that we are talking about him. N has the dog on a metal table and is treating it for a tail injury. In a previous visit, N had amputated part of this dog's tail and it was healing slowly. What was left of the dog's tail was bent in three different directions from previous breaks and streaked blue from betadine treatments. The rest of the dog was a big, seemingly older, dirty white hound with loose flesh, which gave it an over-all jowly and lumpy appearance. This was accentuated by a large growth on its neck.

During one attack from neighbors, both the bodies of the dog and the servant who is now accompanying this dog to the vet were beaten resulting in this dog's tail being broken in two places and the servant's eardrum being burst. In this incident the "animal lover" who owns a large book-selling establishment in this neighborhood and finances the feeding of about twenty street dogs was himself nowhere near the street or the violence of the crowd on the street that wanted to stop the feeding of these dogs.

D, the sanctuary founder and businessman who has 30 dogs in his home and 60 in his sanctuary farm house, also told me some dogs on the street in his neighborhood have

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<sup>181</sup> It is significant to think about the figure of the selfless servant of dog feeding that I examine in chapter two in relationship to the ways in which its body is sometimes also absent from these scenes of violence.

been killed because of his particular association with them. What he means is that some neighbors may have an issue with him and since he is a powerful man they may not be able to confront him directly and so they kill one of 'his' street dogs to get at 'him' in a way. D tells me "I have lost some dogs this way." D also tells me that because he is successful he can invoke jealousy or hostility from neighbors who then attack dogs in the neighborhood because he cares about them.

So far in this triangulation of master, servant and dog, we see that the master who loves dogs expects his or her servant to have love and affection for both the master and his family, which can include dogs. However, in terms of possible violence perpetrated on the employer by those who object to the feeding of dogs in neighborhoods, and more generally to the presence of dogs in the city landscape, the employer's body is not at risk if the servant does the feeding of the street or interstice. And both the bodies of the dog and the servant seem able to be sometimes substituted for that of the master or to serve as an extension of the body of the master for irritations about dog feedings or other resentments.

### **"Squatting in the Other"**

In the dog sanctuary space of D and R, the domestic is a space of protection from the dangerous outside of the interstitial.

In the commonsense understanding of domestication, questions of benefit, dependence and service are thought of at a species level and determined by considerations of evolutionary advantage and reproduction in terms of the frequency of genes in a population. At issue are questions of the contours of the 'who' that is controlling the ultimate form and Umwelt of a domesticated organism considered as dependent species, which does not seem to stay constant in these arguments.

In terms of both pet dogs and servants in Delhi questions of dependence, benefit and service are more about demanding affection, love, service and loyalty, as the boundaries of this love and advantage are worked out in an idiom of family and the promotion of a particular domestic.

I will now turn to another understanding of the domestic, domestication and love that emerges from the study of ethologists and their subjects/objects—non human organisms. In domestication understood as species dependence or benefit the interface is possibly individual, or ultimately a question of frequency of genes, but yet aggregated and ascertained at a species level. In contradistinction, in terms of the promotion of the domestic, the interaction of dependence and service is between the servant and the dog understood as having distinctive "lifestyles, desires and habits" who must negotiate the problem of being both enveloped by and absolutely categorically *other* to the family or the space of the domestic.

In contradistinction, Despret's understanding of domestication emerges in relationship to the interactions between the ethologist and the creature that this researcher studies in a relationship of two-ness or the dual.

Both are active and both are transformed by the availability of the other. Both are articulated by what the other 'makes him/her make'. This is, in my opinion, the



most interesting characteristic of the practices that may be defined as practices of domestication, the practices that allow themselves to be pervaded by humans: they are practices that create and transform through the miracle of *attunement*.

This is a very different form of domestication from the forms of species or family benefit and service that I have previously discussed. For Despret, practices of domestication that are “most interesting” are ones that “transform through the miracle of attunement.” Since the template of interaction from which Despret discusses domestication is that of a scientist or researcher studying a certain quantity or form of another species in order to learn their habits or lifestyle, we are in a somewhat different relationship from the manipulation of another form of life towards some desired end of useful servitude or the domestic of making distinctive kinds of humans or dogs part of a family of dependence and service.

We should keep in mind that Despret promotes a domestication of attunement in response to her figure of the automaton that I explored in chapter two in my discussion of the problem of different modes of attempting to become ‘selfless.’ Despret’s work is developed in a Science and Technology Studies framework in which the relationship between the observer and the observed, or the knower and the known is the primary relationship under review. This “miracle of attunement” then is the goal to counter or to foil the automaton experimenter a specific experimental practice that Despret describes as “indifferent,” or de-passioned.”

I would like to question what might happen if Despret’s definition of domestication developed specifically to re-passion the automaton in a particular relationship of the knower and the known is transposed to some milieus of dog and human encroachments in Delhi that are not particularly about knowledge or a dualistic relationship.

My purpose in juxtaposing what might amount to a play of words of multiple domestics and putting them in dialog with each other, is to think about how the specific milieus of the emergence of concepts affect the limits and extensions we put on these notions. It is my interest to think about how paradigmatic understandings of configurations of relationship from particular disciplinary locations affect how concepts get imported into anthropology and to what effect. Given the growing importance of projects that incorporate methodologies from Science and Technology Studies into anthropology, it is pertinent to think particularly about how relationships between entities are often conceived in terms of the knower and the known, as well as a concern for mapping disciplinary discourses of experts and making these experts key informants in anthropological texts. My question in reference to dog and human encroachments in Delhi, is to ask how formulations that emerge specifically from the study of scientific disciplines impede other understandings of encounter and encroachment that are not necessarily predicated on a knowing subject and known object.

As I turn to Delhi and multiple practices of domestication among servants and dogs and their ‘masters,’ I am interested in thinking about what happens when a strategy designed to problematize the automaton— “the one who will not be affected and therefore will not affect”, in an STS milieu, is unleashed upon a site that might have other requirements of encounter such as human and dog interactions in sanctuary, home, family and street environments in Delhi?

Despret, from the milieu of the philosophy of science and the need to confront the automaton of experimental practice specifically defines human and other creature domestication and love in the following way:

Love means to make an effort to become interested, to immerse oneself in the multitude of problems presented by a jackdaw or a goose. What passions teach Lorenz, both his own and the ones he gives the opportunity to exist, is that learning how to address the creatures being studied is not the *result* of scientific theoretical understanding, it is the *condition* of this understanding (2004: 129).

So for Despret, love is about caring enough to be interested and learning how to address other creatures in a manner that they can recognize in their own terms of bodily organization and sensing. This ability to address becomes the basis for an understanding of others with different body plans, which in some way gives an answer to Wittgenstein's question of enigma and the 'strange country' (1953). There is special hope that Despret holds for ethologists who might be "moved by their subjects of interest, [and] the way they give them a chance to be interesting" which in turn might give the possibility for a shift in "what talks and what is talked about, subjectivity and objectivity, are redistributed in a new manner" (2004:127).

Despret defines the problem of interspecies encroachments as one of attunement between the human and other creatures, which she puts in contradistinction specifically to empathy:

Certainly, empathy transforms the subject (the one who feels empathy) but this transformation is a very local one as long as it does not really give his object the chance to be activated as subject, the subject feeling empathy remaining the only subject of the whole thing. While pretending to be inhabited (or locally transformed) by the other, the empathic in fact 'squats' in the other. Empathy allows us to talk about what it is to be (like) the other, but does not raise the question 'what it is to be "with" the other.' Empathy is more like 'filling up oneself' (2004: 128).

I am struck here by the word choice of "squatting in the other" and "pretending to be inhabited by the other." To squat is to occupy without legal claim. To inhabit is also to occupy. And to pretend is to feign, to be insincere, to be false or to be fictitious. What I am most interested in is this call for sincerity as a form of encroachment upon an other that is being held up as the necessary mode to counter the experimental automaton and engage at all.

If an encounter with another is framed here as always one in which a formerly made object creature needs to be activated then practices of squatting and pretending can only be coded as negative engagements which seems to limit interactions with others (especially those of other body plans) to being sincere and honest. This prohibition would seem to preclude so much of human life let alone encounters between humans and

other life forms.<sup>182</sup> In thinking about the relationship among servants, dogs and employers in the dog shelter, I am interested in thinking about the limits of this understanding of attunement as a prescribed form of encounter in which squatting and pretending are foreclosed as modes of being in the world with others especially in terms of thinking about practices of servitude.

### **Too Much ‘Being Available’ to the Other: Who is Squatting in My Bed?**

We have seen how in some dog sanctuaries in Delhi the dog and the servant are living on top of each other with most of the shelter space built more in relationship to the dog than to the servant. It is in this light that we can also think about B, the Behari worker in R’s shelter who is in a habitual fight with the dog that sits under R’s chair attempting to denounce B for his lack of dog love. And from R’s perspective, she seems stuck between the dog, one of the class of animals that she loves and has dedicated her life to and the recalcitrant worker who not only will not love this dog, but also beats it when she is not there. However, R also needs B to help her take care of the dogs. She cannot create a space of living for the dogs in either her home or her sanctuary without the help of paid workers. R laments that she cannot make the workers love or care for the dogs like she does.

Earlier, in the day, I had been watching B’s interactions with the dogs. When he cleans the large covered outdoor enclosure which houses dogs that are permanently living at the shelter, he raises his arm as if to hit the dogs many times, a very common gesture of interaction between man and dog in Delhi. This enclosure has over one hundred dogs in a space that is between double and triple the room that the dog’s own bodies occupy. Without a human in the enclosure every few minutes, there is some kind of altercation between a few different dogs with barking, snapping and whimpering. I am not sure if a sea of dogs is the right metaphor here, but at close intervals there is a disturbance in what might better be described as a carpet of dogs. When B must enter this space to clean the floors, he is one human to one hundred dogs. B chases most of the dogs into a back enclosure in which absolutely all of the space is taken up by dog. The dogs that remain in the main enclosure because they did not fit in the back room are now milling about in this cage which is now spacious. As he mops the floor, B many times intentionally splashes different dogs in the face with water, in what reads to me as teasing and harassing behavior.

When B is done washing the floor of this enclosure, his next task is to take dog’s that have recently been spayed or neutered and put them in a van to be transported back to the neighborhood in which they were picked up. These are street dogs that will not live their lives in the shelter like the dogs that are in the enclosure. B takes a long stick with a muzzle device to get the dogs from a side pen into the van. B’s tactics are aggressive and the dog is also a wild moving creature under attack. So, a transfer is about thirty seconds of intense and fearful exertion on the part of both B and the dog. The dog ultimately gets thrown into the van and the door of the van is quickly slammed.

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<sup>182</sup> It seems that the hostility towards empathy or squatting in the other is coming from the perspective of a critique of the intervening scientist whose power must be checked. If the experimental subject were to squat in the scientist would anyone be that upset?

B seems to take a joking pleasure at both of these activities with the dogs. He is helped by a female worker who is also from Bihar. She helps with the dog transfers but does not have a jocular antagonistic relationship with the dogs. She is the only one at the shelter whom R thinks has a caring relationship with the animals.

B's next task is to prepare dogs for sterilization surgery. Both he and an elderly male worker anesthetize each dog and put it on a gurney. B then shaves each dog in an area depending on their sex. He also cuts and cauterizes the right ear of each dog as a mark of sterilization. They can prepare two dogs at a time in the pre-op room and there are also two spaces for gurneys in the surgery: one for males and one for females. The surgeon, the same vet who has done more than 25,000 such sterilizations, first does a female side extraction of a uterus and then moves over to the other side of the room to castrate a male dog. He tells me that it takes him three minutes to sterilize a male and seven for a female.

B and the elderly worker keep the flow of anesthetized dogs coming as they orchestrate the movement of unconscious dogs on gurneys. The dogs are floating from room to room in a peaceful slumber. This scene is in such contrast to the dog growling and snapping under the chair, the dog on dog and human on dog menacing in the large enclosure, and the fearful dog on human battles endured in the van transfers. And B is different in the surgery. The dogs are now helpless and yet his mocking tone is gone. He could throw the dogs around as so much meat on an assembly line, for example. Instead, the shaving and ear cauterization of each dog is done with a lot of finesse. I would even say that there is marked gentleness to the way that both B and the older worker manipulate the dogs before and after surgery. The tenderness of the interaction is intensified by the vulnerable submissive body positions of the animals. The females are on their side and the males are partially on their back with one leg tied to a pole on the gurney to keep their legs apart. The combination of B's tender care, the fact that the dogs' faces are not contorted in their unconsciousness and their bodies are positioned in surrender gives the scene a beatific feeling, at least to me. The male dogs in particular remind me of images of a crucified Jesus with splayed legs.

The dogs after surgery are transferred to a series of holding cells from which they will recover for four days before being released back to the neighborhood from which they were picked up. As the anesthesia wears off the dogs start to whimper.

What can we make of B's relationship to the dogs in the shelter and to R the founder? In some of his interactions, B seems to enjoy at the very least teasing or bullying dogs. Yet in surgery, after the dogs have been anesthetized, at the very point when the unconscious body of the dog is at its most vulnerable, B does not drag the dogs around or in any way treat them in a mechanical way. Instead, as they lie unconscious during the preparation for surgery B treats them with the utmost care and reverence. These dogs will wake up and after a couple of days recuperation, B will help get these dogs hopefully back to the exact neighborhood location from which they were taken. As I have said, the job of transferring fully conscious dogs from a pen to the van is quite dangerous especially since the dogs are treated like dangerous wild animals during this encounter. Each transfer has a few moments of very chaotic, intense fear and anxiety for both the dog and the sanctuary worker. Each time this van door is slammed shut behind each dog, the workers grin and laugh. However, in this process there is no effort on the part of either the dog or the human to greet each other or in any way make the encounter

less intense. Given that the sanctuary has been set up with the ideals of dog love paramount, the transfer process does stand out as an occasion in which possible misunderstandings and fears of both dog and human as an inexplicable *other* rules the encounter. Yet it is important to also note that the founder, the “animal lover” is nowhere to be seen during this process. Instead, the bodies on the line in the transfer process are that of the dog to some degree, but more significantly that of the worker or servant. The servant here is constantly running the risk of being bitten by the dog.

And I think it is through examining B and the dogs during the events of post-sterilization transfers and B and the dogs during surgical preparations that the scope of B’s living with dogs can be better understood. B at the same time bullies and teases the dogs in the rectangular pen when he scrubs the floor of their excrement. He also turns the heightened adrenaline scene of dog transfer into an exciting and scary giggle inducing game. And at night when R, the founder, is not at the sanctuary, B and the denouncing hound have some kind of encounter that R suspects to be B beating this dog. And yet when B puts each drugged dog on a gurney he does so with what to me seems like respect for another living creature. And his manner of shaving each dog in preparation for surgery as well as the way in which he cuts each dog’s left ear and cauterizes it is done with what I can only describe as not only the finesse of an expert but supreme gentleness.

If I now return to the problem of domestics, domestication and love that I have been circling around in this chapter, then should I make sense of B’s interactions with dogs in the sanctuary as practices of ‘attunement’ or making an “effort to become interested” as a form of interspecies love? B’s actual encroachments upon particular dog living and this dog living’s encroachments upon him, actually do not seem to fit the politics and practices of attunement that Despret sets up to provincialize the automaton experimenter of ethology and this failure is I think significant to thinking about both the limits of extending some classic concerns of science studies into all spaces of interspecies engagements.

The study of both science and technology and colonialism have tended to focus on the figure of the scientist, the technician and the administrator and the ways in which knowledge has been a mode of control and intervention in which one attempts to know others made object in order to dominate them (Bajaj 1988, Nandy 1988). In discussions of governmentality these known and dominated objects become subjects shot through and molded in material discourse (Foucault 1991, 2010). For Despret, the particular problem of the automaton is that it cannot affect or be affected, which is a different take on the predicament of the experimenter or knower that has some resonances with Haraway’s God’s eye view of Baconian science (1988).

However, discussions of knowing to intervene and govern others as a template for encounters among human and non-human selves leaves out many other modes of encroachment. Even though there is technically no center or knower in a Foucauldian frame, there are still echoes of this selfless experimenter figure in Despret’s admonishments to the former automaton who is chastised for possibly ‘squatting’ in the other or ‘filling’ him or herself up with the other. What I am gesturing towards here is how the deployment of an ethics of attunement is still trying to ameliorate more the position of the experimenter than the non-human organisms of ethological encounter and so this figure actually maintains a privileged position in the methodology of attunement.

For ethology, Despret asserts that at issue is learning how “to address the creatures being studied” which is the “condition of understanding” of these practices. However, in the practices of domestication and the creation of domestic space in dog and human encroachments in Delhi that I have explored in this chapter, neither the study of creatures nor understanding is the paramount concern and so the love which is talked about in most of these locations is not necessarily a love of becoming ‘interesting’. The love of the reproduction of European breed dogs is more about fulfilling duty in a familial register of the procreation of the male dog as a class of kin “with distinctive lifestyles, desires and habits” in the case of pet ownership and a duty to providing for the family in entrepreneurial intrepidity on the part of people thinking about breeding money with dogs. The love that is expected from the dog is an assumed categorical love; while that of the servant is less trusted if we turn to media accounts of servants that ignored expectations of loyalty and affection with their employers as a guide. The love that the employer expects from the servant would actually be a particularly understudied love in which the arrival of ‘bed tea,’ the dogs to be fed or the blows from neighbors to endure are signs of love that the employer does not want to think about that much. In other words, the employer does not desire to learn about the passions or the preferred mode of address of the servant *other*<sup>183</sup> Thus, the servant is not an object of knowledge but a vehicle of another form of love from the perspective of the employer.

The assertion of Kleptoparasitism at a species level is an amusing concept in itself, although weighted down with a possibly excessive focus on species boundaries and thinking about what benefit or servitude might mean in terms of evolutionary advantages of reproduction.<sup>184</sup> However, Kleptoparasitism is also an interesting concept in the ways in which it might disrupt a disdain for practices of “squatting in the other” and “filling up one self” in Despret’s call for practices of attunement in ethology. In the relationship between the dog and the servant in Delhi dog and various encroachments we cannot assume the necessary presence of interest, empathy, love, hate, jealousy, irritation, or disdain among individual dogs, employers or servants. Despret’s undoing of the automaton produces a habitat of assumed sincerity for all creature encounters.

I should also point out that the triangulation of the ‘master,’ servant and dog is, just that, a relationship of three while the ethological encounter is a relationship of two in which the two subjects involved are working out legacies of subject and object encounters, from the perspective of the automaton experimenter, mainly.<sup>185</sup> Both the dog and the servant in their living relationship as members of different categorical classes in the family seem to interact as subjects, which I hope B’s encroachments on dog living and refusals to love dogs in the ways requested by R seem to demonstrate. A focus on Delhi and India as sites of the post-colony in which practices of knowing to govern and intervene are axiomatic frameworks of analysis would make this invasion of a concept deriding empathy, squatting and faking it possibly make obvious sense for some. However, the actual difference in milieu that I have discussed would make an automatic

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<sup>183</sup> I am reminded here of a comment of an acquaintance in Delhi discussing reading Adiga’s *The White Tiger*. She said, “I do not want to think about my servant having a life,”

<sup>184</sup> I am in no way dismissing a Darwinian understanding of the frequency of genes that are still in play in a population. I am merely pointing out that an exclusive focus on this explanatory paradigm can produce problematic research that exceeds the bounds of Darwin’s insights, as well as the transfer of analogies into situations where they actually do not make sense.

<sup>185</sup> I suspect that the object was not necessarily as such to itself in ethological encounters.

importation of Despret's concept of attunement into Delhi dog and human encroachments, understandings and enigmas especially problematic.

I should make clear that I think that the way that Despret outlines a methodology of attunement in terms of making one's body articulate questions among different species to get at how entities can be "subjects producing questions" is amazing work. What I am saying though, is that within particular configurations of domestication, domestic space and domestic servants in dog and human practices in Delhi, so much would be left out of an 'attunement' framework. Similarly, the problem of a trinity and not a dual are absolutely crucial to these encroachments among humans and dogs in Delhi and therefore different problems to those of empathy and squatting develop in terms of discussions of rightful occupation. To disallow either a servant or a street, pet or sanctuary, dog from engaging in practices of squatting, pretending, being insincere, false or feigning would not necessarily make better interactions or a better world.

It is actually this call for sincerity that worries me as a methodology or mode of being in the world, since it seems to take most into account the predicament of the automaton who seems to be a kindred spirit of the selfless servant that I discussed in chapter two. An importation of an ethos of attunement into Delhi dog and human encroachments might then severely limit both human and dog repertoires of engagement with others in possibly dangerous milieus of uneven interaction. It seems naïve to expect even a practice of attunement with others to not yield duplicity, irritations, invasions and other everyday violence.

The Delhi dogs that I met as individuals, but that sometimes coalesce as types for me, were always nothing but passionate subjects of a myriad questions sometimes imploring with that gaze that so affected D's life or whining in that saddest almost comic Delhi dog wail. If I were to fill myself up with Delhi dogs, I would primarily be learning how to be in the world from mimicking their abilities to squat, to pretend, to feign, to snap, to glare, to be 'aloof', to be 'jealous', to be clever, to challenge, to be sneaky, to sleep soundly almost if dead and yet always be alert and to encroach upon each other, humans and the world if "they think they could take you."

My point here is that in the attempted undoing of the automaton and the colonial, there could also be an attempted foreclosure of some capacities and strategies of living for creatures such as the dog and the human. Jealousy, rage, irritations, petty violence, little invasions, as well as the desire for bed tea or a human feeder cannot be excised from legacies of being human or dog, or completely accounted for by histories of experiment or colonialism.

## **Recklessness and Expectations of Family and Kin**

R, the sanctuary founder, often laments that she cannot make the workers at the shelter or in her home love the dogs like she does.<sup>186</sup> R says that it is very difficult to find staff members who care as much about the dogs as she does. This is a common theme of the middle and upper-middle class "animal lover." Just as in her home shelter set up, there is a slippage between animal caretaker and domestic servant. Discussions

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<sup>186</sup> She thinks that generally women have more capacity for this than men.

about the difficulty with staffing animal welfare agencies sound very similar to the prevalent discourse about the difficulty finding and keeping help that might become dangerous in media accounts. For the dog shelter, the question for the dog sanctuary founder usually hinges on the impossibility of the staff to actually care for dogs emotionally.

Why is it that the “dog lover” loves dogs and the staff, more often than not, have not had the type of encounter with a dog that changed R’s life decades ago? R tells me that she did have one staffer from Nepal who was really good with dogs and “truly loved them.” However, his parents suddenly died and he had to go back to Nepal to take care of his two sisters. R, as is a common practice, told the Nepali dog lover to bring the sisters to Delhi and that she would make sure that they were raised up taking care of their education in a servant kinship relationship. Before this could happen, R got a call from Nepal. The “dog lover” worker told R that he could not return to Delhi because he had killed a man and was in jail. R said that she does not know why people are so “reckless” today. In the next chapter I will explore more some of these legacies of love, lineage, legacy and recklessness.



## Chapter 5

### Reckless: Attempted Occupations of Being There

Is the past something that you wake up from?

The past is something you wake up to. It's the nightmare you wake up to every single day.<sup>187</sup>

Coming back from Elephanta Island in Mumbai, I happened to look up and read the inscription on the Gateway of India. It states "Erected to celebrate the landing in India of their Imperial Majesties King George V and Queen Mary on the 02nd of December, 1911." I realized just at that moment that this fifth King George had been the very King George who was the namesake from which the origin of my last name can be traced.<sup>188</sup>

My father's grandfather on his father's side named the family after King George when he immigrated to the United States from Greece sometime right around when George and Mary landed in Bombay in 1911. The explanation for the name George was that this Macedonian "hillbilly," as my grandfather called his father, thought everything good in the world could be traced to the British Empire so he had jettisoned the Greek name for the last name George—The Georges of Philadelphia.

I do not speak to anyone besides my sisters and mother that carry the name of this little cul-de-sac of Philadelphian George the Fiftths. However, some of the questions I will grapple with in this chapter are: 1.) what is a lineage and what is a legacy? 2.) How do lineages or legacies travel? 3.) How do legacies or lineages of disinheritance possess the present and for whom?

If I were to draw a kinship chart or a map of lineage, what relationship should I draw between George the Fifth and the Georges of Philadelphia? And what about the respective dockings of George V, Mary and myself that overlap in the location of Bombay, but are separated by nearly a century? And how should I understand the comparative embarkations, both around 1911, of George V and Mary and this Anglophile Macedonian "hillbilly" whose family name other than the one proudly appropriated from King George V, no one can remember?

And yet these questions and possible lineage charts actually would have very little hold over me in terms of Favret-Saada's concept of becoming caught in configurations of situated knowledges, situated opacities or situated forgettings and remembering of traumas, expectations, obligations and encroachments. Instead, the kinship chart in which I am caught has little to do with King George V, Greece or grandfathers. If I were to draw the kinship chart of my predicament there would only be three figures—the mother, the son and the daughter-in-law. I am a daughter-in-law. My two sisters are daughters-in-law, just like our mother: all daughters-in-law.<sup>189</sup>

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<sup>187</sup> (Lucas 2003).

<sup>188</sup> I note here an interesting kind of laziness that I never bothered before writing this chapter to investigate who the king was that my great grandfather named the family after.

<sup>189</sup> This configuration of relationship does not mean that all of the daughters-in-law would tell this story the same way or share an identity though.

A small plane with a pilot, one passenger and a cargo of rivets goes down near Tupelo, Mississippi. The pilot dies. The passenger or the son is profoundly brain damaged. The fortieth anniversary of this event passes while I write this chapter and the son is still what some would call living, possibly similar to an existence that neo-Deleuzians might celebrate as life itself.

I saw the court papers in 1975; three years after the son fell out of the sky. The mother, having been gifted partial legal guardianship of the brain-damaged son by the daughter-in-law sues for full custody of the fallen boy. I give the testimony of an eleven year old to the judge in chambers, but the court grants the mother full custody. The mother's first act empowered by the court is to serve the daughter-in-law divorce papers. All the daughters-in-law read the first line of this document together around a kitchen table. Mother George versus daughter-in-law number one George. The mother gets possession of the son, the lineage and the right to (dis)inherit.<sup>190</sup>

The logic of the kinship chart in which I started to make sense of the world or this particular configuration of relationship brought into question understandings of heir, or lineage in terms of generational succession and legacy. Yet one would have to ask if this refusal of generation or lineage could here be described as a form of liberation or radical politics (Deleuze and Guattari 1987)? Becoming one of a gaggle of ex-daughter's-in-law, not all the way down as the famous anthropological turtles are positioned in a space that at least has the possibility for some repetitive history and generation, but a horizontal line of immanent and non-transcendent daughters-in-law questions attempting to always think about the absence of arboreal generation of lineage or inheritance as a necessarily better politics (Deleuze and Guattari 1987).

One would have to ask what kind of inheritance is a non-lineage of daughters-in-law in a world in which the mother and the son are in the one legal relationship and the son's brain has been radically rearranged by a cargo of rivets hitting his head as a little plane goes down in bad weather? What is the legacy of the mother who exclusively can both make the son speak and interpret his language, especially before the law?<sup>191</sup>

But why am I writing about this particular kinship chart in a dissertation about dogs and humans and their interactions in Delhi, India? How does becoming caught as an immanent and timeless ex-daughter-in-law pertain in any way to Delhi, dogs and their promoters and detractors? This experience of a law that can make an entity unable to occupy itself is my inheritance of disinheritance and so to actually engage in the knowledge production of anthropology, of a here and a there, and an anthropologist and informant, I have to at least attempt to draw the aforementioned kinship chart and the configuration of relationships that makes issues of rightful occupation, plausible interpretation of the speech or behavior of an Other and attempts at *being there* as a

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<sup>190</sup> This configuration of relationship of the mother, the brain-damaged son and the four ex-daughters-in-law was mainly generated by the mother of the brain-damaged son whom I am unable to call grandmother. There had always been tension in her relationship with the woman who married her only son, and especially after the accident, this mother put the daughter-in-law and the three daughters of her son in the same category of the unworthy, and then proceeded to eradicate any lineage or legacy to the brain-damaged son. Therefore, I did not experience this kinship relationship as a primary one that preceded my first consciousness, but as a usurping of a more originary and right order that the mother was able to make both law and hegemonic reality.

<sup>191</sup> So maybe, I would need to add one more structural position to this kinship chart—that of the judge who authorizes the mother to exclusively interpret the son past, present and future.

particular (un)consciousness, mind or entity in a specific location come to the fore before any possible scene of ethnographic arrival or departure.

As we have seen in chapter two, the Juridical dog in Delhi and its specific experiments in living come into existence authorized by a juridical abductive logic that is both absolutely assumptive and ontological. The power of any court is not just that it cannot acknowledge other categorical or meaning systems that often get glossed under culture, nation or belonging, but that a court has the power to re-orient all who enter its logic, especially to themselves.<sup>192</sup> For me, the Delhi dog that becomes public is produced juridically, as well as the son's brain-damaged speech and memory, which become exclusively decipherable by the juridically-empowered mother, are entities that both fascinate and terrify me, as much as they mark the contours and limits of my ability to engage, withdraw or disappear in experiments in anthropological co-presence.<sup>193</sup> And if we are once again to think about this exposition of how dog proper-uppers, dog detractors and dogs themselves in Delhi are caught in scenes of encounter and ethnography then it becomes necessary to map the multiple, specific histories of different particular configurations of entities and to not rely on assumptions of culture or geography no matter how attenuated. My point being that not every creature in even one neighborhood, a house, or a family "wakes up to" the same past and even if it might in some sense partake of the same morning, it might not share a milieu, environment or history and experience of sense. The triad of the mother, brain-damaged son and daughter-in-law makes this methodological point absolutely, phenomenologically clear to me.

Anthropology is sometimes a difficult tool with which to think about just how provincial a "passionate commitment to a system of reference" may be or how even small scale systems of reference such as the lineage of the mother, the son and the ex-daughters-in-law or the exact territoriality of a pack of dogs in a specific neighborhood in Delhi do not position all entities or parcel a sense of belonging in such a way that we do not have to ask exactly how each individual is caught in different scenes of encounter ( Wittgenstein: 1980: 64).<sup>194</sup> If I return to the problem of one human being a complete enigma to another that Wittgenstein dwelled upon then the issue of understanding or its lack cannot hinge on the metaphor of a "strange country" (1980). And if I want to add the dog as both a kind of creature and as a particular life to this question of being able to discern aspects of an environment which include the communications of others, then I cannot rest on the notion of a country as either a here, a there or a form of being.<sup>195</sup> Any attempt to occupy can always become a disassociation or a necessity to flee and in practices of anthropology, as well as in the predicaments of the brain-damaged son and

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<sup>192</sup> This statement about the law makes me think of the work of both Lacan (2006) and Povinelli (1993).

<sup>193</sup> Thinking specifically about how the Delhi dog becomes public in juridical dog feeding schemes in relationship to other works on publics (Hayden 2003, Latour and Weibel 2005) is an interesting topic, but beyond the scope of this project.

<sup>194</sup> A focus on provincial configurations of relationship, the scene and encroachment would possibly be difficult in framework that highlighted entanglement only.

<sup>195</sup> Ethologists working within the disciplines of biology, psychology and anthropology often distinguish between what they consider social or cultural factors and ecological ones (Laland and Bennett eds. 2009). For a philosophical examination of the contours of culture in studies of animals see Ramsey 2013. I am not maintaining these boundaries especially since there is a play between the ways in which Von Uexkull imports Kantian a priori categories into an experiential biology of sense (1957).

his interlocutors, attempts to *be there* are exactly what are in question.<sup>196</sup> Dona Haraway, in *When Species Meet* talks about a very productive question for her work. She asks “Whom and what do I touch when I touch my dog” (2008:3)? I am inspired by Haraway’s question which helps us see what commonly gets referenced as assemblages and what she terms “attachment sites” and “dense knots of becoming” very well, yet I still cannot forget the legacy of the kinship chart of the juridically empowered mother, the brain-damaged son and the synchronic and fleeing ex-daughters-in-law (Haraway:2008). Therefore, it seems that issues of the ‘who’ are still often absolutely crucial to thinking about attempts at co-presence in practices of ethnography whether this includes multi-species approaches or not.<sup>197</sup> This attention to the who should also be a focus, not necessarily always on absence or constraint, but on the myriad ways in which certain particular histories of psychic crypsis or camouflage make questions of encounters in anthropology always inquiries into the facility and limits of entities and their history’s ability to *be there*.<sup>198</sup>

## Being There

Yet plants were different from people. No plant is able to think about itself or able to know itself; there is no mirror in which the plant can recognize its face; no plant can do anything intentionally: it cannot help growing and its growth has no meaning. Since a plant cannot reason or dream.<sup>199</sup>

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<sup>196</sup> I am taking the concept of co-presence in anthropology from Borneman and Hammoudi’s discussion of *being there* in anthropological practice (2009). Constructivist and performative approaches might find the term presence to be too positivist. However, presence is a helpful term in two ways: first, it maintains some connection to an evolutionary development understanding of an emergence of an entity and its form. Second, it gives a hint of how each person can offer a very different self or vary the degree of its presence depending on different encounters, moods and traumas.

<sup>197</sup> A dog may not have an ‘I’ in terms of being a self-referential subject, but it would be very difficult to deny that a dog is a ‘who’ in terms of being a mind and body who experiences the world. Some of my interest in exploring the ‘who’ in this dissertation is indebted to work, often in anthropology, which has examined human who-making (Cassirer 1946, Favret-Saada 1980, Leenhardt 1979, Levi-Strauss 1968, Levy-Bruhl 1966, 1985, Dr. Seuss 1982, Strathern 1988, Uberoi 1984, Von Uexkull 1957). The issue that this who-making was sometimes defined as an aspect of the mind of the primitive, the child, the woman and the mad only means that it is an important part of the history of provincial configurations of encroachment and not attempts to become ungraspable and selfless. I like Favret-Saada am suspicious of attempts to become completely ungraspable or ungrasped as a bounded and caught ‘who’ whether as Bacon’s (1960) compass or as how some have deployed Deleuze and Guattari’s (1987) rhizome.

<sup>198</sup> Being there might in some senses come close in meaning to ‘becoming with’ (Despret 2004, Haraway 2008). And by invoking a phrase with being in it I do not mean to highlight any necessarily static understanding of existence or reference to essence. Instead the phrase being there highlights location which is important for thinking about practices in anthropology. Being there is also helpful for thinking about how, although the world is a process, solidified traumas and their legacies endure and affect. Being human is not completely accounted for by imagining endless changing moments. I think there is still a place for thinking about how we can be evacuated, usurped or disappeared. Finally, we need to think about how the preposition ‘with’ is, as many writing teachers have pointed out, a very weak relationship. For and against, for example, are much stronger bonds than ‘with’ and part of the anthropology of invasiveness that I am gesturing towards.

<sup>199</sup> (Kosinski 1999: 3-4).

I like to watch.<sup>200</sup>

Anthropology takes some of its practices and claims to truth from a declaration of really *being there* and engaging in the empirical specificity of a there, as well as often a movement from a here to a there.<sup>201</sup> Yet forty years of a legacy of being in which a legally sanctioned very particular here has been only occupiable by a brain-damaged son whose mental life and subjectivity are as shifting, ephemeral and ultimately as completely undecipherable to this fourth ex-daughter-in-law as they were always clear and transparent to the mother, then the possibility of any comfortable *here* has been foreclosed. And the forty year history of the four ex-daughters-in-law has been one of reckless occupations of many attempted theres: to try to imbed, to hide and to flee at the very same time in attempts to outrun the logic of this lineage or configuration of a being that cannot be borne.

The difficulty of *being there* then moves through this ethnography in multiple registers. *Being there* as a term has also been brought up in different anthropological discussions and debates. The phrase *being there* was deployed in Clifford Geertz's essay *Being There: Anthropology and the Scene of Writing* (1988). A few decades later, John Borneman and Abdellah Hammoudi present the edited volume *Being There: The Fieldwork Encounter and the Making of Truth* (2009).

Geertz in his essay attempts to reduce the importance of understandings of *being there* that equate it to the primacy of the concept of the field and naïve empiricism in the production of anthropological knowledge. He stresses how issues of writing, genre and text were elided in an earlier anthropology. He calls attention to how the anthropology up until his intervention tended to focus on the "problematics of fieldwork rather than those of discourse" or what he terms "the complexities of self/other negotiations rather than those of self/text" (1988: 11).<sup>202</sup>

Borneman and Hammoudi reexamine the question of *being there* to insist upon the importance of the scene of encounter between anthropologist and interlocutors for a particular truthmaking practice that is distinctively anthropological. Their concern is for how what they term an exclusive focus on discourse or genealogical histories might create caricatures of understandings of power that can only mark anthropological knowledge as a colonial invocation of a "predatory dominating gaze" (2009: 11). As a corrective to what they diagnose as "a new orthodoxy" of textual practices, they are interested instead in "prolonged acquaintance" with people thinking about complex and ambiguous power relationships of transference and counter-transference (2009: 6). One

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<sup>200</sup> (Kosinski 1999).

<sup>201</sup> Borderlands, globalization, networks, assemblages, ANT and multi-sited approaches in anthropology would trouble the division of a here and there in anthropological practice. However, these approaches often elide thinking about the consciousness necessary to trace a network even if their point is that many agencies in the world are not conscious which is well taken. In these approaches it is also difficult to see how aspects of an environment might be discernable or not depending on relationships and legacies of desire or trauma of particular configurations of whos.

<sup>202</sup> Geertz is interested in exploring shifting configurations of "author saturated" and "author evacuated" texts. Yet more importantly, he is interested in the question of authorship in terms of producing particular texts or "the rules of the formations of other texts" (1988: 18). He makes the important point that maybe an author "sets the terms of discourse in which others thereafter move", but that "many of those "writing" in traditions have "authored" may quite surpass their models (1988: 20) Geertz shows how "being there" authorially...is in any case as difficult a trick to bring off as "*being there*" personally" (1988: 22).

of the authors' main goals is to make sure that what is gleaned from encounters with Others is allowed to disrupt and not parrot philosophical understandings of concepts in the practice of anthropology.

It is significant to note that in this back and forth between the comparative worth of the fieldwork encounter and attention to what is understood broadly as discursive practices in two works that put the phrase *being there* in their titles, that *being there* as a philosophical concept is not mentioned in Geertz's essay and has just a paragraph devoted to the discussion of the film and novel *Being There* and not Heidegger's use of the term as a philosophical concept in Borneman and Hammoudi (Heidegger 1962).<sup>203</sup>

*Being There* is also of course the title of the 1979 film directed by Hal Ashby from Jerry Kosinski's 1970 novel of the same name. However, it is only in reading about the film and novel as I write this chapter, that I became aware that Kosinski's working title for the novel was *Dasein* and that *being there* is a translation of Heidegger's term *dasein*, which is concerned with the experience of what it means to be particularly human and not some other creature in terms of experience, subjectivity and especially an awareness of death (Heidegger 1962). The term *being there* then is a direct translation of *dasein* in German which is often commonly glossed as existence in English. So even this very brief sketch of some of the travels of the phrase *being there*, brings us back very quickly to questions about anthropology's relationship to its object—the human, and to philosophy, to art and yes, to discourse. In the following discussion, I will, as we always are, be imbedded at the same time in discourses, texts and “the complexities of self/other negotiations.”

Specifically, in this chapter I will try to make sense of attempts by some humans and dogs to *be there* or occupy one house in Delhi. At the same time, I will examine a few proposals that consider what might be deemed a proper engagement among entities by making discussions of post-colonial predicaments in historical schematic frames rub up against explorations of human and animal interaction. My aim is to explore some difficult legacies of occupation and attempts to *be there*.

In the film, *Being There*, Peter Sellers is Chance the simple-minded illiterate house-bound gardener who is described thus in the novel:

The soft soil of his brain, the ground from which all his thoughts shot up, had been ruined forever. Therefore, he could not look for a place in the life led by people outside the house or the garden gate. Chance must limit his life to his quarters and to the garden; he must not enter other parts of the household or walk out into the street. (1999: 8)

In the film *Being There* which is subtitled, a *Story of Chance*, this simple gardener is thrown out of his garden for the first time in middle age and as he encounters the world (especially that of the powerful), his simple, de-contextualized, overly literal statements

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<sup>203</sup>Discourse in Geertz is primarily about the practices of writing in anthropology, but Borneman and Hammoudi are using discourse more as a Foucauldian concept as it has been operationalized in anthropology. It is interesting to note that even though the enemy for Borneman and Hammoudi is textual analysis, discourse is also often deployed as something more akin to an amorphous force that does sometimes seem not that unlike what previously went by the name of culture or the social.

that border on what some might term mere sense data are interpreted as profound allegories about existence.<sup>204</sup>

The predicament of *being there* for the character Chauncey Gardiner and his interlocutors and the enigma of attempting to *be there* in the kinship chart of the mother, brain-damaged son and ex-daughters-in-law might help explore some limitations in anthropological practices, conceptualizations and texts. Maybe both Geertz's and Borneman and Hammoudi's explorations into conundrums of *being there* in anthropological practice would have benefited from thinking more about the character Chance Gardiner of the film and the novel, as well as Kosinski's artistic questioning of Heidegger's understanding of what the limits of a particularly human and not human (let's say, for example, dog) mind or experience might be.

In their brief mention of *Being There* as a film, Borneman and Hammoudi invoke the character of Chauncey Gardiner to chide anthropologists for possibly reducing themselves to the comedic figures and caricatures of a "voyeur" and the "tourist" that "watches" and then "decodes," basically agreeing in this part of their introduction with many critiques of anthropological practice as being complicit with colonial and neo-colonial power relationships of the gaze even though they reject this assertion in other parts of their text (2009: 15). The character of Chauncey Gardiner watches television and throughout the film vapidly declares that he "likes to watch." However, this watching and his statements about what he sees on television are devoid of all context and knowledge external to the images on the television themselves. Borneman and Hammoudi state that after the impact of this film, anthropologists had to change their relationship to any easy sense of naïve visuality understood as observed or read truth.<sup>205</sup>

The corrective for the anthropologist as Chauncey Gardiner for Borneman and Hammoudi are practices of co-presence:

Co-presence is also a source of knowledge that makes possible a transformation of what we know, specifically of the anthropologist's own self-understandings. Misunderstandings, tricks, double meanings, opaque metaphors, and self-interested distortions are always present in communication, but what is important is that the engaged ethnographer learns something of the grammar that guides the actions of his interlocutors. (2009: 14)<sup>206</sup>

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<sup>204</sup> One reviewer claims that this film demonstrates "our susceptibility to be taken in by appearances. We believe what we want to believe. We make people into what we want them to be." Instead, for the same reviewer, Chance "is able to make all of those around him draw their own conclusions about him, and in the film they are all wrong" This is true except, as the reviewer notes, for the Black maid who is aware of who Chance is and sees his ascent as a sign of White privilege (Puccio 2009).

<sup>205</sup> And one could ask what experience this film or novel might have had on Geertz given that he uses the title of *Being There* for his essay. The influence of this film versus other critiques of anthropological practices is clearly overstated in this discussion, but it is significant that both of these texts quite explicitly reference the film and novel.

<sup>206</sup> Borneman and Hammoudi mention Geertz and his interest in "modeling social action as text" right after mentioning the novel and film *Being There*. However, they do not mention the essay in which Geertz specifically employs the phrase *being there* in its title. From their perspectives "Geertz did not retreat from fieldwork encounters to pure library work or to an exclusive reliance on vignettes, pictures, media materials, and rhetoric" (2009: 15).

Instead of this figure of an ethnographer who is capable of being transformed, Borneman and Hammoudi cast Chauncey Gardiner as a hapless anthropologist “who watches and then depending on textual skills and mastery cynically decodes what is seen” (2009:15). Yet, in the film Chauncey takes every chance not to think or interpret anyone’s speech and his engagement to the world is anything but cynical. Therefore, Chauncey Gardiner and his attempts at *being there* would be the most unusual and rare of anthropologists—the one who avoids interpretation or judgment. Instead in the film, it is Chance whose utterances are eagerly, almost aggressively interpreted by all of his interlocutors. If we were to map the anthropologist and his or her Other onto this relationship between Chance and the other characters in the novel or film, then Chance might make more sense as an informant and all the other characters could be anthropologists abductively “making people into what we want them to be” and “[being] wrong” as one reviewer understood the main point of the 1979 film (Puccio 2009).

Whether one makes a character such as Chauncey and his obviousness disorder occupy the position of the anthropologist or his or her informant might matter very much for what one might want to say about anthropological practices or humans in general. Yet, could both sides of this relationship be occupied by a Chauncey Gardiner or a brain-damaged son? I would say yes, especially in terms of thinking about how problems of abduction, delusional interpretation and the possible enigma of the thought of Others (of both the so-called normal and abnormal minds of both humans and dogs) seem not limited to the anthropologist, but may or may not mark a condition of the human mind or perhaps a larger or smaller category of mind than the human.<sup>207</sup> Both Chauncey the gardener and my brain damaged father as ex-husband are entities that particularly challenge calls for practices of co-presence, as well as traditional definitions of what may be particularly human. My discussion here is obviously not a celebration of differential norms qua difference, but more of a cautionary tale about the desire to always posit all differentials from one assumed and despised norm as a necessarily positive politics in the absence of any reference to particular context, milieu, who or whom.<sup>208</sup>

Similarly, Chauncey and my father make difficult endeavors to characterize anthropology’s goal as a quest for a shared grammar that Borneman and Hammoudi give as the purpose for attempting co-presence with another in fieldwork practices (2009:14). *Being there* as a problem both of one’s physical location and of being capable or not of offering a particular presence to, or being perceived by, specific others makes the pursuit of an underlying grammar not always the applicable metaphor for what is at stake in trying to understand particular configurations of humans, dogs or humans and dogs.<sup>209</sup> If we return to the very provincial configuration of a legacy of disinheritance of the mother, the son and the ex-daughters-in-law triad, and if we try to understand it as a grammar, then the very different ways in which the son and the daughters-in-law cannot be present or recognized and to or by whom is elided by the legacy of the limits of always having to think in an anthropological here and there separated by language.

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<sup>207</sup> For fans of the movie *Young Frankenstein* (1974), as well as Canguilhem (1989), I would like to include the “Abby Normal” mind.

<sup>208</sup> Growing up with my brain damaged father and his mother’s radically assumptive and authoritative speech acts about his mind and intent makes me cautious to embrace absolutely every variation from assumed norms.

<sup>209</sup> Grammar might be a particularly problematic term for an animal that does not communicate through spoken language.



All four of the daughters-in-law saw the film *Being There* in the theater when it was released in 1979, six years after the son fell from the sky and four since the law had declared that the mother could exclusively interpret the son's utterances. Chauncey Gardiner's vacuous pronouncements such as "I like to watch" became common usage among us daughters-in-law to denote a world in which most give primacy to the Rorschach speech of the brain-damaged son, but the four daughters-in-law are not only not enchanted by these utterances, but fear this interpretation of speech that one daughter-in-law diagnoses as "attempted soul murder."<sup>210</sup> This attempted soul murder was the triple bind of being continually excoriated for a lack of devotion to the brain damaged son as a daughter who can only be hailed as a daughter in the negative terms of an existential failure of fidelity to the son/father, at the same time that she is perpetually ontologically guilty as a bad daughter-in-law whose very life must be extinguished and made an offering to feed the one and only brain damaged son. Only this sacrifice of the existence of all four daughters-in-law would make the brain damaged son live and maintain the bond between mother and son at the center of the universe. At fifteen watching a character who liked "to watch," helped me occupy a place apart from the mother and the law's attempt to impose this universal grammar of the brain-damaged son. This is my first anthropological education.

Borneman and Hammoudi are particularly concerned that ethnography has become somewhat subservient to philosophical concepts and that practices of co-presence between humans in a particular location are often invoked mainly to support concepts imported from certain canonical philosophers. At issue in their examination of *being there* are concerns about what can disrupt what in terms of ethnographic encounter and philosophy.<sup>211</sup> Yet neither author in their own exposition of *being there* mentions that Kosinski is quite obviously inspired to write about the plant-like Chance Gardiner in order to think about the limits of a particularly human consciousness in Heidegger's concept of *dasein*: "no plant can do anything intentionally: it cannot help growing and its growth has no meaning. Since a plant cannot reason or dream" (1999: 3-4). The hands of philosophy then are all over the novel and the film versions of *Being There* as Kosinski grapples with thinking about what the limits of a specifically human experience of the world qua human might be, although it must be noted that Kosinski is seriously disrupting the concept of *being there* using weapons of literature and not merely endorsing philosophy with his story and characters. This questioning is uncomfortable and dangerous in terms of asking exactly how Chauncey Gardiner is human, but also not a cause for the mandatory celebration of broken brains as some kind of gift.

This brings us to a join where discussions of *being there* in an anthropological frame of a quest for human alterity in the ruins of what is left of culture, of a here and a there and an us and a them that most commonly refuses a biological human nature, meets

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<sup>210</sup> Some interpretations of the mother did not even need an utterance from the son, but just her assumptions about what he wanted. Daughter-in-Law Number Two, my oldest sister, coined the term of "soul murder" for the impact of these radically abductive and assumptive statements. The film *Being There* stands out to me as the first time that I saw anything that could brush up against the kinship chart of the mother, son and the ex-daughters-in-law and not completely obliterate the position of the ex-daughters-in-law.

<sup>211</sup> I would add art and literature to this list. Academic production seems to have a hard time letting literature, art or film, left as themselves with their own form of argumentation, disrupt either philosophy or ethnography. I would have to add that philosophy, art and literature are then all over Borneman and Hammoudi's introduction also (2009).

the problem of *being there* in terms of a general human mind or consciousness with specific capacities that differ from other forms of life. Many ardent supporters of the quest for alterity that categorically refuse the biological often collapse into a defense of a particular human consciousness when the animal starts to be brought into the anthropological scene as yet one more mind that the anthropologist cannot get into or occupy and yet cannot continue to ignore in terms of the power and knowledge of practices of co-presence. Animal Studies in multiple disciplines including anthropology have attempted to think about the contours and limits of trying to define a particularly human subjectivity, or not. These questions are important for an ethnography that attempts to think about how another species, here how the dog, might “think, reason and dream” in relationship to humans in a particular place such as Delhi, while at the same time focusing on how particular individual dogs or humans are caught in configurations of relationship.<sup>212</sup> Therefore, in this dissertation I am tacking between differences and similarities in both kind and individual.

### **Caught in an Umwelt? Problems of Co-Presence, Being There and Becoming With**

For the brain-damaged son I might abdicate any claims to state positively what is going on, but for the Delhi dog and their lovers and haters, I must say something. In the discussion so far, issues of the interpretation of speech and behaviors and the problems of error and delusion are at the fore. Yet, the most pressing problem is to think about how certain histories and configurations of relationship impede or enable the ability to be caught or even encroach upon another in a particular milieu. If the goal is to “change an anthropologist’s own self-understandings”, then unfortunately the issue of what those understandings are in reference to provincial configurations of relationship are necessary to explore.

If we think about Borneman and Hammoudi’s (2009) understanding of *co-presence* or Haraway (2008) and Despret’s (2004) concept of *becoming with*, and we try to think about both terms in reference to von Uexküll’s (1957) notion of an *umwelt*, then issues of how a particular life form and life history senses its environment of relation are both paramount concerns. The evolution of a particular body of sensing, as well as particular provincial lineages of experience and configurations of relationship create unique abilities to sense in an environment and therefore what can hook, seize or impinge upon a particular entity in any attempts at ‘co-presence,’ ‘being there’ or ‘becoming with’ is very particular to specific configurations of relation. Histories and legacies of the sensible make aspects of environments or others either cryptic or legible in often very specific terms. Therefore capacities of *being there* anthropologically depend on lineages of relationship that create very provincial abilities to sense or be sensed that are most commonly not shared among anthropologists as a group or even among entities in the same neighborhood, pack, family or household.<sup>213</sup>

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<sup>212</sup> Eduardo Kohn’s work on specific dog and human interactions is significant in this regard (2007).

<sup>213</sup> I should point out that in using von Uexküll’s notion of an *umwelt* and combining it with Favret Saada’s understanding of becoming caught in a scene I am thinking about what is perceptible in multiple registers of what is often separated into the sensing of a body of evolutionary organization, the psyche and divisions between biological and cultural understandings of what can be sensed.

In addition, if we think about being caught to know anything at all, then I must seriously consider what kind of a specifically anthropological *being there* is possible from this lineage of daughters-in-law whose speech cannot register on the law in relationship to utterances of the brain-damaged son as interpreted by the mother. At issue are two more joins in discussions of *being there*. First, there is in anthropological practice an assumption that the anthropologist is capable of being transformed or what Geertz defines as being “penetrated by another form of life”.<sup>214</sup> Yet, can some histories and ways of being caught in configurations of relationship make attempts at co-presence more difficult than others? Can we think about an anthropology of numbness or an anthropology of cataleptic refusal of external stimuli for the anthropologist, as well as his or her interlocutor?<sup>215</sup> Second, there is an assumption that this fieldworker will be capable of distinguishing a grammar of some group, kind or configuration that has been designated to be within the field, even if it is imagined as a network. However, issues of how provincial references catch individuals differentially in particular nodes of relationship in any scene would affect both sides of this equation and so different anthropologists could be hooked very differently in what we may assume to be the same ethnographic scene, but which may indeed be a different *umwelt* of sense for particular dog or human.<sup>216</sup>

In *umwelt* theory, it is the body plan or sensing of a particular kind of organism that creates a specific environment for the organism. Another kind of body plan has a completely different milieu of sense and so much of another creature’s environment would therefore not be perceptible to another kind of body. This leads to a logical problem in von Uexkull. In the conceit of *umwelt* theory, it is the human who occupies a position that can in some sense become aware of the *umwelt* of another kind of creature at the same time that Von Uexkull declares that ultimately each human milieu of sense is particular. So what permits the human or the anthropologist some access, even if it may be more conceptual than actual, to the sense world of other life forms? And how does this gesturing towards a particularization of a sense world in the human possibly extend, or not, to other body plans, for example that of the dog? So there are two questions here: who can be an individual living in a particular *umwelt* in this theory? And how does the development of a particular life, experience and history of relation create even more specific abilities to register or to not perceive certain stimuli from an environment that also must include memory as a milieu for both dog and human?

## **Legacies of Dualistic Colonial *Umwelts* of Sense**

There is a history of attempting to map what could be termed a colonial *umwelt* of sense using bi-furcated models. In the following discussion I will look at two such

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<sup>214</sup> Geertz in his examination of *Being There* states: “The ability of anthropologists to get us to take what they say seriously has less to do with either a factual look or an air of conceptual elegance than it has with their capacity to convince us that what they say is a result of their having actually penetrated (or, if you prefer, been penetrated by) another form of life, of having, one way or another, truly “been there” (1988).

<sup>215</sup> Deleuze states that disappearance or catalepsy is possibly the price of thought (1995:138).

<sup>216</sup> Haraway’s (2008) discussion of attachment sites makes sense in reference to the semiotics of form in biology, but we can also talk about ways in which no registration of co-presence might happen in other registers as well.

schemas or their critique that have used an organism and environment framework to mark a particularly native or non-native capacity to sense a milieu. My reason for examining these schemas and their attendant figures such as the native is to examine how the enduring legacy of these divisions (and even some truth value) may still be operable in anthropology and other milieus, even in assemblage type thinking.<sup>217</sup> It might seem odd at this juncture to return to these models of the native and his other, especially given the ways in which understandings of ‘culture’ have changed in light of many incursions over the last decades. However, it is the very attention to the environment in these models that is significant for this discussion of attempts to *be there* in legacies of disinheritance. These bi-furcated models do in fact pay attention to biological understandings of milieu that notions of culture had already bracketed even before this concept started to be imagined as blurred, hybrid, traveling, interconnected, encountering, fluid, exposed, diverse, marginal, and a borderland, or abandoned completely for assemblages, the emergent or the actual. This discussion of colonial schemas of sense then will be preoccupied with questions of territoriality and the positing of entities.

As I mentioned in chapter one, Appadurai in the development of his schema is actually critiquing ecological approaches in anthropology.<sup>218</sup> For him it is the specific focus that many have placed on adaptation that immobilizes, incarcerates and confines the figure of the native in his place or environment (1988: 37).<sup>219</sup> The opposite of the native in Appadurai’s critiquing but still deploying dualistic model is the cosmopolitan who is not limited in any way by an environment and so in effect does not really have one.

Robert Bringham, the poet and translator, has also outlined a dualistic schema similar to Appadurai’s of the native and non-native. In his understanding of the relationship to landscape of either Native Americans or New World colonizers or refugees, Bringham defines the native as a creature of adaptation and the colonizer or refugee as the one who refuses (or is possibly refused by) the environment. For Bringham, the native and the colonizer or refugee move or migrate, so there is not a sense of being immobilized in a place that we get in Appadurai, but instead adaptation is given a positive valence so that the native can distinguish and adapt to its actual environment or milieu, while the colonizer or refugee can only repeat “idealized versions of remembered patterns” of an absent physical milieu.<sup>220</sup>

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<sup>217</sup> There are many other approaches to mapping this history. To name a few, there are understandings such as those of Sidney Mintz (1985) or Amitav Ghosh (1993, 1996, 2008) that focus on circuits of transit. And then there are understandings such as those of Fanon (1967), Memmi (1991), and Said (1978) that focus on group selves and others. There are also proponents such as Dirks (2001) or Asad (1993) that maintain strong conceptual divides between an East and West. I am in the following section focusing on two mappings that are interesting in the way that they specifically invoke adaptation, environment and landscape as they maintain a quite strong divide between only two kinds of milieu for their organisms.

<sup>218</sup> And I should note that Appadurai is probably more known for his thinking about globalization flows and ‘scapes’ of culture and ethnos (1996).

<sup>219</sup> “So what does it mean to be a native of some place, if it means something more, or other, than being from that place? What it means is that natives are not only persons who are from certain places, and belong to those places, but they are also those who are somehow in-carcerated, or confined, in those places. What we need to examine is this attribution or assumption of incarceration, of imprisonment, or confinement. Why are some people seen as confined to, and by, their places?” (Appadurai 1988: 37)?

<sup>220</sup> The original milieu for the colonizer or refugee is sedentary and so seemingly less adapted somehow than that of the alert native. This value schema of course makes no sense in terms of the fit of an

It is not hard to distinguish between these earlier Native American migrations and the Colonization of North America by Europeans. The difference is cultural, not racial. It is the difference between, on the one hand, families of hunters learning their way through the landscape, step by step, and on the other hand, boatloads of refugees uprooted from a sedentary life in one land, crossing the great ocean to another they know nothing whatever about (Bringhurst 2006: 20).

The first kind of movement encourages learning, alertness adaptation, and it generally allows the kind of time this adaptation requires. The second kind of movement is abrupt. It involves the imposition of remembered patterns, or idealized versions of remembered patterns, even where they will not fit (Bringhurst 2006: 20).

Appadurai then offers us an environment that almost completely controls its life's form in the figure of the native and an organism that does not have a proper actual milieu in terms of the cosmopolitan. Bringhurst proposes one creature who is in a seemingly perfect *umwelt* that does not have any blind spots to its alert sensing, while another being only has access to an environment of memory and idealized patterns.

In these two similar schemas of bi-furcated milieus of colonial experience, the same pole other than that of the native is occupied by three different figures: the cosmopolitan, the colonizer and the refugee. The cosmopolitan functions absent any restraints of a world, while the colonizer and the refugee can never have any access to the new land or environment and are instead enveloped in a possibly traumatic *umwelt* of memory or remembered patterns only.<sup>221</sup>

In both understandings the problem of the figure comes to the fore. On offer are only occupations of either a native who is trapped or adapting or a non-native who only has access to a senseless milieu or a memory of one. Although, these mappings of colonial histories and knowledge production are discussed in terms of organism and environment relationships and processes of adaptation to an environment that could be referenced in terms of differences in population in biology, variation among different entities that might make up the figure are never addressed. Instead, these figures are at most a kind that stands in for a people or *ethnos* as a kind. And therefore the use of these schemas makes all differences of sense occur between the two figures of the native and the non-native.<sup>222</sup>

In discussions of native plants and animals in conservation movements the terms native as well as alien, foreign and invasive have built upon these dualistic schemas

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environment not possibly having anything to do with moral understandings of better occupations of a milieu.

<sup>221</sup> Other arguments map the destruction of ways of life, peoples or environments in colonial histories, so it is significant that, in these two formulations, it is the world of the cosmopolitan, the refugee and the colonizer that disappears or is only accessible in memory. What should we make of possible inversions of meaning in terms of what a loss of a world or an environment might entail in terms of declaring freedom, desolation or delusion?

<sup>222</sup> It is also interesting to note that Von Uexkull's idea of an organism only being able to sense a certain aspect of what could be understood as a total environment that is actually not sensible by any one being seems more what might be going on in the colonizer and refugee *umwelts* created by Bringhurst, although Bringhurst formulates this more as an inability to sense a 'real' environment for the colonizer and refugee.

attempting to map specifically colonial movements and migrations as opposed to others. At issue in these mappings are what can be claimed as a rightful occupation or what should be considered literally out of place.<sup>223</sup> Thus in the two schemas I have looked at, all the natives can never not be in a rightful occupation whether they be trapped or alert and learning and the colonizers' relationship to an environment can only be invasive, while the refugees must flee and then squat in their physical milieu. At the same time, both the colonizers and the refugees have no actual access to a milieu of sense other than one of a repetitive, distant and possibly abductive memories of a lineage sans milieu. In all of this, the cosmopolitans are un-locatable and 'free'.<sup>224</sup>

And yet in these discussions and diagrams of scenes of colonial encounter there would not be a way to think about the difficulties of attempting to occupy a there for a Chauncey Gardiner, the brain damaged son or the ex-daughters-in-law. And particularly illegible would be any provincial triad such as that of the mother, brain-damaged son and the ex-daughters-in-law.

It might be claimed that the two charts of bifurcation that I have offered in this section are historical or past tense in the sense of being quaint or not affecting the present and that the now of conceptual repertoires such as assemblages, globalization theory, borders or borderlands, understandings of networks, performativity or desire are more actual than these little dioramas of colonial milieu. However, these figures of the native and the cosmopolitan/colonizer/refugee still seem quite operative in the ways in which painfully provincial configurations of human (and animal) relationships might be dismissed as personal or biographical and not what is ever at stake or needs to be taken seriously in anthropological practices that still no matter what must give an account of a there in reference to a here as they necessarily critique a here from perspectives gleaned from an often celebrated there.

In the remainder of this chapter, I will assess what we might make of the figures of the native, the colonizer, the refugee and the cosmopolitan if we neither persist in the shell of dualistic milieus of sense occupied by populations of identical figures facing outward nor become overly enamored of restless, peripatetic absolutely un-coalescing ontologies, but we instead think about how specific entities in one band, neighborhood, pack, family, house or self might be alert, trapped, endure, invade, squat, flee, disassociate, remember, or refuse all sensory input in order to ask the question: what is a rightful occupation?

The figures of the outsider, the foreigner and the alien as creatures that somehow refuse or are refused by an environment or persist in a completely artificial or experimental milieu are particularly interesting to think about in contemplating what might be meant by rightful occupations. Von Uexkull offers us his famous and much quoted tick that can live in a laboratory without a proper milieu of sense for eighteen years (1957). Subramaniam proposes a similar case in her discussion of a Harvard

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<sup>223</sup> In Subramaniam's article the fear of the foreign or the outsider is only that of "the white settlers who reached the Americas to displace the original natives, to become its new, true natives" (2001: 34). In these discussions of the invasive, we might also want to revisit discussions of "matter out of place" (Douglas 1966).

<sup>224</sup> It might be interesting to ask about this freedom in relationship to the God's eye view of Bacon that Haraway discusses (1988).

zoologist's version of an Asian swamp eel. This creature is described as being able to endure:

Seven months in a damp towel without food or water. The olive-brown creature prefers tropical waters, yet it can flourish in subzero temperatures. It prefers fresh water but can tolerate high salinity. It breathes under water like a fish, but can slither across dry land, sometimes in packs of 50 or more, sucking air through a tow-holed snout. Even more of a riddle is how to kill the eel: it thus far appears almost immune to poisons and dynamite (Robichaux quoted in Subramaniam 2001: 30).

The brain-damaged son has persisted in what I might consider to be an experimental or artificial milieu policed by the legacy of the mother and the State for four decades as his rivet shaken brain has been further rearranged by post-accident strokes. The four ex-daughters-in-law have variously attempted to flee, invade, squat, hide, destroy, capitulate, submit, succumb, and abandon themselves in this milieu. In the following sections, I will from the perspective of the un-occupiable there of this legacy, explore particular encroachments upon one specific domesticity in Delhi in order to look at how the inhabitants of one house, namely the servant, the guest and the street dog encroach upon the space of a homeowner or rightful occupant in reckless and impolite attempts to *be there*.

### **Reckless Encroachments: Invade, Squat, Flee**

Life has been reckless to these people.<sup>225</sup>

One could ask to whom or to what is Delhi the proper milieu and this questioning of Delhi in terms of rightful occupations would problematize using metaphors of roots for lineage or belonging. Delhi is not construed as the family territory of that many of its current human residents.<sup>226</sup> The dominant ethos is that most families are from somewhere else and many have a ritual relationship with that elsewhere that Delhi as either a site of everyday life or a governing capital does not occupy.

In addition, Delhi as a site of kingship and empire has a complicated relationship to notions of home, rightful inhabitation and the concept of the foreign. In the Baburnama, Babur, the founder of the Mogul Empire, laments the un-occupiable apple orchards of central Asia, from the locations of his possessions of Delhi and Agra (Babur, Emperor of Hindustan 2006). Furthermore, the consequences of 1857 and partition are still, as I said, legible on the landscape and discussions of who is other to particular milieus are part of everyday preoccupations in Delhi. For Babur, just as for many in Delhi today, there is a homeland whose air and produce become sweeter the longer that they are compared to Delhi. For those who can maintain this understanding of a ritual place better than Delhi, there might still be a possibility for a certain kind of home.

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<sup>225</sup> (Lucas 2003).

<sup>226</sup> Many residents have recently moved to Delhi from somewhere else and the history of partition is I would say everywhere legible on the landscape.

Patterns of inhabitation in Delhi often focus on the neighborhood as the site of living especially for the categories of housewife, servant and sometimes dog. Yet, Delhi as a mega-city is by definition a vast urban complex. Thus, if much of living is done at the level of a particular neighborhood, then there are not many vantage points from which a neighborhood embedded dog or human can take in all that is Delhi. The whole of the city, even in an imagined form, is not usually the scale of life perceived from the vantage point of particular entities in Delhi neighborhoods.

In its middle class version, the Delhi neighborhood is often a repetition of forms that seem to make space more generic across neighborhoods. Practices of numbering houses and blocks in a grid format, as well as the similarity of the few shops in these middle class neighborhoods, add to this effect.

When I first arrive in Delhi for fieldwork, a friend originally from Jharkhand insists on touring me across the whole length and breadth of Delhi, an activity that is actually a hobby of his that he started shortly after arriving in the city four years previously. He told me that only a person who had not grown up in Delhi would be interested in these kinds of outings or the acquisition of the extensive knowledge of Delhi that he has acquired from this habit. I am amused and grateful for his companionship and protection on these outings, even though my association with Delhi pre-dates his. In addition, he teaches me to pay attention to just how proscribed some inhabitations in Delhi are.

The entities in this particular tale of reckless and rootless encroachments—of simultaneous attempts to squat and flee—are the rightful occupant of the house, who I will call the homeowner, the servant, the anthropologist and guest, as well as a pack or group of dogs that include this house in their range of human domiciles that “prop them up” in one neighborhood in Delhi.

The servant, let’s call her T, is not from Delhi. Working in this household is her first employment as a domestic servant and her first experience living outside of the Northeast of India where she is originally from. The owner is also not from Delhi, but comes from a lower caste and originally lower-class background in the Northwest of India. Both T and I come to live in this house through the conscious practice and cultivation of compassion and a specifically Gandhian ethics on the part of the homeowner. Let’s call him L.

My first residence in Delhi was the apartment of a recently deceased single woman. I rented this place from her mother. Thus, I had spent the first few months of my attempts to inhabit Delhi living alone in a milieu in which none of the possessions of a decades-long inhabitation had been touched since the unexpected passing of this woman six months previously. Every drawer and surface in this apartment was already occupied by the material traces of a life and I could not make myself even attempt to encroach upon any space in this apartment. Out the window of this apartment one could see a mannequin workshop on the roof of a building across the street, so I found myself living in a sense over and in-between the artifacts of this dead woman with the visuals outside of rows of arms, legs, heads and torsos—a fantastic array of women’s body parts—moving in ever renewed configurations as they were hung to dry. At the same time what remained of a life inside the apartment invaded any attempts to *be there*.

I was rescued from this milieu by the homeowner who invited me to be a long term guest in his home. T came to live and work in this house not that dissimilarly. The



owner of the house is someone who has thought a lot about the ethics of employing servants. He tells me, “I am responsible for a servant in my house and if anything would happen I am responsible.” This responsibility includes protecting a worker especially a woman from other people in the neighborhood. However, L also feels that he must have a domestic worker.<sup>227</sup> L finds T through friendships with people who work in NGO networks in the Northeast. T does not have a history working previously in domestic servitude. Instead, she has worked within her family and for two NGOs that promote work in a broadly Gandhian framework of the cultivation of an ethical self.

Both Delhi and domestic service are new to T and she had been in Delhi and this home for less than a year when I arrive. Therefore, Delhi and this domicile are new territory for both T and I, although T’s Delhi consists almost exclusively of L’s house, the train station and the route between them.

T works very hard and is continually cooking, cleaning and washing clothes and generally seems to be in a good mood as she moves around the house usually with a lot of energy. However, this general good will and industriousness is punctuated by fights between T and the male driver and assistant, let’s call him U. U teases or harasses T and sometimes T gets very upset about these interactions.<sup>228</sup> At the point that T is screaming or crying, the owner generally intervenes to restore order, but T would be upset sometimes for a day or more after these events, while these interactions seemed more like a game to U. What stood out to me from the perspective of a guest was that T was comfortable enough to show such extremes of emotion to the homeowner L.<sup>229</sup> Thus, a lot of the space of the house was occupied by the emotions of T. Both her joy and goodwill and her anger did not seem to be hidden or modulated in her vocation as a domestic worker in this house in Delhi.

As I have said, T was new to the vocation of being a servant. She had never cleaned and cooked in this capacity before. In the beginning of my residence in this house there is no set scope or parameter to our relationship as the limits and responsibilities between a servant and a guest do not seem to be clearly delineated. In the house, T’s work for me is mediated through L the homeowner. I eat food that she is already preparing for L and she does wash the floors in my room at L’s request not mine. However, I wash my own clothes in a bucket and T does no personal chores for me. I bring the issue of the guest and servant relationship up with a few interlocutors in Delhi who help me ponder some possible understandings between the guest and the servant. A journalist, let’s call him G, is intrigued by this problem, and as a single man in Delhi has been in this paying guest relationship in private homes quite a few times. He tells me, “I think the relationship between the servant and the guest is a difficult one. The guest

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<sup>227</sup> The absolute necessity of having a servant for the middle class is one of the tenets of what Ray and Qayum mark as a “culture of servitude” in Kolkata (2009).

<sup>228</sup> Trying to ascertain exactly the tone and meaning for the participants of this interaction is very difficult. Trawick, for example, in her work in Tamil Nadu makes a case for a cultural form that prefers constant interaction in all its forms to one of quiet or solitude. However, the tone of these interactions seems less playful and ambiguous than what she describes in *Notes on Love in a Tamil Family* (1990).

<sup>229</sup> In other situations in which I have lived in houses with servants in Delhi and other parts of India, there was more distance between the servant and the employer, even though this seems to vary considerably. My point here is that the relationship between T and her employer was not one in which, for example, the servant was put on probation for eating one biscuit without permission, a scene that I witnessed in a home in Jaipur, Rajasthan.

actually has very little power, often less than the servant in the house and he is more of an outsider and the servant will not get anything from the guest and I think the servant knows this.”

The relationship between the servant and the guest might also be indeterminate because both of them are residing not in their own domicile, but by definition in someone else’s, which bring us back to understandings of milieu. The guest and the servant, unlike the householder or the native, cannot be defined as never being out of place in the home or homeland. However, if we think about the servant or the guest and their relationship to each other in the there of the home, then what mode of engagement is possible or recommendable between them? Should the servant or the guest interact in a modality of being alert, trapped, enduring, invading, squatting, fleeing, disassociating, remembering, or refusing all sensory input, if we were to borrow from the list of dispositions from colonial schemas of sense?

### **The Distant Spectator and the Politics of Politeness**

In order to think more about the problem of the servant and the guest, I will trace two discussions that attempt to define appropriate interactions between entities. One of these is Uday Singh Mehta’s examination of the anti-imperialistic thought of Edmund Burke and the other is Donna Haraway’s discussion of the visitor and what could be considered “polite” or proper forms of greeting in her examination of “taking touch seriously” and “becoming with” multi-species entities.<sup>230</sup> It is my hope that putting understandings of what might be meant by either an entanglement or an invasion between a text focusing on a bifurcated division between colonial realms of experience with one examining human and primarily domestic animal interactions will help me think about rightful occupation in terms of how an entity may or may not *be there* in particular lineages and occupations without assuming the contours of inheritance, dispossession or right in advance.

Mehta admires Burke for the “specific quality to his engagement that sets it apart and casts a general hue on his views on empire. It is this perspective on India’s history” which is:

The perspective of a spectator-concerned, at points sympathetic, at others critical-but always mindful of a distance, not simply physical but more importantly emotional, that separates him from those whose story he is recounting. It is a history he had studied with great diligence and passion. But Burke is painstakingly aware that neither of these qualities makes it his history, nor do they guarantee that it will become transparent to him. History as experienced is more than the knowledge of that experience (Mehta 1999: 163-164).

Mehta is making the case for Edmund Burke as unique among thinkers of his time and place in terms of not assuming a transparent understanding of India or Indians in a

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<sup>230</sup> Donna Haraway states that “[she] like[s] the language of “politics” as used by Despret, Latour and Stengers, which [she] see related to polis and polite: good manners (politesse), response to and with (2008: 92).

stagiest schema of historical development.<sup>231</sup> Mehta's version of Burke offers us the modes of engagement of "the perspective of the spectator," of being "mindful of physical and yet more importantly emotional distance" and "being painstakingly aware of exactly what is not one's history."

Haraway invokes a language of attempting to be a visitor, a tourist, polite and a guest in multiple places in *When Species Meet* while at the same time exhorting us to "take touch seriously," and to "think about attachment sites" and "dense knots of becoming" (2008). In her discussion of a cartoon that depicts a wolf "raised by scientists" meeting a forest pack of wolves for the first time, Haraway defines the wolf who is wearing a radio monitoring device as a visitor:

The wolf mentor and sponsor of the visitor is generous, willing to forgive some degree of ignorance, but it is up to the visitor to learn about her new acquaintances (2008: 15).<sup>232</sup>

Similarly, in a discussion of "species co-shaping one another in layers of reciprocating complexity all the way down" the issue becomes about "learning to be polite" in responsible relation to always asymmetrical living and dying and nurturing and killing" (Haraway 2008: 42). It is at this juncture that Haraway references a tourist brochure that admonishes the human tourist to "be on your best countryside behavior" in a multi-species milieu in which it seems that the tourist is the one being that cannot ever be considered to be of this place or assemblage (2008: 42).<sup>233</sup>

It is significant that in these discussions of colonial and multi-species interactions respectively, there is some similarity to what is being considered a virtue in terms of the valorization of the figures of the spectator, the visitor, politeness, good behavior and keeping one's distance, even as multi-species literature traces entanglements of entities.<sup>234</sup> At issue in what Mehta seems to admire in Burke, it seems to me, would be trying to ascertain what is and is not one's history. This question of who can possess history or be possessed by it does not seem to be in any way an easy query especially in light of Haraway's metaphysics of "taking touch seriously" or thinking in terms of "reciprocating complexity" and "becoming with." Similarly, the question of knowing what history or story an entity can take part in, possess or be possessed by is complicated

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<sup>231</sup> Specifically, he does not assume that India is an earlier form of Europe in a stagiest understanding of world history (Mehta: 1999).

<sup>232</sup> "The wolf mentor and sponsor of the visitor is generous, willing to forgive some degree of ignorance, but it is up to the visitor to learn about her new acquaintances. If all goes well, they will become messmates, companion species, and significant others to one another, as well as conspecifics. The scientist-wolf will send back data as well as bring data to the wolves in the forest. These encounters will shape naturecultures for them all" (Haraway 2008: 15).

<sup>233</sup> What seems interesting here in the text, is that the tourist humans are requested to pay attention to what would be considered good behavior to two different species—those of the flock and those of the guardians of the flock and so other species as species are seen to reach the level of being a group that needs to be considered. "And so I end with the alpine tourist brochure's severe injunction to the hiker to 'be on your best countryside behavior,' followed by specific instructions about what polite behavior toward the working dogs and flocks entails. A prosaic detail: The exercise of good manners makes the competent working animals those whom the people need to recognize. The ones with face were not all human" (Haraway 2008: 42).

<sup>234</sup> In Haraway's work she always seems to be thinking about colonial legacies and therefore the colonial would be also part of her multi-species approach.

because inheritance and disinheritance are not uniformly portioned within the divisions that Mehta makes between history as experience and history as knowledge. Furthermore, emotional distance and non-transparency or opaqueness need not only be signs of a story not being one's own, but also possibly of not being able to occupy a story or a history as being constitutive of the predicament of the subject in general.<sup>235</sup>

### **Knowing One's Place: Disconsolate Attachments**

Also at issue in the framing and promotion of the distant spectator is the way in which possible possessions of history slide between the levels of a nation or people and that which can be owned as a singular possessive pronoun or the native as a kind. Burke is studying Indian history as a sub-continent, but what he might own is that of an individual possessor. Therefore, no other possible configurations of becoming caught or having a "passionate commitment to a system of reference" are on offer between the possessions of an entire subcontinent and those of one man.

Some configurations of relationship and systems of reference that might lie between those of a sub-continent and those of Edmund Burke would quite quickly bring up issues of hierarchy which would disrupt the bifurcated schema of the native and the colonizer and Burke's thought has generally been discussed in terms of his defense of hierarchy and established orders. Mehta minimizes this discussion, making the important claim that a discussion of Burke's thought that stays at the level of examining social classes would miss "Burke's more general underlying thought" which is how "the sources of our attachments, including the attachments we have to the obligations we feel, are local":

For Burke hierarchy is an implied feature of that recognition; 'We begin our public affections in our families. No cold relation is a zealous citizen. We pass so many little images of the great country in which the heart found something which it could fill' (Mehta 1999: 181)

People have psychological reliance on the places to which they belong and the position they occupy in a social system (Mehta 1999: 182).

Yet what happens if the equation must be to at all costs avoid examining hierarchy except in relation to bi-furcated schemas of the native and the colonizer/refugee? Burke's description above of the start of public affection in the family and the psychological reliance on the places and positions to which one belongs locally does not permit the possibility of any other modality of engagement besides that of belonging and warm affection in the local or the familial. I should point out that attachment, which Mehta defines as a sense of obligation, or which Haraway calls attachment sites in her work, can also hook, impinge, intrude, catch, seize and invade us in pain, disconsolation, abandonment and other wounds that maintain attachments that are not always either affectionate or uniformly distributed.<sup>236</sup> Mehta's promotion of

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<sup>235</sup> (Freud 1965, Lacan 2007, Borch-Jacobsen 1988, Butler 2005).

<sup>236</sup> The work of Vena Das makes this point (2007).

Burke's defense of hierarchy does not seem to be able to think the local or the familial as differential places, positions or milieus of possibly difficult, painful, destructive or impossible occupations. And thus, the servant, the guest, the ex-daughters-in-law and even the brain-damaged son can only be assumed to have a heart filled with images of a family as a great country in Mehta's version of Burke:

To have a sense of ourselves on this account [of the "psychological and moral integrity of individuals and communities" and of "being in the middle of things"] requires being self-conscious of our status as inheritors and as transmitters of an inheritance (1999: 183).

Yet the problem is that inheritance in many different registers of family, kinship, genetics, community and history is often more about very specific inheritances and disinheritances that position and catch individuals and specific configurations of relationship quite differentially rather than create any sense of general belonging that can be understood as some kind of moral integrity.<sup>237</sup> Differential inheritances, disinheritances and exclusions at the level of how an individual is caught or configured in relationships are crucial to thinking about what legacy, lineage or roots or their transmission might mean in a specific milieu. And so if we return to issues of hierarchies of inheritance and transmission as what is necessary for the integrity or morality of an individual or community then who or what would disrupt this generically filled heart of belonging? Mehta states that:

Burke always views the leveling out of these distinctions with the greatest suspicion—such "experiments" invariably provoke the thought that they are motivated by an easy instrumentality that the concrete situation cannot sustain and that they will ultimately exact a heavy toll. Indeed, more often than not Burke uses the term "Jacobinism" (and the term "Indianism") to designate an ideology and a set of practices that are *reckless* in their disregard for the extant order of the communities in which they operate (199: 181).

### **Lineages of Family and Empire: Reckless Transmissions of Disinheritance**

So what might it mean to be "reckless" in [one's] disregard for the extant order"? In chapter four, I explored the concept of recklessness as it was brought up in a dog sanctuary environment. R, the animal sanctuary founder used this word in English to lament about how it seemed to her that people today as opposed to the recent past are now "reckless" and that she is not sure why. Her example of recklessness was the one worker who she had identified as being the only one who truly loved animals and was not just doing a job at the sanctuary. Yet he had killed a man in Nepal on a visit to the 'home' country and so he could not come back to Delhi to work for her or love the dogs

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<sup>237</sup> Freud (1965) is another thinker who posits scenes in which there is no sense of the equality of 'whos' posited. Chaucer (1955) might be another reference to how any territory is going to have individuals in it who are in a very different relationship to each other, although this difference for Chaucer is less about emergence than occupying already existing roles.

at her sanctuary anymore. For R, this “recklessness” seemed to be a generalized lament about the disintegration of social order that I interpreted as a common middle to upper class Delhi complaint. I had originally placed this comment in just such a framework of the lower classes no longer knowing their deferential place; however, exactly what constitutes “recklessness” and the extent of its domain and effects is, I think, more than just a diagnosis of a particular upper caste or upper class unease about people that they might consider to be social and moral inferiors not giving proper deference. In Mehta’s understanding of Burke’s thought to be reckless is to set in motion an ideology that destroys the “extant order of the communities in which [people] operate.”

For Mehta, recklessness and its attendant modality of rootlessness are forms of being of Empire:

The empire effects its power through creation of a class of individuals who are rootless and who afflict the societies they touch with a similar contagion. Lacking society themselves, they unsettle the norms of both British and Indian society (Mehta 1999: 173).

This destruction of an extant human order and its attendant hierarchies that this rootlessness unleashes on the world seems to create no possibility of community—moral or otherwise—but only a kind or figure whose mode of being is reckless, rootless, contagious and unsettling. Could this creature possibly be that unlike the invasive Asian eel or the cataleptic fleeing ex-daughters-in-law?

The common definition of the word Reckless is to lack proper caution or to be careless of consequences.<sup>238</sup> The Nepali animal shelter worker in killing a Nepali man in Nepal jeopardizes future opportunities for his two sisters who were going to come to Delhi from Nepal to be educated by the dog shelter founder in a relationship of obligation and exchange between the worker and the shelter founder. However, before this can happen, the Nepali dog sanctuary worker is hooked or seized by the murdering of a Nepali man. By this action the worker could be considered to be reckless according to both the schemas of the native and the colonizer/refugee or Burke’s understanding of the role of the filled heart of family affection and the great country. The charge of recklessness here seems to stem from not properly considering and parsing attachments of love, hate deference or disdain among entities along divisions of family, caste, class, nation or form of life.<sup>239</sup>

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<sup>238</sup> (Merriam-Webster.com 2013).

<sup>239</sup> Another anthropologist who studies gender once told me that he could not read my work because he did not like dogs or people who treat dogs better than people. In this declaration I was fascinated by the way in which: 1) my relation to object of study was assumed a priori and considered to be absolute and one-dimensional, as well as diagnostic of a kind of person 2) He felt comfortable declaring dislike for dogs and people who do not maintain proper divisions between different kinds of species love. I wonder if anyone has ever declared face to face a hatred of gender or people who study gender to this person 3) There was no sense of invoking a Weberian sense of understanding and instead a dislike for the object of study and therefore its studier was considered a sufficient substitution for a critique of a particular conceptual engagement with a phenomena.

It is significant that the murderous Nepali dog sanctuary worker actually shares an attachment with the sanctuary founder R that is outside of the bonds of bi-furcated schemas of colonial encounter or a generic experienced history as belonging. R tells me that the murderous Nepali, alone of all the workers, loved the dogs like she did. R had told me that she did everything for the dogs, but had to pretend that her dog sanctuary was really for humans in terms of the good of diminishing cases of rabies in order to get support for her sanctuary activities. So what seems to be reckless from Mehta's perspective, might not be about lacking society or family absolutely, but being caught and responsible in and to very different configurations of the social that probably cannot be recognized or probably even perceived from the perspective of bi-furcated colonial schemas of community.

The crux of what this responsibility and catching might mean brings us back to predicaments of inheritance and legacy. To have a sense of order, to be an integral individual or community—to not be reckless—is defined in terms of “being self-conscious about a status as inheritor or of transmitting an inheritance.” In this understanding the fellow countryman murdering Nepali dog lover is as reckless in his interspecies attachments as he is in dispatching a fellow national and not transmitting a legacy of education to his two sisters. For Mehta it is empire whose destructive effects are actualized through what is defined as being reckless. Is this recklessness or lack of caution a disregard for birthright and the transmission of lineage and legacy or could it be read in a different frame? Mehta States that:

Both inheritance and birthright carry with them important historical and social attachments. It is not simply our birth as biological event; our birthright is the middle term linking the past and the future. It something that can be lost destroyed or stolen (1999: 180).

Yet, the question is never asked— a birthright for whom or birthright lost, stolen or destroyed by or for whom since the main framing under consideration is the bifurcated schema of British and Indian society. The ways in which an entity or particular configuration of relationship may be dislocated, disinherited or transmit a painful legacy in its proper milieu or place does not seem to be an issue in this schema until some particular entity's ungrateful attempts to occupy or *be there* start to be registered as reckless or rootless dangers and contagions. A disinheritance that does not disrupt a sense of order of a community most probably produces a very different sense of lineage and legacy, as well as a different relationship to time and what could be considered to be past, future or present or even transmission.<sup>240</sup>

### **Provincializing Realms**

So should I make sense of Mehta's defense of hierarchy and community in reference to understandings of modernity that posit an outside or a before as necessarily

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<sup>240</sup> This statement reminds me of Elizabeth Povinelli's invocation of the one who must suffer for the maintenance of others (2011).

integral and holistic?<sup>241</sup> Is this particular valuation of internal cohesion yet another imagining of society as a happy organism such as what one finds in promotions of the Purusha sukta or the rule of Ram?<sup>242</sup>

Yet most at issue in this diagnosis of a particular modality of recklessness and rootlessness is where to mark the divisions that matter: What is or is not one's history? Who can be possessed by what history? Who will or will not inherit? What is a rightful occupation? What is an occupation's proper duration?

Mehta seems to admire Burke's distant spectator disposition primarily as a corrective for overconfident assumptive forms of colonial engagement that always assumed intelligibility and a stagiest view of history (Mehta 1999). The mode of engagement that Mehta promotes as a corrective for colonial abduction is conversation across realms of experience to get at Burke's:

Alternative conception of how different realms of experience can and should relate to each other. It is one that I have called conversational because it does not presume on the transparency of the unfamiliar, nor on a teleology of which it must be a part (1999: 192).<sup>243</sup>

So a question then is what constitutes a realm of experience? Cognates for a realm are a kingdom, a field, a domain and a regime.

In terms of the scale of Mehta's intervention, Geertz in his discussion of *being there* offers us a similar category to the realm in his notion of a "form of life" as that which should focus the anthropologist (1988). Although instead of distance and conversation across that distance, Geertz states that actually convincing others that one has "actually penetrated (or, if you prefer, been penetrated by) another form of life, of having, one way or another, truly 'been there'" is what is often at stake in anthropological writing (1988).

So, an obvious issue is how to delimit each realm or form of life, but also to think seriously about how experience could be constituted as a sphere or a kingdom, especially in terms of trying to think about entities, environments and sensory capacities in terms of an *umwelt*. How would a realm or a form of life in Mehta's and Geertz's formulations

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<sup>241</sup> (Durkheim 1995, Radcliffe-Brown 1952).

<sup>242</sup> (Gandhi 1984, Prasad chandrabhanprasad.com).

<sup>243</sup> This discussion of the limits of trying to think about the modality of conversation as a salve for previous colonial intrusions is part of an essay dealing specifically with three different engagements with liberal theory or post-colonial thought (George, 2007). In all three engagements—that of Mehta, Chakrabarty and Skaria—this conversation is between bounded entities of coherence and all three promote some kind of understanding of the importance of inherited "lived worlds." Mehta offers concerns about identity and belonging that hinge on his understanding of the involuntary binding that inheritances of habit and location produce in terms of human belonging (1999:162). Chakrabarty (2000) is concerned with the world of the "already is" which is defined by its absence of conscious telos and future-oriented amelioration. Skaria (1999) offers a version of Gandhian practice in which bounded groups of difference, which are defined in relationship to their devotional practices to absolute truth and love are forever devoid of any syncretic possibilities (1999). I will return to Chakrabarty's dualistic schema of the "already is" and the "decisionist" at the end of this chapter.



respectively, sense or delimit its sensing dispositions? Or in other words, could a realm have an environment or an *umwelt*?<sup>244</sup>

The properties and limits of realms of experience or forms of life do not seem self-evident, just as what might be meant by conversation across this kind of divide.<sup>245</sup>

For the purposes of this discussion, I would like to ask how the promotion of the distant spectator and conversation across realms of experience as the correct forms of not so post-colonial engagement might be understood in relationship to the whos and whoms problematized in calls for ‘co-presence’ in ethnography or ‘becoming with’ in animal and human trainings. Similarly, what relationship would the distant spectator have to my insistence on the importance of attempts to *be there* as a mind, a body and a location?

A focus on intervention understood as something that always must be protected against or mitigated given the traumas of colonial encroachments limits thinking about possibilities that “those who are to be in the world are constituted in intra-and interaction,” in subject- and object-shaping dance of encounters” and as “ordinary knotted beings” in the words of Haraway (2008: 4). And yet also problematic would be a celebration of infinite destabilizations as dances of encounter which would deny the reality that not all touch or its legacies even in what is sometimes understood as one realm of experience, legacy or transmission can be considered a positive value as a totality, without always naming and demarking specific entities and the limits of their particular *umwelts* of sense.

### **“Lazy by Language:” Bracketing Conversation and Legacies of Vision**

Calls to conversation as that which can protect from a history of overconfident assumptive interventions in colonial history also bring us back to classic, boundary divisions between human and animal, as well as the animate and inanimate; how far can this ideal of conversation as encounter be extended? What limitations of inquiry does this methodology of distant conversation propose?

Similarly, the concept of co-presence, if it is always about the pursuit of communication and shared grammars, then would be dependent on human language. So, a conversational human language matrix seems to be built into understandings of this term, especially if it is promoted as a corrective to what have been diagnosed as overly visual legacies of colonial knowledge formations understood as “liking to watch” and “naively decoding.”

Presumably the distant spectator would also rely on visual sensing. One would have to ask if this spectator who is keen on keeping an emotional distance between realms of experience as well as always staying conscious of what is not his history, would have any relationship to the practitioner of the appropriating gaze as particular colonial

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<sup>244</sup> What I am gesturing towards here is how a “form of life” seems to include both the physical form of a creature and some kind of understanding of cultural or social difference.

<sup>245</sup> A focus on the concept of realms of experience highlights the very embedded and bounded nature of the groups that the concept of intervention must posit to exist at all. Questions of intervention across boundary divisions of belonging actually reinvigorate the understanding of life worlds as bounded entities of coherence, forms that are necessary to then posit concepts such as intervention, domination, or exploitation as we see clearly in Barth (1998), but possibly more so in Strathern (1988) and Uberoi (1984). I would like to point out that this work pre-dates most anthropological understandings of assemblage.

knowledge formation? And could we think about these two modalities of sight in relationship to legacies of stereoscopic three-color vision in the primate lineage (Haraway 1988)? However, most important would be to consider if it would be advisable to positively value distant spectatorship and despise the gaze, while at the same time ignoring specific primate inheritances of sense? And should this differential valuing of the visual or any other sense occur absent any discussion of specific provincial configurations of relationship, milieus, umwelts and legacies of seeing?

What seems sometimes like a distaste for making any reference to the primacy of visual sensing for the human qua human in cultural anthropology, as well as a sensitivity towards what is understood to be a particularly appropriating invasive visual “realm of experience” marked as European, makes it difficult to in any way provincialize human language and the pursuit of grammars as what is at stake in the practice of anthropology understood as the study of ‘life worlds’ as spheres. This is compounded by questions of “who can speak,” as well as politics and practices of staging voice in ethnographic work.<sup>246</sup>

However, what if we consider ethologist and psychologist Alexandra Horowitz’s claim that “we [humans] are made terribly lazy by language” (2009). Behaviorists and ethologists have asserted that animal behavior and other signs in the world can be interpreted (or accessed through experimental methods that can then be analyzed). So we need to ask if practices of ethology and attempts to interpret behaviors, signs or symptoms in both inter- as well as intra- species contexts might be more or less problematic engagements with the world than attempts at conversational co-presence in the aftermath of exceedingly abductive and assumptive colonial engagements? We could ask what this most recent turn to ethological practices might do in milieus that have been carved out between bifurcated schemas of the native and the colonizer/refugee/cosmopolitan?

These questions are of course not simple problems and one would have to think about how what Mehta might mean by the distant spectator, animal behavior studies, legacies of decoding in anthropology and what has been diagnosed as a particular colonial gaze might be imbricated with each other.<sup>247</sup> However, to always think about interpretations of behavior, signs or scenes in the world as an exemplar of naïve visuality or the colonial gaze would be an error in discussions of either dogs or humans. Critiques of representation in terms of who can speak and who speaks for whom then have historically bracketed some legacies of practices of observation and interpretation of signs as being too painful to accept methodologically. Yet, this censoring of the reading and interpreting of signs cannot possibly have one political valence and one milieu.

The issues of what is actually transacting between the observer and the observed and the trainer and the trained becomes much more tactile in Vinciane Despret’s concept of ‘becoming with,’ which emerges out of her engagements with ethology, studying both the scientist and the animal. Haraway takes up this concept of ‘becoming with’ stating that Despret:

Emphasizes that articulating bodies to each other is always a political question about collective lives, Despret studies those practices in which animals and people

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<sup>246</sup> Is it this preoccupation that makes the staging of voice in a text such a major concern?

<sup>247</sup> This discussion would be further complicated by fieldwork having a lineage in natural history.

become available to each other, become attuned to each other, in such a way that both parties become more interesting to each other, more open to surprises, smarter, more polite more inventive (Haraway 2008: 207).

Although ‘becoming with’ emerges in animal and human engagements, Haraway seems to be pushing the concept towards an understanding of all bodies, which would include those of similar body plans, such as multiple humans or multiple dogs.

However in this work there remains a tension in terms of how the introduction of a differently structured body plan sometimes creates an assumption that the bodies of a more homologous plan must feel more similarly to each other than then ones of a different plan whose articulation requires more explanation. This kind of thinking in terms of kind is echoed at a cultural level in terms of trying to understand experiences between what gets thought of as ‘different realms of experience’ or ‘forms of life’ in Mehta and Geertz’s terms respectively.

So how should what we could term the ‘engager’ or the ‘who’ in any experiment or encounter associate with particular entities, if we attempt to think across the problems of colonial histories and bi-furcated milieus, ‘realms of experience,’ ‘forms of life’ that can penetrate or be penetrated, and specific bodies and minds of different or similar body plans becoming ‘available [or not] to each other’?

On offer in the methodologies previously discussed, is conversation to cure legacies of naïve and invasive visual practices, as well as particularly distant visual practices of spectatorship presented to alleviate assumptive and abductive logics of appropriating the world as a stagiast history of realms. And then there is the goal to become more open, interesting and inventive and the interface is between specific bodies of different species as the exemplary case.<sup>248</sup> The ones who could become available, attuned, interesting open, smarter and more inventive lie along divisions between the animal and the human. While the exemplar bodies that should converse across a great distance are definitely both human and the divide or interface that matters is one of ‘realms of experience’ that no longer want to be touched and not individual bodies craving articulation.

### **Adjacent Milieus: Functional Tones of the Domestic**

Let’s now return to L’s house and T, the servant, myself, the guest, and the pack of dogs being co-propped up with the neighbor K to think one more time about the ambiguous relationship between the servant and guest. How should T and I interact and relate to each other in light of these discussions of appropriate interactions between entities? Should we engage each other in terms of articulating and inventive bodies that emerge in animal and human encounters or should we relate to each other across divides of generic belonging protected by buffers of distance, conversation and realms forged as a protection from colonial incursions?

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<sup>248</sup> Domestication, animal training and ethology are the particular sites that inform Despret’s work (2004). She also makes a distinction between ‘becoming available’ to the other and ‘being docile.’ Docility is much closer to what Mehta (1999) is concerned about in the practices of empire in terms of an interaction or an invasive encroachment that cannot be refused.

Practices of co-presence seem to lean towards conversation, politeness and realms, while becoming with tends towards trying to always be more inventive and interesting. However, both approaches do not think enough about how an entity is always caught in specific opaque scenes and their legacies in the Favret-Saadian sense. Questions of entanglement or the rejection of overtures must grapple with how painfully particular configurations of (non) relationship and their legacies of (dis)inheritance differentially hook, catch and seize specifically and not at the level of a kind. And attempts to *be there* in multiple registers bring us back to issues of encroachment, disconsolate attachments, transmissions of disinheritance and recklessness, all of which could function as methodologies and possible modes of encounter for T and me.

At the start of my residence at L's house, I am not particularly mindful of distance with T, but also not overly friendly. Instead, I would say that in the beginning we co-exist in the house without me focusing on her that much or her on me. From the perspective of umwelt theory, one might be able to say that we do not share the same umwelt in the house in terms of what Von Uexküll calls functional tones, which are defined as a particular subjective sense of objects of use or other entities in an environment that may have one utility for a particular organism or individual, that may overlap with that of others, or may not in any way correspond to the functional tone of another organism or individual in a generic milieu versus a particular umwelt (1957).

Shortly after moving in to L's house, I notice that T will start to seem irritated if the owner and I converse for longer than say half an hour. At first, I am not sure, if I am actually picking up on this annoyance or imagining it, but the owner tells me that yes T acts similarly when some of his female relatives come to visit him. And I do experience, when a niece that the owner is very fond of visits, T seems to pout and slam doors in the house. L says that he is not sure what to do about this behavior in T and he talks about it with the niece. L does not yell at T about these issues, but attempts to always talk with her calmly.

From observing T's behavior one could possibly say that, for T, the owner of the house might have a certain functional tone that he did not have for me. I was friendly with L and admired his way of being in the world, but I wanted to maintain an even relationship with him, and I, unlike what T seemed to be doing, did not want to restrict his socialization with other people such as female relatives or female guests.

Instead, I relate to this house with a visual and pleasure tone focusing on geckos in the house and some trees, insects and animals that transit through the small garden. I also pick up on Delhi tones such as the non-stop traffic noise intermixed with many calls of birds, as well as the smelling tones of garbage burning. I find out later that Delhi is the fourth most bird-filled city in the world.

In the beginning of our co-habitation, T and I occupy together, at most an adjacent milieu.<sup>249</sup> This is significant in terms of neither of us employing any modalities from the distant spectator, the politics of politeness or conversing across realms of experience

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<sup>249</sup> Paul Rabinow (2008) uses the concept of adjacency as the position of the anthropologist of science, who is not in the same relationship to an inquiry as a scientist, but instead alongside as an inquirer. My own use of adjacency is indebted to this thinking, but also inspired by a combination of Von Uexküll's (1957) concept of an umwelt and Favret-Saada's (1980) concept of needing to become caught in order to have access to certain knowledges at the same time that others are foreclosed by this caughtness. In my relationship with T, I would have to ask what is particularly at stake in not inquiring about an other living so near, but living adjacently and encroaching?

philosophies of engagement. Similarly, any attempt to use a vocabulary from what Despret gleans from studying ethologists studying and training animals would not at all describe our interactions. T and I do not “become attuned to each other in such a way that both parties become more interesting to each other, more open to surprises, smarter, more polite [or] more inventive,” for example (Haraway 2008: 207).

This is important for two reasons: First, there is an implied sense that both the distant spectator and attuned body could be positively valued practices of political change in both respective texts and yet what one particular guest and servant are actually doing in this particular house in Delhi does not fit with either program. Second, the promotion of the distant spectator is a policy gleaned from trying to protect from legacies of colonial invasion and calls for one body to become attuned to another are coming out of multi-species ethnography and philosophical ethology which are interested in thinking entanglements and positively re-articulating bodies to more hopeful futures than that possibly posited by the experimenter as automaton.<sup>250</sup>

T and I, in the beginning of our co-habitation, actually to some extent ignore each other, not in a rude manner at all, but in a form that highlights how we slide past each other because there is no hook or attachment node that can seize either of us for the other.

### **On the Edge of the Pack: The Missing Milieus of Permanent Guests**

L’s neighborhood included dogs separated into different groups or packs. However, I did not focus in or make dogs a functional tone in my milieu right away. I also would not consider myself before my experiences in this Delhi neighborhood a ‘dog person.’ Yet, dogs were there and part of the environment, but not standing out from the birds, the burning garbage, the geckos, the traffic noise or the monkeys in my umwelt of sense. As I mentioned in chapter one, I was first enrolled in the dog pack that included L’s house in its range due to the behavior of Ana, the dog protected by many inhabitants of a hostel for young men in the neighborhood. Sundar had killed many of Pinky’s puppies from different litters and the first dog to enter L’s house from my auspices was the fawn-colored runt of Pinky’s litter who had been cut up from an encounter with Sundar.

L was already having this pack of dogs fed in a casual and haphazard manner, but after having the runt shaking and whimpering all night on the floor of my room, this dog and her littermate, as well as their mother Pinky became part of my environment of awareness at L’s house. Our mutual encroachments start very slowly, however. I buy some extra bread for the dogs and build the two puppies a little shelter outside for their comfort in the cold months. T feeds the dogs bread and scraps from the kitchen at L’s recommendation and is friendly to the dogs.

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<sup>250</sup> For some, a discussion in which the relationship between a servant and a foreign guest in India is discussed using a language gleaned from animal studies might seem to be denying the servant her humanity, especially in terms colonial schemas of not quite human humans. However, discussions that continually critique the animal’s relationship to abject human others in such discourses historically, if they are continually heeded, offer no out to this connection and each mention then actually reinforces this logic. Therefore, in this text, I embrace animality for all the human participants in this ethnography, including the myriad authors and all other persistent ‘whos’ in this text.

I actually come to be enrolled more in this dog pack through a figure that troubles many ethnographic accounts and is often edited out of anthropological work altogether: that of the ex-pat or long term foreign resident inhabiting the 'field'.<sup>251</sup> This friend has lived in India and Nepal for more than twenty-five years.

She tells me three things about dogs, sadhus and the concept of the foreign: 1) That one should never fall in love with a street dog or a sadhu because "they will die on you and break your heart." 2) Street dogs being taken care of by foreigners in cities like Delhi or Katmandu often disappear so attention to a particular dog by a foreigner is not always beneficial to the dog's longevity. 3) And most importantly the declaration that the pup who had been torn up by Sundar the hostel dog was in fact my dog.

The ex-pat said one day gesturing towards the dog, "that is your dog." This statement became performative as I thought about these three contradictory understandings of street dogs, sadhus and the foreign in India and Nepal. A few days after this event, I told the puppy that if it were still alive in two months, that I would make a commitment to it and adopt it. The two months went by and this dog did not die or break my heart and so I kept my word and this dog was now 'mine', although the terms of this possession were still up for negotiation at this juncture. I was still propping up the pack with K the neighbor next door who I never did tell about my changed configuration of relationship to one of our pack.

The ex-pat who reconfigured my relationship with the runt of Pinky's latest litter as I said is one of those categories of people that can be embarrassing for some anthropologists. She had been part of a group of sadhus for almost three decades and was therefore now an elder among this group, as well as being intimately aware of some of these particular sadhus tendency to "die on her." Before she had uttered the sentence that changed my relationship to what became my dog, we had been talking about a book written about the group of sadhus of whom she was a member. She had helped the author, but in her opinion, this author had gotten very little actual or accurate about her companions which from her perspective was probably the best outcome. She also tells me that she would always be unable to write about these sadhus because "they are family." I realize that I am different in this regard.

However, this occasional shadow figure to the anthropologist who might show up, help with some introductions, translations or embarrass with his or her potential co-presence, often does not make it in to an anthropological text. The ex-pat is significant to think about in relation to the visitor, the guest, the tourist and the anthropologist. All of these figures are generally defined by assumed limitations in the time frame of their encounter with a milieu or inhabitation, possibly similar to that of the reckless.

A politics of politeness, oddly even when it is mobilized in an entanglement or assemblages framework, seems to sometimes assume that there is another more proper milieu that these entities will and should return to where they really might be able to relax a bit and possibly be less vigilant or reserved. Therefore, the promotion of best behaviors in encounter assumes the positive valuation on holding back and not encroaching, hooking or seizing in a non-native milieu even for durations of three decades, which

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<sup>251</sup> Tourism Studies is of course a robust field and in saying that the long term foreign resident is edited out of some accounts, I do not mean to imply that no one studies the tourist. Instead, my point is that the long term foreign resident is sometimes conceptually dealt with not that dissimilar to how certain plants or animals become 'invasive' in some ecological accounts of milieus.

brings back to images of the eighteen year impossible inhabitation of Von Uexkull's laboratory tick or the forty year unbearable *being there* of the brain-damaged son.

Therefore, the ex-pat, the guest, the tourist and the anthropologist, like the figures of the colonizer, the refugee and the cosmopolitan occupy an impossible milieu in which abductive, assumptive and violent histories of colonization and genocide make the proposal of a permanent guest, visitor or distant spectator—the one who should always bind his proper history tight—seem like a rational and reasonable politics and not a delusional fabrication of an atrophied bi-furcated colonial still life. This not so post-colonial figure would be the most amazing and impossible of living creatures: the one who could possibly not encroach, invade, seize or attempt to *be there*.

Similarly, entities that function more as a permanent guest or visitor often operate in modalities of distant spectatorship and best behavior that shift discussions away from geographic location and back to issues of hierarchy. Who is a permanent guest or visitor, but possibly the servant, the guest worker, the poor relation or the daughter-in-law?

Haraway in narrating her story about a monitor-wearing wolf meeting a pack of forest wolves envisions that “the wolf pack is politely approached, not invaded and these wolves will decide her fate.” And a future point is imagined where, “if all goes well, they will become messmates, companion species, and significant others to one another, as well as conspecifics” even though Haraway points out that there is no “teleological warrant” or “assured happy or unhappy ending” to this encounter (Haraway 2008: 14-15). The point is that in this anticipated meeting “getting on together” and becoming “messmates” or “significant others” is a real possibility for Haraway.

Instead in the distant spectator modality the entities have already been determined in colonial formations so this lone wolf would not be able to possess or be possessed by history among different wolf packs. And the complicated politics of eating between ‘realms of experience’ would probably foreclose the option of “messmates” for Mehta or Burke.

In addition, a metaphysics that asserts that the pack should always have precedence over deciding the fate of an incoming lone wolf on the lam from, but still monitored by scientists, would thus permit no imaginable milieu in which the lone wolf might be ever complexly at ‘home’. Instead, for the monitor-wearing lone wolf the impossible non-choice is between the dangers of the laboratory or the forest where this wolf “cannot take her welcome for granted” or to forsake sociality completely. Like the refugee, would this wolf possibly exit in a milieu of memory that is neither the forest pack nor the lair of the scientists?

And if I were to superimpose this wolf encounter story on top of calls for distant spectatorship, polite or best behavior practices as a politics then what could “learning to be polite in responsible relation” be for the servant, the guest worker, the poor relation or the daughter-in-law? And if I were to push this fable further into the configuration of relationship of the mother, the brain damaged son and the daughters-in-law, then what would responsibility and learning to be polite look like from these three perspectives?

## Mobile Homes and Still Lives

T is unmarried and without children at the age of 25. From mid-childhood she has lived in the homes of two different uncles after her mother got remarried and the husband did not want T in her natal home. I cannot say exactly what the understandings are in this family about T's movements to different homes during her childhood.

However, at issue is that T is the one that is moving and entering new milieus as a way of being in the world. T leaves her mother's house and then those of her uncles in turn, then the NGOs that she works for in the Northeast and then comes to the house of L as a domestic in Delhi.

One day I ask T if she prefers Delhi or Assam, even though she is mainly only familiar with T's house, the train station and the route between them in Delhi. She tells me that she prefers living in Delhi, but that she wishes that her cousin could come live with her here. She says this while she is showing me fabric that she made working for an NGO in Assam. I ask her what this organization was like and she says, "It was a good place but here [L's house] is better."

As a woman from the Northeast, T's phenotype is often perceived as an outsider in Delhi, yet if she were to adopt a politics of the distant spectator always mindful of emotional distance, which of her mobile homes should she consider to be part of her history and realm of experience? And in these migrations what relationship with recklessness, empire and the integrity of her person and community are at stake? Can we imagine T in a number of scenes of arrival and departure in her life and in these first encounters would we want to say that T should "politely approach, not invade and let others decide her fate in each new milieu"?

What might change to understandings of the concepts of anthropological co-presence, if there are too many scenes of arrival, departure, withdrawal or disappearance to even remember them all for both the informant and the anthropologist? Multi-sited ethnography and the tracings of actors and networks, assemblages and entanglements all tend to evacuate understandings of a who as a mind or (un) consciousness caught in legacies and configurations of relationship that are already organizing articulations and disarticulations of what is sometimes construed as linked without referring to the engagement of any mind. Therefore, I think that the problem of the 'who' should not be evacuated in attempts to understand reckless practices of invading, squatting and fleeing.<sup>252</sup>

After the son fell out of the sky, the ex-daughters-in-law tried to outrun the sadness of a pre-accident melancholia that entanglements with the mother, the brain-damaged son and the law had transformed into a sometimes near total cataleptic milieu. Only a fleeing and scurrying often across the lower forty eight states—why are we always driving through Arkansas? I should have asked—could shake this slowing down of time that threatened a total stoppage. These rapid retreats followed by a wearing down of time, trained me to always attempt to occupy a new milieu, but never to relax.

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<sup>252</sup> There is even a tendency in these approaches to evacuate the mind of the researcher as the one making decisions about what sites or networks to trace, as if every mind would trace the same network.



The daughters-in-law move to Tucson for a year. Then we move to Boulder for six months.<sup>253</sup> Then, we move to Philadelphia for six months. The daughters-in-law move in with the mother and son. The mother insists that the daughter-in-law have marital relations with the brain-damaged son. I should not know this. We flee. We take out a map of the United States and examine it around a kitchen table. I say California, but we return to a tiny Wisconsin town from before the accident. It is not inhabitable. A year later we get in the car with a dog, some cats and house plants...Tucson...San Diego...Philadelphia...San Diego... As an adult my first trip out of the country is to Mexico and I only know how to attempt an occupation, not a holiday. I have no capacity to be on my best behavior or really settle down. I stay for six years.

## **Invasive**

Maybe neither T nor I know how to “politely approach and not invade” or to trust and “let others decide [our] fate” in each new milieu. Instead, our own specific and not reducible to each other histories and inheritances of dispossession meet in the territory of a house that neither of us will be able to successfully occupy for any duration. In the impossibility of an enduring inhabitation for either of us, we encroach upon this house in Delhi in ways that help me think more about recklessness, occupations, attempts to *be there* and understandings of time and duration—all of which probably cannot transmit a legacy or if they do, often transmit legacies of disinheritance.

Neither T nor I stay “mindful of a distance” polite or in completely adjacent milieus to each other for very long (Mehta 1999). The house is not ours in very different ways, but this lack of possession actually does not put either of us on our best behavior as either a guest or servant. Instead our specific histories and configurations of relationship and displacement as well as the ways in which each of us pick out what to focus on in our respective milieus, and where and what to encroach upon, means that we come eventually to be functional tones for each other. What I mean by this is that the behavior of each of us becomes a perceivable event for the other exactly by how we encroach upon the house or what we focus on in our adjacent attempted occupations.

## **Sickroom: “I think I Could Take You”**

The change that I had made in relationship to possession of one of the dog pack that I propped up with K in turn, reformulated my engagements with the whole pack and

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<sup>253</sup> I am ten and we live in Tucson, Arizona. My fifteen year old sister starts calling the time and weather number obsessively. One fateful misdial leads her to an answering machine which is a novel phenomena and the voice of a man whose German/French accented English is difficult to understand. She now calls this number repeatedly. Our mother calls the number also and talks to the owner of the machine and the voice to explain all the calls to his number. He is a classical music composer who lives mostly in Boulder, Colorado who himself had listened to a voice in his head that told him not to return to his apartment and to leave Paris the day that the Nazis came to his door. This misdial of the number for a time sends the four ex-daughters-in-law to Boulder, Colorado for six months.

ultimately both T and L as well. It also reconfigured relationships among this group of dogs.

After I claimed the runt of the litter, I brought Pinky and the two female pups to a dog sanctuary to be spayed. I picked these dogs up two days after surgery. All three dogs start to get sick a few days later. Pinky and her two daughters had contracted a very bad case of kennel cough from the dog shelter and the surviving male runt that had been propped up by L a year previously also got very sick. I find out experientially that Delhi dog shelters tend to function as intensifiers of disease since so many unvaccinated dogs are in close proximity to each other in this kind of milieu.

I start to leave these very sick dogs in my room which is temporarily turned into a dog sick ward since I have access to the outside directly from the room. The dogs and their illness, which almost kills three dogs, pulls my attention towards these dogs and I become at this time completely caught in the maintenance of life of these specific dogs. I therefore encroach upon L's house with a dirty dog pack of coughing feverish female (plus one) dogs.

T is not happy with dogs being let inside the house and so a tension develops over this issue. However, I am less interested in dogs in general versus the survival and flourishing of these four specific dogs. I become caught or hooked into them. T catches me crouching on the floor kissing the belly of the dog that I consider to be "my dog." I understand the horror that she might feel at this scene, but I am powerless to stop this behavior in myself. I later look at photos of the dogs during this time and I am still amazed at how sick and dirty they actually look to me from a more distant vantage point. I could not see any of this at the time. T stops cleaning the floor of my room due to the dogs and I could not be happier to have her out of the territory that the dogs and I now occupy and hold.

Even though these dogs before they got sick showed an absolute awareness during the day of the current territorial lines among the different groups of dogs, they also do not seem to have the capacity to be mindful of distance or an ability to be on their best behavior. What may appear to be different dog groups or realms of experience during the daytime, at night gives way to a multiplicity of dog interactions—fights, howling, incursions and encroachments—among individuals and groups of dogs in the milieu of the night. An aural account of these encounters is the main sound in this neighborhood after dark.

Among the six dogs that make up my and K's pack there were certain configurations of relationship. K propped up this group of six dogs even though I really only considered four dogs to really be in my pack. I took care of Pinky, her two surviving puppies, the Runt and Other puppy, as well as the not-so-bright dog that L had propped up a year previously and considered his one dog. As I have said, K had a special relationship with the two male dogs that I mainly ignored. This terrain of affiliation seemed to also be somewhat understood by the dogs in terms of K's two male dogs marking L's porch frequently to assert more of a claim on this territory than they had. However, even in L's garden, neither Pinky nor her offspring would challenge these two male dogs for food.

I am not sure if it was the illness, the absence of the two older male dogs, the new environment, the approaching adulthood of the two puppies, or my ability to observe the dogs more in my room, yet the dynamics of interaction change in the sickroom. Pinky

and her three offspring are quite sick, yet I was at first surprised that the runt and other puppy start to emit growls towards each other, but especially towards the dog that L had propped up a year previously. This behavior in turn makes all of the dogs growl at each other whenever one of them gets up or moves at all. In this environment, the relational dynamics among these dogs was in continual contestation. This behavior of not accepting an order or ranking among this group of dogs continued after their condition improved and the sociality of this group could be defined as continual assertions and counter assertions. I started to define this behavior among Pinky's offspring as gestural equivalents of the phrase "I think I could take you." Therefore, the configuration of relationship among these dogs was continually negotiated.

### **Training: Obsessive Functional Tones and Fragile Milieus in Delhi**

Shortly after the dogs start to recover from this illness, there begin to be reports in the neighborhood that the dogs from K and my pack are biting people. Over a couple of weeks, it becomes clear that the dog that has bitten a neighbor's mother, a sweeper and a tutor is none other than Pinky.

I become worried that the very fragile relationship among dog packs and human domiciles in this neighborhood will fracture and not be inhabitable for the dogs of K and my pack due to this increase in dog bites. This behavior roughly coincides with me inviting these dogs into my room and offering them more regular meals

I seek the advice of a dog trainer in Delhi who tells me that he thinks that Pinky is becoming more territorial due to this increased care and feeding. In the opinion of this dog trainer:

Pinky is protecting her place. I have seen this happen so many times and I have helped many keep these dogs [pariah or street dogs] in their home. First, the [street] dog is protecting the property and biting anyone who comes in. Then the dog starts biting people in the house, the family and the servants. Finally the dog is protecting the master and does not let anyone else in the house close to him. I have helped so many people keep these [pariah or street] dogs in their homes through training.

For the trainer, without his interventions, this Delhi dog (as a kind) must encroach and increasingly isolate and focus on this one aspect of its milieu, which intensifies until the one rightful occupant of the house becomes an all inclusive functional tone of the Delhi dog's umwelt in domestic spaces. In the description of this dog trainer, this kind of dog—the street, pariah or Delhi dog who is invited into domestic space— becomes obsessed with protecting what we might call either a love tone, a life tone or possibly an everything tone of the master in this new umwelt.

When I learn about Pinky's behavior, I become worried that neighbors will call the authorities to pick up my pack of three female dogs or someone will retaliate against these dogs and poison them. I start to keep the Runt in my room and let her out only on a leash effectively destroying her pack and neighborhood life.

At the same time, T continues her pushing in on the life of L. I would like to say for the sake of balance in this story that T encroaches more on L as Pinky pushes in on the neighborhood in protection of me and I lock up the runt in my own encroachments. However, I do not think that would be accurate. Instead, T, I think, continues encroaching on the space of the house, but not directly in response to my or the dogs' behaviors, but because of her own adjacent need to encroach upon the house and protect the rightful occupant L. L confides in me around this time that he is not sure what to do about T's behavior. He is very aware that she is dependent on him, but he also does not want to be so controlled by her behavior.

However, T is also not sure what to do about my reckless occupations of the house either. He tells me, "dogs were not part of our agreement for you to stay here." I tell him that I know this, but just like T, I continue to press in on the house with a too focused attention on that which demands my focus and in which I am caught. L is also of course concerned because of the increase in dog bites in the neighborhood as am I, even though this is mitigated by my being caught by Pinky.

So, T the dog Pinky and I could be considered to all be recklessly occupying L's house and attempting to protect the entities or functional tones that focus our respective umwelts. Pinky might be understood to be biting neighbors, workmen, tutors and rag pickers in a bid to protect me, the bedroom, access to more food and all the attention that I give her and her offspring. T could be considered to be becoming too protective of L who has provided her with a milieu worth defending. And I had found in four particular Delhi dogs, creatures who have moved me in ways that still surprise and sometimes disturb me. One would have to ask what kinds of reckless habitations these were in this one domicile in Delhi that needed to push in so hard that that which needed to be protected became its own peril and undoing.

As I have said, obviously T, Pinky and I do not maintain any sense of polite visitation or best behavior in L's house. Yet neither do we become markedly more available or more inventive to each other as particular living beings. Instead, the adjacency of our reckless encroachments and attempted occupations in this overlapping environment motivates us to action. The illness of all the dogs and my subsequent keeping of the runt in my room to keep her safe from neighbors and municipal authorities makes T pay attention to my functional tone of love in this milieu only because it pushes in to her desire and functional tone of keeping the best house for L. And Pinky through my devotion to her and her offspring is pushing into the neighborhood in an unsustainable occupation of ripping flesh. Thus, what could be termed the reckless occupational tones of T, Pinky and I become ultimately interactive to each other and not just adjacent; however, we do not have a trainer for either T or I who could help us figure out how to be able to make our attempted occupations less reckless and more sustainable and capable of producing a duration or a legacy.

### **Not So Post-Colonial Diorama**

L leaves on a trip and T and I are left in the house. During this time T has a cousin stay in the house also. T continues making some basic vegetables and dal during this time. I start to notice that T is serving me two or three day old dal, which I actually

prefer because the flavors have had time to mellow with each other. However, this offering I cannot help but also read as a sign. Practices of eating food that have just been cooked are very commonly linked to upper caste and class status in India. Old food is often reserved for those of lesser rank, including servants, so even though I prefer one or two day old dal, I still feel negatively about this act.

It is also part of T's job to open up the gate in the morning for the sweeper who is from a hereditary group of this occupation. However, during the vacation of the homeowner, T stops waking up consistently to do this. The absence of L then has quite drastically changed some of T's behaviors in the house. One day, towards the end of this period, the sweeper shakes the outside gate to be let in for what seems like forever to me. I finally decide to get up to look for the key, but I cannot find where T has put it.

The ways in which T and I have encroached upon the house and our objects of desire in the last months and what I consider to be T's not so subtle signs towards me, combined with not being able to find the key myself, with being sleepy, with being caught out wearing the wrong attire, and with not being able to do anything about the sweeper staring at me from the other side of a locked metal gate that has suddenly turned the porch into a cage makes me more and more irritable.

The sweeper has been up to that point a bit of a shadow figure in my particular *umwelt* in L's house. What I mean by this is I kept him on the periphery of my awareness because I just could not face him. On the one hand, I feel that he is a bit inappropriate towards me in a common way in which foreign women in Delhi do not have a proper milieu. On the other, I am not actually able to figure out how to respond to the legacies of families of sweepers. Thus, I have not really developed a way to address him up to this point.

When T finally comes out on to the porch after finding the key, which takes probably about five to ten minutes, but seems much longer, I am very angry, especially for being stuck improperly dressed and caught on the porch and in view of the sweeper in what could be termed a not so post-colonial diorama or cage of guest, servant, anthropologist and informant, as observed by the sweeper. I could have run back in my room, but somehow I felt that I owed the sweeper my presence until T found the key. This proliferation of histories of uncomfortable gazes, as well as legacies of the inability to meet eyes in this tableau actually staggers me.

I am certainly not on my best behavior or polite when I start complaining to T. T also is not mindful of distance when she immediately starts shouting back at me. A lot more than a key that could not be found and the issue of who should open the door for the sweeper is at stake in this exchange. I know from my own perspective that the issue of keeping my three female dog pack healthy and safe and in a milieu that each dog might consider a proper occupation had become a paramount concern for me; however, I am at this point so inside of doing the bidding of what I consider to be the desires of these dogs that I only later realize just how caught I am by three particular Delhi dogs at this juncture.

At the same time that both T and I have been encroaching upon the space of this house in adjacent attempts at an occupation, it is significant to note that we speak to each other in Hindi, a language that is not 'native' to either of us. Similarly, the sign of serving me old dal is not articulated in a moral grammar really occupiable by either of us. We have been communicating with each other in idioms that are not either of ours

specifically, such as two day old beans being inferior as opposed to superior in quality. Thus, it is not surprising that we both jettison Hindi quite rapidly in this altercation and just start wailing, not really at each other, but without language, we both, dare I say it—howl, together, but adjacent. The gate remains locked. The sweeper continues to stare.

Later, I think about this scene quite a bit. I do feel shame for my behavior, but more importantly, I admire T and even myself for continuing to attempt to push into our worlds and to even get angry sometimes. T and I are witnessed howling at each other by the sweeper in what had become the diorama of the porch, the very space that K's two male dogs continually mark in attempts to occupy and leave a legacy.

However, the legacies of disinheritance of the sweeper make me not able to imagine him trying to recklessly occupy in the similar ways that T, Pinky and I had attempted to *be there* in L's house. Maybe T and I could not be present to each other or share a co-presence or figure out a grammar in the Borneman and Hammoudi sense in L's house. However, we could both be adjacently present in our own specific umwelts of desire and attempts to *be anywhere* at all. Both T and I still had our capacities to be invasive and for a brief moment the adjacent milieus of T, Pinky and me almost flourished in mutually exclusive invasions of the same house in Delhi. Following each of our individual love and comfort tones as Von Uexkull might say, we could recklessly and rootlessly attempt to show up and *be there*—howling adjacently.

### **Awkward and Vulnerable**

Just a few days after my and T's howling session on the porch, I am riding in an auto-rickshaw in Delhi and another auto-rickshaw going in the opposite direction loses its front wheel and starts to careen towards us. The driver of the auto that I am in turns too quickly and we go over on our side. I break my fall with my shoulder and then head hitting the pavement, snapping a collar bone in two places, but yet I am so thankful that the shoulder hit first given the legacy of the brain-damaged son. I spend two days in the hospital for observation and then come back to L's house.

The breaking of a bone makes me feel oddly more alive and less distant from myself. That the bone can feel is a revelation to me and this sensation jolts me out of my absolute Delhi dog milieu and lets me be more adjacent and less caught by Delhi dogs. However, I can barely move without pain and therefore I need help that cannot be provided for by dogs. I cannot change clothes without assistance but deciding between T, L or the driver to help seem all equally horrible options. Of course issues of sex and gender, make T the only real option to help me dress and in this awkward "articulation of bodies," we do not come to some new understanding of each other or more inventive, yet this encounter is significant in terms of T and myself—the servant and the guest—as we relate to each other in a relationship less mitigated by L or by our quite separate attempts to encroach upon and occupy L's house.

In this intimate articulation of bodies of T helping me to dress my broken body, we do not become more attuned to each other or more respectful of the legacies of colonial and other histories that separate us. We do not even bother to really converse very much across all that divides and unites us. Instead this encounter can only remain awkward and uncomfortable for both of us, I think, since our more proper relationship

and rightful occupations would be one of adjacency in our own milieus as opposed to attempting to live on top of each other in the home of someone else.

### **Feral Sanctuaries: Relaxing the Startle**

Recklessness tends to undermine the milieus that its pursuit wants to protect above all else. Therefore, reckless encroachments do not seem to endure or reproduce very well because the actual consequences of insecurities about place and the longevity of a milieu in which one could feel safe, at home or able to occupy the self, even if for a moment, tend to always push beyond the limits of this kind of attempt to *be there*.

If we think about the two founders of dog sanctuaries that I discussed in chapter three, then for them practices which ultimately created massive scale experimental milieus for dogs, started with the paramount concerns of protecting dogs and providing them with a safety and a sanctuary that would endure. And in the reckless and impolite encroachments upon the home of L, T and I, from the perspectives of our specific un-occupiable legacies, actually undermine the possibility of any enduring occupations or security.

Part of the attachment and hooks that I felt for Pinky, the Runt and Other Puppy were the ways in which each of these female dogs in turn learned to disarm herself with me. These dogs are savvy Delhi street dogs, living in a milieu that demands smarts, and I fell in love with the most exquisite startle impulses and reflexes that I have ever encountered in any living creature. In becoming caught in this configuration of Delhi street dogs, I also became a connoisseur of the finest tuned fight or flight impulses and capacities to skulk, slink and cower in advance of even any muscle- thought of human or canine encroachments or aggressions.

I particularly noticed this fine tuning when Pinky attempted for the first time to get on my bed. I did not want her there and so I put her down. And yet, in the time that it took to put her on the ground, before my brain could even register her movements Pinky was already back up on the bed in a crouched position giving me a sideways glance, showing me the whites of her eyes and ready for my next move. Her reaction times were so fast that I actually could not register her movement. I was so fascinated that I kept putting her on the ground to see if I could learn to sense her movements. I could not. Pinky and her pups also tended to yelp in pain before any possible touch and to articulate such impossibly exaggerated whines when begging for food that they absolutely caught me in what I might term their most exquisitely reckless nervous systems.

To help a dog like this to relax and trust to the point that I could take the Runt and move her on her back all over my room in a seemingly intoxicated state hooked me. And yet I also knew that these dogs' capacities to startle and skulk, as well as tendencies towards what even some lovers of Delhi street dogs term anger, jealousy and aloofness had not dissipated even when each one permitted me to momentarily relax their startle. Pinky, the Runt and Other puppy seized me in their superb capacities to invade, to squat and to flee. I wanted to provide them a sanctuary in which they could be who they were in a milieu proper to their dispositions, but I failed at this because I also wanted them to endure. I could not just prop them up like K. I was too afraid, which is ultimately a position closer to the sanctuary founders. I end up completely reconfiguring the pack in

my reckless encroachments and I still do not know what kind of milieu would most have celebrated this startle that made me able for a brief moment be able to *be there* in this house in Delhi.

I wish that L could have provided some kind of sanctuary that I am attempting to imagine in terms of Delhi dogs for T and her umwelt. L told me a few times that he was starting to feel a bit trapped by T. Even though L feels that he is being encroached upon and controlled too much by T, I would like to imagine what would happen if L could have completely embraced providing T with her milieu of a desire to in turn provide him with the best home environment. What if L could have let T be a devoted servant to him, while at the same time respecting her need to encroach maybe a little too far in her singular focus? Could L have possibly fostered T's attempts at reckless occupation and *being there* in the house and still feel himself congruent to his environment?

I, as a reckless occupier, would not have been able to provide T with this kind of enduring legacy in this house because T and I mainly occupied adjacent milieus and I was not a functional tone in her environment; however, part of me wishes that I could devote my life to providing this kind of specific sanctuary to particular reckless others. To help just one entity occupy, *be there*, relax just a bit, but not have to dull the sometimes painful legacies of their startle impulse, would be a politics of sanctuary that might have some hope of not turning once again into prisons of dispossession, legacies of disinheritance and warehouses of bodies. Could L offer T an only occasionally reckless milieu or a truly reckless one that could also endure?

A friend in the United States who 'rescues' feral cats once described to me the interesting predicament of a recently 'rescued' feral cat as it starts to negotiate its startle impulse with wanting to be petted. This woman told me that at a certain point some cats want to get close enough to be pet; however, they are still fearful and so she has seen this dance of the not quite disarmed feral cat in which it tries to get close to the human while almost at the same time skittering back in a protective stance over and over. The four ex-daughters-in-law have danced similarly and the question would be what kind of sanctuary could respect both aspects of this feral modality?

I cannot help but think of myself and T in light of the trainer's comments about helping cure domesticated pariah dogs of their tendency to obsessively guard an increasingly localized obsessive tone to use von Uexkull once more. This trainer claimed that he had ways to get the pariah or street dog to let go of its reckless encroachments on an increasingly narrowed umwelt of just one human (presumably the master or most rightful occupant) in domestic space. I am not sure if this trainer would want to turn all reckless and rootless encroachers such as T, Pinky or I into a distant spectator or one who has his heart filled with affection for family belonging as a great country (Burke quoted in Mehta 1999: 167)? I hope not because I think that our very differently generated startle impulses and needs to sometimes howl and skulk are all valid attempts to *be there*.

Understandings of family and a filled heart that frame claims of recklessness as formed in empire only do not consider enough the importance of what Faavret-Saada identifies as being caught in relationships of situated knowledges, situated opacities or situated forgettings and rememberings of traumas, expectations, obligations and encroachments in which exceedingly provincial configurations influence how any entity can *be there* or attempt to occupy anything at all.



## Letting Ethnography Disrupt: Are Umwelts (Pre-) Analytic?

In this chapter I have tried to outline how attempts to *be there* are intimately tied to provincial configurations of lineage and relationship that understandings of belonging in bi-furcated models can tend to obscure. In this last section, I will let an ethnographic engagement that once again analyzes relationships in one household, this time in Tamil Nadu, disrupt understandings of attachment structured in a more dualistic framing. Specifically, I will briefly outline how three very differentially caught two-year-old children in Margaret Trawick's *Notes on Love in a Tamil Family* are configured in relationship (1990). I will then put my reading of this material in dialog with Dipesh Chakrabarty's division between an 'objectivist' and 'lived experience' relationship to the world discussed in *Provincializing Europe* (2000).

The broad aim of Trawick's ethnography is to highlight configurations of relationship in a Tamil family and to outline a specifically Tamil pattern of relationship.<sup>254</sup> And yet, in reading this work, I am most struck by a triad of young children whose singular "systems of reference" are forged in specific configurations of relationship that create radically different milieus of sense or umwelts in what is ostensibly the same house. Each child's position in this domicile can be understood in terms of legacies of attachment, belonging, disinheritance and recklessness. The following is how Trawick describes each two-year-old and his or her respective milieu:

The first child Jnana Oli, the youngest of three and an only son, [is] a magnet that [adults in the household] formed a pattern around, each part of the pattern unique, yet the whole symmetrical. His personality incorporated this pattern. Jnana Oli had a plurality of mothers. Many laps cradled him, many hands fed him. He slipped without friction in and out among them as they were all interchangeable. Particularly desirable objects were monopolized by Jnana Oli (Trawick 1990: 218-229).

[The second child] Sivamani differed from [his cousins] and in particular from Jnana Oli, because he did not belong entirely to this household. He was one with his cousins, he was outnumbered by them, he was their shadow (they were not his). Thus Sivamani was taught what Jnana Oli was taught, to value others by considering their absence. But whereas Jnana Oli was taught by means of threats that were never carried out, Sivamani was taught through unrealized promises. Jnana Oli thought that he was in control of his world, especially of other people's comings and goings and of his own. But Sivamani could have entertained no such illusions. Jnana Oli swam at will through the fluid but stable medium of his family. Sivamani had to spend much of his life with no such medium to swim through (Trawick 1990: 229-233).<sup>255</sup>

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<sup>254</sup> This text is very complex and its examination of configurations of human relationship exceeds the framing of particular Tamil patterns of interaction almost on every page.

<sup>255</sup> His grandparents, like his father cared little for him. Subsequently, in their household his mother would attempt suicide. She (and Sivamani?) had gone for days without eating, and her parents-in-law had not even noticed, she said....What might it mean to be allowed to fall out of the nest (Trawick 1990).

[The third child] the servant Modday's two-year-old daughter, Ponni wandered about crying or masturbating, or slept alone in a corner of the floor, covered with flies while her mother worked. She looked sick. [Women in the family claimed] Ponni was sick because she ate dirt. She could not even touch the [toy] blocks. Jnana Oli ignores the servant's daughter Ponni (Trawick 1990: 236-240).

What particularly haunts me from this work is that in reference to Ponni, the servant's daughter, the author states that she "had no answers" and instead of grappling with why she has no response, Trawick quotes the philosopher Patanjali in reference to a general human understanding of pleasure's impermanence (1990: 240). This inability to directly face Ponni does not seem that different from my incapability to attempt a co-presence with the sweeper at L's house.

In reference to these refusals, should we consider Mehta's call for a politics of a distant spectator who is mindful of emotional and physical distance and the limits of what is or is not his history and what could or could not be transparent to him? Maybe, one, maybe I, or maybe we should ask about who really could share a history among the three two-year-olds in this one domicile in Tamil Nadu. This same question would also trouble understandings of rightful occupation among a homeowner, servant, guest and dog in Delhi, as well as attempts to *be there* in the trinity of the mother, brain-damaged son and the ex-daughters-in-law.

For Jnana Oli other people are interchangeable and it is his will that controls the movements of other beings. Jnana Oli is always in the center of his milieu. He monopolizes objects and yet he also does not seem to have the capacity to shift perspective in his milieu. What I mean by this is that he can only occupy the center of his milieu as an ego occupies a kinship chart.

On the other hand, the servant's child, Ponni, is not configured in interchangeable relationships. She is particularly invisible to Jnana Oli, and not only does she not control the movements of people around her, but in her milieu there are actually fewer people and most commonly they have come to take things away from her such as toys, fruit and affection. Ponni is either alone or pleasuring herself. And even inanimate objects in her *umwelt* seem to reject her.<sup>256</sup>

The child in the middle of these two disarticulated milieus, is Sivamani, the cousin, who unlike Jnana Oli, as Trawick puts it "could have entertained no such illusions" that he was in "control of his world".

In terms of an *umwelt*, Jnana Oli and Ponni—these two entities inhabiting what could be termed the same so-called bare environment of this house—barely overlap in terms of what is sensible and how both objects and people can be functional tones for each child.

One possible reason why Trawick refuses an analysis of Ponni in the same terms with which all other configurations of relationship are examined in reference to Tamil patterns of interaction might be, that to include Ponni, would push the narrative into a possible critique of these patterns which would most commonly then be pulled into

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<sup>256</sup> Ponni does not seem to be that different than the figure that Povinelli has discussed of the one who must suffer for the system (2011). However, I do not think that Poinni is functioning this way in the relationships looked at in Trawick's account.

schemas of bi-furcated colonial umwelts of sense. I really cannot imagine an anthropologist ever trying to make sense of the drooling, masturbating and wandering Ponni with patterns from the long duree of Tamil poetry, and so the servant's child becomes the point where there cannot be answers. However, there should be some questions.

If we return to understandings of “passionate attachments to a system of reference” and the ways in which particular entities are caught in painfully provincial configurations of relationship that organize knowledge, opacity, expectations and obligations then trying to think about exactly how these three different children can live in the same house, but cannot occupy the same sense of belonging is crucial to thinking about how discussions of any Ponni-like figures are most commonly made sense of in reference to bi-furcated schemas of colonial umwelts of sense.

Figures such as the servant or the woman can reinforce understandings of absolute divides by either defending or excoriating the existence of this drooling and masturbating figure in the corner on either side of bi-furcated divides. In some anthropological logics, if we can find Ponni figures on both sides of the great colonial algebraic calculation, then there is not much more to really say.<sup>257</sup> It is this logic that would make it difficult for some to even contemplate how T and I could be encroaching upon each other in invasive and reckless attempts to briefly occupy adjacent milieus in one house in Delhi. I must be appropriating something from T even by suggesting adjacent frames of reckless invasion and attempts to *be there* for both of us in this one house, not to mention comparing us both to dogs.<sup>258</sup>

Trawick outlines from many different vantage points processes that ultimately trace a divide between two different realms of experience that hinge on a Western individual and its dissipated Others:

Hence it would seem that as life proceeds, what happens to the self is neither individuation (i.e., increasing differentiation of self from others) nor internal integration (i.e., crystallization of a stable sense of self), but rather a continuous decrystallization and deindividuation of the self, a continuous effort to break down separation, isolation, purity, as though these states, left unopposed, would form of their own accord and freeze up life into death (1990: 242).

The divide then that is made to matter the most is between a Western bounded individual and its relational others that makes the most sense in bi-furcated colonial schemas of sense. The problem is that the seemingly obligatory gesturing towards this divide tends to reinvigorate this distinction and therefore all processes of isolation and fragmentation can then only speak to this divide at the same time that individuation can only be Western and a problem. And after each intervention and attempt to ‘provincialize’ this Western individual, it becomes seemingly more powerful and entrenched since in the logic of

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<sup>257</sup> This figure of colonial algebra that I am gesturing towards reminds me somewhat of the Strong program or sociology of scientific knowledge in its form (Barnes, Bloor and Henry 1996).

<sup>258</sup> One point I have tried to make in this chapter has been to highlight how both T and I were appropriating, encroaching and claiming in L's house, but were not really focused on each other until we both push far enough to become functional tones for each other.

Trawick's formulation "separation, isolation, purity...left unopposed, would form of their own accord and freeze up life into death."

However, understandings of the import of processes of breaking down separation or crystallization and individuation might change considerably if we consider what belonging, distant spectatorship, conversation across realms of experience, penetration by another form of life, co-presence, becoming with or available to another, becoming more interesting, more polite, more inventive or open to surprises might mean from the very specific attempts to occupy and *be there* of, for example, the painfully particular configurations of the brain-damaged son, Ponni, the Runt, the ex-daughters-in-law, L, Jnana Oli, T, Pinky, the mother, Sundar or me.

### **Thinking Lived Experience in Provincial Configurations of Relation**

In the remainder of this chapter, I will let Trawick's trinity of two-year-olds in one Tamil household interrogate Dipesh Chakrabarty's division between what he defines as a "decisionist" versus an "already is" orientation to the world (2000). The "decisionist" mode is created by always being fixated on a future that ends up dismissing current reality because the now as seen from the perspective of the future is always outmoded and error. For Chakrabarty, "decisionist" reality is problematic, but is necessary for social justice to exist. The "already is" world seems to be quite enveloping and has at best a problematic relationship to analytic thought.

For Chakrabarty, objectifying knowledge systems have no way of relating to "lived experience" except to treat life as an object and abstraction tends to "sever the relationship between thought and modes of human belonging" (Chakrabarty, 2000: 255). "Decisionism" for Chakrabarty is the unavoidable gesture of the modern political subject and the most exemplary forms can be seen in the practices of history and anthropology, which in their attempts at improvement and social justice objectify everything.<sup>259</sup> Chakrabarty calls this an "anthropologizing relationship" (2000: 253). In contradistinction, the "already is" which:

Includes pasts that exist in ways that I cannot see or figure out—or can do so sometimes only retrospectively. Pasts are there in taste, in practices of embodiment in the cultural training the senses have received over generations. They are there in practices I sometimes do not even know I engage in. This is how the archaic comes into the modern, not as a remnant of another time but as something constitutive of the present. Whatever the nature of these pasts that already "are," they are already oriented to futures that already are. They exist without my being decisionist about them (2000: 251).

So for Chakrabarty, "reason here assumes the form of a totalizing principle with the help of which the social-science investigator can only create an anthropologizing relationship,

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<sup>259</sup> Of course, as Chakrabarty points out objectifying is just one mode of being and the project of "provincializing Europe" is really one of provincializing practices of abstraction and objectification and yet there are other effects from this effort (2000).

even to that with which he or she may have a connection prior to, during, and after the process of investigation” (2000: 253).

Chakrabarty explores what he means by an “already is” relationship to the world with reference to two ‘native’ anthropologists to examine the relationship between objectifying and lived forms of interaction. One example is Jomo Kenyatta who in Chakrabarty’s terms describes magic in both an analytical and “lived-relationship” mode.<sup>260</sup> Thus, Kenyatta is seen as having “a consciousness that was inherently double” (2000: 240). In his understanding of magic, Kenyatta leaves open the possibility of some kind of efficacy in its own terms for magic. This for Chakrabarty is a doubling of Kenyatta’s voice. Chakrabarty then quotes Malinowski’s distancing of this possibility which is read as a single voice:

The closer that one gets to Malinowski’s end of things the more the language of social science obliterates the plural ways of being human that are contained in the very different orientations to the world-the “worlding” of the earth, in Heidegger’s language-that participation and observation connote (2000: 241).

However in this process of provincializing, Chakrabarty might be reducing the scope of what analysis and reason might be capable of or what its proper milieu may be.

In Chakrabarty’s telling there is the realm of objectifying knowledge systems which have no way of relating to “lived experience” except to treat life as an object. This dualism of objective and lived experience, while admirable in its focus on the attachments and sense structures which are formed without active reflection, seems to deny any analytical capacity to that which obtains within the realm of “lived experience.” Therefore, lived experience is being represented as existing outside of the possibility of a many kinds of thought/body/mind experiments which does not so much provincialize certain forms of objective rationality but maybe reproduce rational and romantic divides. Even with many attempts to not have the objectifying impulse adhere in Europe and the lived to reside in the non-European, this division seems to reinvigorate colonial schemas of sense.

And if we attempt to think about Jnana Oli, Sivamani and Ponni and their specific umwelts in this one house, where would we place each one in this dualistic division between “decisionist” and “already is” ways of being in the world? Should I just ascribe all three equally to a space of “lived worlds” and understandings of belonging as a great country that do not and could not ever objectify or abstract? My question would be to further interrogate what could be meant by this particular sense of belonging that seems so easily severed from thought as objectification, abstraction or analysis.

In discussing Facing Mount Kenya, Chakrabarty divides Jomo Kenyatta’s narrative into what he terms a double consciousness of a lived “preanalytical involvement” of an apprentice or an “objectifying gaze of the anthropologist as a witness” (2000: 240). However, I think we need to look closer at what this pre-analytical involvement with anything could really be if it always needs to be in opposition to an objectifying gaze. How should we then compare the promotion of the distant spectator

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<sup>260</sup> Chakrabarty gives another example of the anthropologist Kwame Anthony Appiah relating a practice which he has a preanalytical relationship to in a language of complete objectification. In this way Appiah is seen as “writing over” his earlier relational possibilities (2000: 241).

who should know what is not his history and what can never be his experience to this other figure who is so enveloped—so not able to gain any perspective on his experiences—in a world in which he cannot even begin to trace the outline of any of its forms? And what relationship could these ‘anthropologizing’ and ‘lived’ figures have to the native who cannot ever be out of place and the colonialist/refugee/cosmopolitan who is rejected by his milieu and wandering in his memory in bi-furcated umwelts of sense?

### **The ‘Lived World’ of Jnana Oli and the ‘Anthropologizing’ of Sivamani and Ponni**

If we try to think about the distant spectator and the pre-analytic worlded one in reference to the ability to both think, occupy or *be there*, then what happens if we push the divisions of a ‘decisionist’ and ‘already is’ framework on to the specific umwelts of Jnana Oli, Sivamani and Ponni? It seems that the one most enveloped in a world of non-analytic or non-abstracting belonging would be Jnana Oli. His umwelt is configured with him as an ego at the center. Other human entities are interchangeable and he is under the impression that his will controls the movements of other beings and objects.

In contrast, Sivamani has “no such illusions” that he could be in control of “other people’s comings and goings and of his own.” As Trawick points out, “Jnana Oli swam at will through the fluid but stable medium of his family. Sivamani had to spend much of his life with no such medium to swim through.” So, in his lived everyday experience, Sivamani must have at least a ‘double consciousness’ that cannot also be divided between a ‘native’ lived experience and a European or anthropological ‘objectifying gaze’ in reference to his different possibility for perspective from Jnana Oli.

And what is Ponni’s relationship to either ‘lived experience’ or an ‘objectifying gaze’? Can anyone imagine what Ponni might see or think about as she cries, drools and masturbates? What is her analysis of her predicament? Her experience I think would most closely resemble what is called for in the figure of the distant spectator who is so very careful not to attempt to appropriate any history, experience or toy blocks to itself and is always mindful of distance, especially emotional distance. So it might seem odd that the proposal of the distant spectator deployed to protect the wounded bifurcated colonial figure of the native might turn out to resemble in some ways this abject female child servant?

And which of this trinity of two-year-olds would be most similar to the non-abstracting lived experience of the apprentice in Chakrabarty’s terms? That would be Jnana Oli the one who is most enveloped in a milieu that impedes analytic engagement as he swims without friction at the center of his familial umwelt—he is always in a rightful place and occupation in his seemingly weightless or ‘unbearable lightness’ to his attempts to *be there*. And dare I say it, but the brain-damaged son occupies a similar position and disposition for analysis in his own umwelt. So it is a Jnana Oli-like position that seems to be closest to the figure of the native that can never be out of place in bi-furcated schemas of colonial sense. This native son is uniformly in the center of his lived experience as he alone confronts the colonist/refugee/cosmopolitan as an original threat coming from an outside to his fluid stable medium or the milieu of his household.

I would contend that some understandings of belonging deployed in both the historical work of Mehta and Chakrabarty are disrupted by an examination of specific

configurations of relationship among these three children in one house. Therefore, it is a reading of ethnography or a different kind of anthropologizing that functions here as a methodology which can be so much more than just an alienation from an all enveloping lived experience.

Instead, thinking about just how provincial lineages of configuration and “passionate commitments to a system of reference” may be, makes thinking about family and specific lineages of dispossession both more tragic and hopeful. It seems that any positive valuation of a politics of politeness, the distant spectator, the visitor, or lived worlds as opposed to abstraction needs to grapple with some of these specific legacies of painfully provincial configurations of relationship and the differentially occupied and occupying perspectives of the rootless, the reckless, as well as those who could possibly “swim at will through the fluid but stable medium of family” without assuming a priori the probable capacities of entities from categorical distinctions devoid of the actual hooks and wounds of relationship.

I should point out that the systems of relationship in which these three children are configured would not need to be specifically gendered and that the positions between the two boys are absolutely different from each other. If we were to make these three children into figures, archetypes of part of a structure of positions, which I am not recommending, then probably most people in the world would be in configurations of relationship that more resemble that of Sivamani, it would seem. I would also like to point out that anthropology should not become the search for ever more abject positions such as that of Ponni, from which authors of texts either claim their authority or the inability to make claims about such figures.

Furthermore, it would also seem unwise to collapse the relationality of a Ponni with that of the sweeper or that of T that I discussed earlier in this chapter. Ponni, the sweeper and T are all in some position of servitude, but that does not make them equivalent to each other. I should make clear that when I compare T, myself and Pinky the dog in terms of the specific ways in which our loves and passions urge us to encroach more upon the domestic space of L’s house in an invasive manner, I am well aware that T and I come from very different worlds and placements in them. However, what we do share along with the dog Pinky is an ability, which is a gift really, of being a sufficiently bounded and bordered entity to be reckless, invasive and to push our own agendas into the world. So when I compare T to a dog, I am not attempting to be disrespectful to T or to myself, but to not stay in a system of values, structures and common sense that would make this comparison problematic. More at issue are the sweeper and Ponni who may be so entangled in the world that their capacities to encroach and occupy have been possibly extinguished, which I think is a horrible possibility. For the sweeper, it may well be the fault of my ability to engage him or someone in his structural position. The question of why I do not encroach upon him should be a serious inquiry. Ponni, a two-year-old without proper bonding and attachment experiences and nutrition, makes me think of Harlow’s famous experiments that denied baby monkeys a living mother (Harlow 1965). So, to be clear, T, Ponni, the sweeper, Pinky and I can all be compared in terms of specific configurations in which the terms are set out. It is I think some legacies of bifurcated schemas of the native and the cosmopolitan/colonizer/refugee that make some reticent to compare outside of these dualisms. However, a point that I would like to make is that to put T, the sweeper, and Ponni in the same all inclusive category of the servant or

the dispossessed, for example, would be to ignore just how different their provincial configurations of relationship really are. The ways in which T, Ponni, and the sweeper can be reckless and encroach upon others are possibly more different among each other, then among T, Pinky and me.

## Poor Relations

And if I return to my own trinity of dislocation and site of my own legacy of disinheritance, what can I say about the mother? If I were to attempt to describe the *umwelt* of the mother of the brain-damaged son, what are the functional tones that pushed her own reckless invasion of my ability to have, if I ever could have had, any illusion that I might “swim at will through the fluid but stable medium of family.”<sup>261</sup>

It seems safe to say that the absolute love tone of her life was the son. And yet, I think it is also pertinent to think about what I have heard about her childhood. She came to the United States, from Scotland when she was nine, maybe a decade after the arrival of the Anglophile Macedonian ‘hillbilly’ and his family. Her father had been a coal miner in Scotland and would stay a coal miner working in the veins of small town Pennsylvania. He dies of black lung; however, he could also, as a migrating Scot, easily have arrived on another shore to be one of the shock troops of the British Empire.

The mother was the oldest child, female and she could not see well. She was taken out of school at a young age because of her poor eye sight and put to work cleaning other people’s houses. Her other siblings were able to go to school, though.

Six years after the son fell out of the sky, my mother was poor and cataleptic enough to send my middle sister and me to live with the mother and the brain-damaged son. This arrangement only endured two months because of my sister and my inability to be guests or on our best behavior. We would after this return to California and become unofficially emancipated minors.

The trip to Philadelphia does permit me to confront the mother for what I consider an indefensible invasion and occupation of the daughters-in-law ability to *be* at all. We start screaming at each other. She yells repeatedly that, “You treated me like a poor relation.” The events of which the mother spoke would have happened when I was two years old, but the sentiment and the wound of her caughtness in configurations and legacies of “poor relation” preceded this event and should not be dismissed in trying to think about her attempts to occupy and *be there* in the milieu of the brain-damaged son.

As I study Hindi, I read short stories for class and one after another deals with dramas of the mother-in-law and the daughter-in-law. I am not sure how to read these stories or how to learn a language through them. I should be able to say that this is not my history, which I think is true enough; however, even more importantly, I cannot even possess the numbness that these stories invoke either. And if the mother-in-law turns up in the bed of the daughter-in-law, I cannot usually continue to read the story or watch the film.

Yet, I can participate in this other literature of the dog lady or mad woman’s voice and if these stories had been part of my classes in Hindi, I would have had a different

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<sup>261</sup> This option would have already been foreclosed by the configurations of relationship of my pre-accident family, so the Jnana Oli position was never actually available to me.



experience and relationship to this language entirely.<sup>262</sup> And yet still, my favorite Bollywood movie scene has a mother-in-law and a daughter-in-law in bed together. In *Nagina*, the mother-in-law suddenly sits bolt upright in bed because she realizes that her daughter-in-law is a snake. I would like to say that, yes, I am a snake. Or, yes, I am a dog. However, I am not. Instead, brushing up against the mad woman, the snake and the dog opens up questions about what it could ever mean to possess or be possessed by history, the past, or legacies of (dis)inheritance and for whom.

### **Hook, Wound, Belong**

To be of a place and to know one's place, are both part of what it means to have roots in Mehta's elaboration of Burke's thought. However, I do not think that either Mehta, Burke or Chakrabarty have thought enough about how painful legacies of either knowing or doubting one's place can be and how this knowledge can configure legacies of (dis)inheritance that are not occupiable except in reckless attempts to *be there* that never have sat neatly in bifurcated milieus of colonial sense.

After the son fell from the sky, the mother created a sanctuary for herself in an Umwelt of the brain-damaged son. However, this sanctuary was a milieu in which the daughters-in-law in particular could not *be there* at all.

And if I were to attempt to make a sanctuary for myself of what functional tones would it consist? In one neighborhood in Delhi for a brief time my ability to be part of a pack of dogs that were reckless in their own attempts to occupy—to invade, to squat and to flee—and to startle, and be jealous and not to accept their positions in configurations of a group or pack for even an hour at a time—felt like a milieu in which I could for a moment *be there* in joyous encroachments, invasions and retreats. I, of course, cannot be a visitor, a distant spectator or that respectful of what the limits of my proper history could be, and so my incursions into and with this pack and into L's home completely rearticulated the previous configurations of relation of both this pack and this house.

To use terminology from Despret (2004) and Haraway (2008), in 'becoming with' these Delhi dogs, I do in some senses become "more attuned" and "more open to surprises" of the ways in which these dogs attempt to occupy their worlds, both as individual dogs and as a similar body plan in a similar Umwelt.

I also became addicted to the smell of the Runt, and sanctuary for me might in some small way be the smell around her neck that I refer to as desert animal cotton; however, I also know that I cannot make the nape of this dog's neck into my Umwelt—I cannot occupy it—because that milieu for a human as opposed to Von Uexkull's tick would not be enough of an attempt to *be there* in the world for my body plan.

In becoming caught in a particular configuration of Delhi dogs, I also have had to brush up against that which does not sit comfortably in imagining articulating and attuning with another life form as becoming "more interesting to each other" and "more inventive." Even though I am sure that I have been forever altered by specific dogs in Delhi, becoming caught by another life form means that one is sometimes forced to confront the limitations of being so hooked, seized or encroached upon. As we saw in chapters two and four, issues of abduction and alienation must also be a part of any

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<sup>262</sup> Cohen discusses the voice of the mad and elderly woman in Hindi literature (1998: 268-274).

philosophy of the articulation of bodies and minds. Therefore a dog can be in one moment one's beloved, and then a friend and just as suddenly a possible source of anxiety in terms of questioning one's projections, assumptions and abductive leaps about one's companion. This experience of fearing the gaze of another brings me back immediately to the milieus of the brain-damaged son and Chauncey Gardiner. If I think that I could not face the gaze of the sweeper in L's house, then I am much more comparatively fearless in this regard, than I am in terms of actually being able to meet the eyes of the brain-damaged son or to feel anything more than numb in reference to Chauncey Gardiner's vacuous pronouncements about liking "to watch."

However my encounters with Delhi dogs, T and my brain-damaged-father have taught me that, in the practices of anthropology (and animal and human studies), encounters that can only be adjacent, abductive or destructive should not just be coded as only failures or a bad politics. To do so might be to inscribe the anthropologist as always in a Jnana Oli type position of a figure that insists on being the ego in the kinship chart petulantly demanding to be transformed by the Other.

In calls for co-presence in anthropology as outlined by Borneman and Hammoudi (2009), it is just the anthropologist who should change his or her self-understandings in the pursuit of a grammar that presumably is not under any obligation towards self-understanding in the encounter. Instead, Despret (2004) and Haraway's (2008) version of human and animal encounters have both parties transformed, instead of just the anthropologist. In Mehta's understandings of conversation across colonial difference the contours of both participating entities seems to have already been decided before the encounter and so possibilities of transformation seem much more bracketed for both parties in this methodology (1999).<sup>263</sup> For T and I in L's house, adjacent attempts at reckless occupation is how I have tried to make sense of our encounter as guest and servant. However, I am not sure if this form of *being there* can or should be made into a methodology or a political platform, and if it is not, what other uses can anthropological practice make of this particular adjacent mode of not having functional tones in common?

We could think more about adjacency in terms of belonging. Issues of belonging are certainly tied to legacies of colonial wounds, yet legacies of disinheritance can not always be traced in bifurcated schemas. Instead, wounds and hooks of belonging can often be traced in painfully provincial configurations of relationship that push in on each other or remain adjacent or at war (often in the same house), and if we want to think about recklessness, possible occupations and attempts to *be there*, then yes, we must think about empire, but also about the family and the pack and the wounds that each entity can bear or endure in provincial configurations of relationship that cannot be made structure.

In the popular book on dogs, *Dog Sense*, that I discussed in chapter two, John Bradshaw outlines how current research on wolf packs have lead to reformulations of how to make sense of these groups. Bradshaw outlines how the pack was defined as being despotic, rigid, hierarchical, aggressively controlled competitive organizations and now they are seen as harmonious, cooperative voluntary groups (2011: 14-22). Bradshaw

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<sup>263</sup> Mehta's understanding of conversation would in his terms not decide the encounter beforehand, but my point is that the knowing of what history pertains to an entity a priori would already decide just how far each entity could encroach or change before the encounter.

declares that “it’s now known that the majority of the wolf “packs” are simply family groups” (2011:16).

The configurations of the mother, son and the ex-daughters-in-law, the three two-year-olds in Tamil Nadu, the exodus of T from her mother, uncles and NGOs, and Pinky and her struggle to produce offspring and protect me in the shadow of Ana’s killing, and the drama of the rightful occupant, the guest, the servant and the dog in one Delhi domicile are in no way simple. And to make an opposition between despotism, competition and hierarchy and a simple family would be to follow bi-furcated schemas of colonial sense in which one could imagine the existence of a distant spectator, a politics of politeness or a heart generically filled with happy thoughts about a great family and country. Understandings of rightful occupations, instead of playing out in bi-furcated schemas of the native and the invasive cannot afford not to pay attention to the politics of becoming caught, encroaching and attempting to *be there*.

## Chapter 6 Estrangement

But when your mother town is estranged from you, death can't be far away.<sup>264</sup>

In this chapter which is also the conclusion of this dissertation, I want to look at practices of estrangement, of being estranged from one's everyday milieu, as well as purposively attempting to alienate oneself from one's sense of one's self. This is not an attempt to become selfless, such as that of the selfless servant and animal lover that I discussed in chapter two, but I am defining this estrangement as a possible double movement of both being exiled from, and attempting to exile aspects of one's self, habit or milieu.

### I am not Thou

As I have attempted to demonstrate, understandings of having a bounded, entangled or porous self or being of a pack, rhizome or swarm cannot be a question of the forms themselves dictating a better political or ontological outcome for humans or anyone else. Instead, a form needs to be grounded in a milieu and a perspective to make any evaluation. B, the sanctuary worker and servant of R, seems to defend his singularity in what from his perspective might seem more like a swarm of dogs than even what I described as mega-packs of dogs in chapter three.

In some sense, B, at least from my perspective, respects the dogs more than R does even in some of the violence that he aims towards some dogs. What I mean by this is that, unlike R who wants to make sure that every dog is safe from human and dog violences of the interstice, B is willing to make an individual dog his adversary and yet be tender to some other dog during sterilization surgery. Although this analogy would not hold up in a thorough analysis of all of B's actions at the sanctuary, there are some ways in which B might consider himself to be coeval with dogs in terms of letting an individual dog be a friend or enemy.<sup>265</sup>

In saying this, I might offend some who are wary of representations of categories of people such as workers or servants that might compare these groups of people with animals. Some may have been made uncomfortable in chapter five by the comparisons I was making between the servant T, the dog Pinky and me in terms of our similar capacities to be invasive and reckless. However, it seems like a very odd politics that would insist on both lambasting the 'humanist' for exclusions of other life forms from membership in the political and ontological categories that historically have been made to matter, while still insisting that the legacies of colonial racist categorical politics are such that these categories can never, into the perpetual future, be modified or entangled, even by those who are deemed properly, authoritatively, categorically and structurally abject.

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<sup>264</sup> (Bruno S. quoted in Kimmelman 2008)

<sup>265</sup> I am borrowing the term coeval here from Fabian (1983).

However, it is exactly this particular post-colonial double-bind which seems to produce the calls for belonging that I have marked in the discussions of empire of Mehta (1999), Chakrabarty (2000) and Skaria (2002). The Imperial-liberal practices as outlined by these authors seem to carry within them a heightened capacity for solidification of categories. So even in calls for conversations that would not presuppose the contours of entities as categorical beforehand, the milieu of this imagined discussion is already carved into, for example, “distant spectators” who should already know what is not their history for Mehta (1999), as well as those whose lived experience categorically cannot include abstraction for Chakrabarty (2000).<sup>266</sup>

It is significant, I think, to ponder how the solidification of categories and boundaries of ‘cultural’ difference as a form of colonial rule produces a particularly bounded categorical figure that is actually defending the borders of a wound in terms of positing sharp divides between certain categorical selves and others (Asad 2006, Cohn 1996, Dirks 2001, Hansen 1999).

It is in this context that the advancements of a multi-species ethos of “departing from individuated subjects of becoming to explore the possibilities that arise with a swarming multitude” or the dissipation of selves in attempts to mimic the “rhizomic sociality of mushrooms” might seem to be dangerous proposals (Kirksey and Helmreich 2010). Colonial classifications are articulated at the scale of the group and not at the level of the milieu-less, rational and bounded individual, which is possibly one enemy-inspiration of this multispecies undoing. However, this disrespect for constraints, borders and boundaries still can endanger this wound of group classification and generic belonging of the post-colonial. Another point, I have been making in this dissertation is how an overly enthusiastic entanglement aesthetic would elide thinking about constraints that are not just categorical legacies of a form of rule, but generated out of organism and environment interactions and therefore cannot be considered as deriving from colonial forms of governance or the liberal rational subject only.

But for B, it seems that the creation of strong boundaries of self and individual is more a strategy for living as part worker and part domestic, enveloped in dog life and multiple understandings of the family and service in a dog sanctuary environment. And discussions of “what anthropos is becoming under radical revisions in the biosciences” would not seem to be sufficient grounds to make B depart from his sense of being an individuated human in a swarm of dogs in which even some of this mass also became individual and coeval for B (Kirksey and Helmreich 2010).

So B cannot really be made sense of as a figure forged primarily in colonial technologies of the codification of categorical difference as a form of rule. His sense of wanting space not completely enveloped in dog does not seem to be a sign of a unitary master subject or neo-liberal individual. Yet, B does emerge as an entity with not so porous boundaries of self that are not so much categorical in terms of being a laborer or servant as much as part of how he is actually caught in configurations of relationship with humans and dogs in this Delhi dog sanctuary (Favret-Saada 1980).

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<sup>266</sup> Gandhi’s politics of the neighbor that Skaria (2002) discusses is made up of categorical others whose inherited hierarchical placement determines in what ways they should act neighborly to each other. In this schema the categories are also already given and not subject to even the effects of hybridity.

## Touching the Wound

V's project is very different than that of B, although there is some overlap in terms of the milieu of the dog shelter.<sup>267</sup> V hopes to cultivate compassion and mindfulness through changing the bandages of wounded dogs and debriding their sores of maggots. V has recently started volunteering at a dog shelter in Delhi with these goals in mind. He is not by any means what is known as an "animal lover" in Delhi parlance.

V is interestingly attempting to both more inhabit and dis-inhabit himself and his milieu at the same time. One could say that V, an upper caste Hindu from birth, has "converted" to Buddhism, but what does this really mean? In his own words, V is trying to cultivate mindfulness and compassion. Our paths intersected because we chose the same subject for our interventions onto the world, self and other, namely dogs. V has a newly acquired practice of caring for dogs at an animal shelter and he actively seeks me out after finding out that there is an American studying dogs and humans in Delhi. He has identified me as his expert and after just a few meetings asks me to be his guru to the animal world, even though I myself feel even more the imposter with this interpolation.

Becoming a Buddhist for V is part of changes that he started to dedicate himself to when he turned sixty a few years back. V tells me that he was raised in a family in which he was not permitted to, as he says, "even get a glass of water for himself." I get the feeling that he has a sense that there is something missing in him, skills that he lacks, due to always being on the receiving end of the maintenance of the everyday and servitude.

This cultivation of compassion and mindfulness for V then has something to do with estranging himself from this person who mainly spent his life receiving service from others, especially female kin and servant others. At first V has a "slight feeling of revulsion" touching dogs, but he is getting used to it. And when I say touching dogs, I mean just touching them at all and not their wounds if they have them. I ask him if his parents disliked animals. "They were indifferent. They were not part of our lives and we considered them to be dirty," V tells me.

However, V is impatient to develop his compassion and mindfulness and sometimes feels like he is "wasting his time" at the shelter as he walks dogs. He is maintaining mundane aspects of the dogs' lives in the shelter environment, yet he has difficulty seeing these activities as a path to achieve his spiritual goals of compassion. V tells me that he has offered shelter workers, who are mainly Nepali migrants, money so that they might permit him to clean wounds and debride maggots from wounded dogs. V, through his relationship with dogs, is attempting to estrange the self that needs so much care from others or is less competent at maintenances of the self or of others.

And if his care of dogs is an inversion of his relationship to the servants and women in his natal family, then he has cast the self that he hopes to estrange from himself as an infected wound on a dog held captive in a dog shelter whose only hope of relation is with other dogs in the same condition or with either low wage workers or mainly upper-middle class "animal lover" volunteers. V has cast himself as his servant or his female kin, but he admits to feeling "impatient" with any kind of seva or service in the name of

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<sup>267</sup> V is volunteering at a different animal sanctuary than those of D and R who I write about extensively in this dissertation.

the mundane aspects of the daily maintenance of eating and defecating. Open sores and infection seem to constitute a spectacular field for the cultivation of compassion for V and one could possibly frame V's interventions as heroic, delusional, or both (Mother Teresa and the politics of humanitarianism come readily to mind).

I am fascinated by V's particular mode of attempting to estrange the legacy of his particular positioning in family inheritances and disinheritances from himself, just as he is being involuntarily undone, dissipated, and disintegrated by living long enough to make his body foreign to himself, in addition to living in a Delhi being remade by many forces. The choice of the wound of the dog as a mode of these attempted transformations is particularly interesting in terms V's possible wounds of purity and privileged isolation.

That being said, I would in no way want to make these maggot-filled wounds of Delhi dogs, either in shelters or on the street, into a site of human disgust, multi-species encounter, or microbial celebration of life itself. One would need to think specifically from the position of particular dogs, maggots, dog sanctuary workers or volunteers to ascertain exactly what these relations might be and not propose that a dog sanctuary worker might have some special relationship to nature or "life itself" As we see with the sanctuary worker B, there is neither a categorical relationship that the laborer qua laborer has with the dog, (and presumably the maggots), nor one particular story of microbial, dog or human interactions that could anchor any human attempt to be in the world. Similarly, I would not accrue any cultural sense of a particular penchant for "de-crystallization or de-individuation to V's experiments and encounters with estrangement (Trawick 1990).

V's cultivation of compassion takes place at a dog shelter that is an institutional setting in which many of the adult dogs and most of the puppies that are brought to it for care will soon die. The dog shelter actually acts as an intensifier of illnesses such as distemper or kennel cough because of the close proximity of many unvaccinated dogs.<sup>268</sup> In one sense, V is not that aware that the shelter is a space of death. Yet at the same time, V is so impatient to estrange his receiver self because he is aware that death is not that far away from even this potential self that he would like to cultivate through his practices of estrangement. There is a striving here in relationship to a very finite individual time.

## **The Mother Town and Death**

However, I would like to remind the reader of the aphorism of Bruno S. with which I started this chapter. "But when your mother town is estranged from you, death can't be far away." Bruno S was known for his "childhood spent in the experimental embrace of a Nazi mental institution." As an adult, Bruno was a musician in Berlin and became internationally famous for playing what could be termed a 'feral person' in two films by Werner Herzog (Douglas 2010). In Bruno's statement, the you in question does not attempt to cultivate its strange, hostile, unfriendly or alien relationship to its mother town. The agent of this estrangement is not explicitly stated, but the result of it is death,

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<sup>268</sup> These diseases are more prevalent at the dog sanctuary than on the street. It is interesting to think about what sanctuary might possibly mean in relationship to a care that may be fatal for some individual dogs at these shelters.

or possibly it is death's approach that is the source of the estrangement from the mother town.

V starts to transform himself with Buddhism and the wounds of dogs upon turning sixty with its potentiality of going "sixtyish" and becoming weak of mind and self (Cohen 1998). The sixtyish syndrome that Cohen identifies haunts V's practices of estrangement.<sup>269</sup> V talks quite a lot about the increasing difficulty of living in India in general and Delhi in particular. He doesn't use the words but effects of liberalization and influxes of capital seem part of V's discontent. One could say that his mother town has become strange to him and that this is not a cultivated practice like attempting to make his childhood, class or gender positions alien. Many might object to Delhi's ability to be anyone's "mother town" due to histories and discourses that have cast Delhi as a bit empty in narratives of home or homeland that I discussed a bit in chapter five.

However, I think that both Bruno S and V are concerned with habitations of their milieus at a smaller degree of both time and scale. V speaks about daily disappearances, such as that of the tea stall. Very soon all of them will be gone, an orchestrated extinction hastened by government policies. And in every store, V tells me that he must deal with Bihari clerks whose only joys in life, at least according to V, are to mock him as a Delhiite and an upper caste and class man. And his family is also estranged from him. So, in his wound touching praxis, V is playing with multiple extinctions.

There was a wife, a foreigner, but that was a long time ago. There is also a grown child in another country. He does not talk with his brothers and sisters due to issues of property and inheritance. He lives in a very small apartment with one live-in servant who, according to him, has become less attentive and occasionally hostile the more he pays her. Dramatically increasing his housekeeper's salary was an act of mindfulness on V's part. Thoughts of death, the disappearance of tea stalls, the ex-wife, the adult child, greedy relatives, his irritable and inconsistent servant and the increasing appearance of Biharis, whose main joy seems to be to make fun of him and his expectations of civility, all seem to be much more part of an estrangement from, rather than a cultivation of, making one's habitus strange to a self one wants to modify.

It would be all too easy at this point to 'tame', 'domesticate' or categorize V and his struggles.<sup>270</sup> I could label him bourgeois, giving this term the excessive explanatory power that it seems to enjoy in some academic writings on India. It is after all the disappearances of sites of sociality and civility that make up part of what makes V feel uncomfortable in his milieu. Is it not possible that V has lived long enough in a life and city that have both changed too much and possibly not enough for him? Can time and age be forms of estrangement?

In her work on Calcutta, Ananya Roy discusses demolitions of illegal shops in the name of encroachment that at least in one case were experienced as both foreign and familiar (2004). A writer in a Bengali newspaper identified by Roy as a middle-class resident says "I feel as if I have been suddenly transported to a foreign land, to the city of my childhood" because she can walk on the sidewalk after these demolitions (2004: 148).

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<sup>269</sup> In conversation with me, V made reference to his age and the ridiculousness of celebrating birthdays because they just bring one closer to death.

<sup>270</sup> Discussions of taming or domestication as the opposite of a wild are of course problematic; however, my point in using these terms here is to think about how it might be possible to not already know what the answer is before the inquiry itself.



Roy sees this as how “Calcutta, the city of the future was in fact the city of the past – a timeless entity, standing outside of history” (2004: 148).<sup>271</sup> At least in Roy’s text the words of the “middle-class resident” function as irony, that the bourgeois and the Marxist might share legacies and bodies. However, for my purposes of discussing V and Bruno’s legacies, practices and experiences of estrangement, I want to focus on the equation of the foreign with childhood in the “middle-class resident’s” speech, as well as confusions of past and future being rendered as timeless and outside of history in Roy’s.

After a certain age, whose childhood is not a foreign country to them? V’s estrangements and his practices of becoming strange to himself are at the same time a dialog with death and the relentless remaking of the city and its possible socialities.

### **Reckless Disinheritances**

In light of this discussion of both the purposeful and inevitable estrangements of V, I would like to return to Mehta’s understanding of Edmund Burke and his discussion of recklessness and inheritance as inversions of each other:

To have a sense of ourselves on this account [of the “psychological and moral integrity of individuals and communities” and of “being in the middle of things”] requires being self-conscious of our status as inheritors and as transmitters of an inheritance (Mehta 1999: 183).

Indeed, more often than not Burke uses the term “Jacobinism” (and the term “Indianism”) to designate an ideology and a set of practices that are *reckless* in their disregard for the extant order of the communities in which they operate (Mehta 1999: 181).

For Mehta’s Burke, this movement of a transmission of inheritance and becoming conscious of it is exactly that which produces integrity in both individuals and communities and keeps practices of reckless disregard at bay. In these deliberate practices of attempts to estrange himself of his earlier experiences of not doing tasks for himself and avoiding dirty things, can we say that V is attempting to transmit an inheritance or is there some kind of reckless disregard of the “extant order” in his desiring to touch the wounds of dogs and debride them of maggots?

It is I, the author, who has connected V and his attempts at cultivating compassion through attending to the wounds of Delhi sanctuary dogs with Bruno V’s connection of death with an estrangement from a mother town. As I do this, I have to ask myself what possible kinship Bruno, V and I might share and how this relation might correspond to practices of both co-presence in anthropology and an attention to citations, texts and authors. In V’s attempts to ethically engage with both death and the reformulation of particular configurations of relationships of his past, there is both a transmission of

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<sup>271</sup> The next sentence reads “And so it came to be that the bourgeois city was reclaimed through the rhetoric of leftist radicalism” (2004: 148). Roy connects the emergence of this bourgeois city to the history of the bhadralok through which one must understand “the left’s yearning for the gentlemanly city, for the lost city of charm and grace” (2004: 148).

lineage and a certain abandon or recklessness of living a life. I would like to ask what exactly is at stake in this dialoging with inheritance as a letting go, as well as an understanding of change in a city and a body that is being referenced as an estrangement from a town of the mother?

To return a moment to Bruno S., Richard Eder of *The New York Times* wrote about Bruno's performance in the film, *The Enigma of Kaspar Hauser* thus:

Kaspar's extraordinary face, his eyes strained wide to see better, his whole posture suggesting a man trying to swallow, trying to grasp a world of strangeness, is the film's central image (Kimmelman 2008).

I would like to keep this image of Bruno "grasping a world of strangeness" in mind as I continue to explore relationships among reckless encroachments and occupations, transmissions of inheritances and disinheritances, and estrangements from the mother town of both human and dog in the following.

### **"It is Genetic:" Why am I Not My Brother?**

"It is genetics." D, the sanctuary founder and businessman keeps repeating this sentence in response to his own question, "why is it that I feel a dog's pain?" D is taking the opportunity of our interview to explore the reasons why he has devoted some of himself and a lot of his resources to the care of dogs.

D, like R, is aware that he cannot force all of his workers to care about dogs like he does. According to D, whether or not any person loves dogs is "a matter of genetics." D himself sees any dog in pain or need and he feels pain himself.

I could not say if V is particularly "filling himself up" with this pain of a dog or "squatting" in a dog's pain, which could be charges from an overly literal reading of Despret's work on the relationship between human and animal in ethology (2004). However, it is obvious that D is in a very different relationship to dogs (and presumably maggots) than V is. V is touching dogs to get over a revulsion to the dog itself, and instead of having a relationship with a dog in terms of some kind of possible co-presence, wants to touch their maggot ridden wounds as the ultimate site of an imagined abjection so as to turn this inheritance of disgust into possibly some kind of reckless compassion.<sup>272</sup>

When I press D more in our first meeting for his reasons for this dog love that seems extreme to me, he mentions charity and religion. However, on subsequent meetings he adamantly denies that his care of dogs has anything to do with religion or charity. Again he repeats that the ability to feel the pain of a dog on the street "is a matter of genetics." In fact, for D, dog love is not an ability, as much as something indefinable that one cannot control in terms of looking at a dog on the street and feeling pain. At first I assume that the question of "genetics" is a placeholder for this gaze that subsumes the vulnerable looker into its thrall. At any rate, for D the care of dogs has nothing to do with NGOs, religion, charity or even choice. One could say that the results of this "genetic" ability or affliction depending on one's point of view are the thirty dogs

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<sup>272</sup> V's relationship to dogs does also seem very different than that of the "selfless servant" and activist that I discuss in chapter two.

in his home and the sixty in his farmhouse – a monument to the blessings or curses of this “genetic” dog love.

After a few meetings, D and I finally talk in depth about what he means by “genetics” influencing one’s engagement with dogs. After relating to me how he has lost some dogs to the wrath of neighbors, D tells me a story in the hope of clarifying what he means by genetics.

There is a dhaba or roadside eatery near his home. Of course, around this eatery, as around most in Delhi, lived a group of dogs including a Pomeranian or part-Pomeranian dog.<sup>273</sup> As D tells the story, one night the Pomeranian was barking a lot and this was getting on the cook’s nerves. The cook had been drinking and at some point he grabbed the Pomeranian, put it on the chopping block and severed one leg using a cleaver. The owner of the restaurant brought the dog to D who in turn brought it to a vet and paid to save its life. After, this, the owner wanted the dog back, but D refused to return the dog. And a few weeks later the cook was run over by a Blue Line bus in front of the dhaba. D saw the death of the cook as a form of cosmological justice, even though these blue line buses were considered so dangerous as to be known as the “killer” Blue Line.

And what is it about the dog that can illicit in the human these responses—this loving, this disgust, this killing and this feeling of pain? One might want to ask if D’s point about his vulnerability to dog love in the telling of this story is a sign of bourgeois insensitivity to other human beings. Is “genetics” for D a code word for struggles over reformulations of social formations such as caste and class? However, any supposition of class being the salient category of analysis in what D means by “genetic” dog love would be an error.

D’s category of “genetic” is marking otherness, but it is not necessarily marking class or caste group distinctions. The more that D repeats the term “genetic,” the more I become unsure of what he means. I finally press D enough to get a very different accounting of genetic. He states, “Why is it that I can feel the dog’s pain? It is genetic. I am like this and my son is like this, but my brothers and sisters do not care or might go out of their way to hurt a dog. It is genetics, which is life energy.”

This energy, according to D, is actually extremely developmental. “It depends on when you are born, what your parents were thinking and feeling when you were conceived... What they were eating.” For D there is a totality of physical, emotional and cellular histories that affect the person and the body and make one vulnerable to the gaze of a dog and these economies of pain and love in which D is involved. Thus, according to D, most of his own family does not at all share his genetic relationality. For D, one is captured by dogs due to histories of environment and organism interactions, as well as solidified histories of emotional cellular encounters that prioritize the moment of conception, but also the psychic and physical life of the mother during gestation.

I cannot help but think about Pinky, the female dog of K and my pack in reference to D’s discussion of conceptional and gestational dog love. Pinky was generally

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<sup>273</sup> The Pomeranian and its larger kin the Spitz is one of the most popular breeds kept as a pet by the middle and upper classes in India. However, this dog, as well as its pack members, were not pets and lived in a symbiotic relationship with the dhaba, eating scraps and garbage produced by this eating establishment. This relationship cannot be categorized as that of stray dogs and people have coined the term community dog to mark this level of engagement between human and dogs in this arrangement.

developing puppies in the shadow of Sundar's attacks and the puppies that did survive lived in an *umwelt* in which Pinky would groom them for about an hour at a time even when they were adults. However, if D's "genetic" explanation for why the gaze of a dog has such spectacular effects on him and not on his siblings were made deterministic, then there might not be room for the kind of experiment that V is engaging in with his desire to debride dog wounds of maggots in order to transform his disgust into compassion. In a similar vein, B's engagements with dogs are particular and situational in terms of a whole spectrum of emotions and acts of love, irritation and violence that probably could not be made sense of in D's schema.

However, D's story of genetic dog love does point out some problems with trying to think of inheritances, disinheritances and dispositions as emerging out of a general sense of categorical, structural, group or community belonging and not from exceedingly provincial configurations of relationship, that once they are made categorical, tend to become more error and imagined structure than a history of multiple encroachments, occupations squattings, and fleings that are generally not perceivable from the perspective of the group.

In this juxtaposition of V's estranged mother town of old age, family disinheritances and migratory and capital re-workings of Delhi, as well as his own desire to undo aspects of himself in the wound of a dog with D's couple of conception and the gestational mother in which certain thoughts, foods and emotions can produce the thrall of the dog gaze that cannot be avoided, I cannot help but think about my own legacy of disinheritance in the exceedingly provincial configuration of the mother, the brain-damaged son and the ex-daughters-in-law.

### **Reading *Co-presence, Meeting and Being There through Becoming Caught***

And if I return to Borneman and Hammoudi's discussion of the possibility of *co-presence* in ethnographic practices, then what would the possible "transformation of what we know, specifically of the anthropologist's own self-understandings" and what an "engaged ethnographer can learn...of the grammar that guides the actions of his interlocutors" in these specific problems of mothers and dogs be (2009: 14)? At issue is the 'who' that is engaged. Who will be singular or plural between the ethnographer and the interlocutor and who specifically changes their self understandings in these practices?

*Being there* can be, as Geertz points out, a problem of claiming some truth from going to a particular place and saying yes I was really there (1988). For Borneman and Hammoudi the issue seems to be making sure that an actual meeting of living human beings occurs, as opposed to a textual, media or discursive account only. However, Haraway's question about what and who she is actually touching when she touches her dog would not make the problem of presence any easier to attempt to decipher in a multi-species methodology (2008). *Being there* is thus a questioning of how a particular 'who' might show up in a scene and in a life. This includes Heidegger's issue of a particular human relationship to a knowledge of death, thresholds of perceiving that are constrained by species forms, and how one is caught in provincial configurations of relationship of the very near that permit some, but not all knowledge.

A major problem in attempting to *be there*, as I have attempted to grapple with in this dissertation, is figuring out what has a hold on one and how this catches. The problem of showing up in ethnographic work is just as problematic as in other scenes of living. Just how one is caught in provincial configurations of relationship seems to make it difficult to form a “we” of knowing without ignoring the ways in which what could be considered a general sense of belonging of group, family or discipline is usually more of a particular *umwelt*. That being said, this investigation of *umwelts* brings up the problem of those that have the possibility of meeting in terms of perceiving or attempting to perceive certain functional tones of species, biography or legacies of configurations of relationship. How does one attempt to perceive what one cannot?

This entire project is therefore haunted by this problem of *co-presence* and how to perceive what one cannot due to legacies of evolution and provincial configurations of relationship. I am interested in exploring some of the limits of how an ethnographer may be considered able to transform what he or she knows, if his or her prior relational knowledge indeed opaques through its nearness, holds one in its thrall, and yet also permits particular perspectival apertures from which some aspects of an environment become able to be registered in an acute particularity. In both my experiences of relations with Delhi dogs and the kinship chart of the brain-damaged son, mother and ex-daughters-in-law, the problem of attempting to *be there* in terms of trying to show up and become conscious of how one has been caught is at the fore. The particular minds and life worlds of particular Delhi dogs, a brain damaged father who was a different person at every meeting, and a grandmother as radically certain in her maniacal claims and possessions as Columbus are part of ascertaining my own limitations in inquiry.

At issue from this particularity of being caught are the ‘whos’ that might be perceivable and those that stay obscure. The ethnographer in this framework, cannot so much be transformed or come up with a convincing grammar that would link all of his or her interlocutors together, but to think about how half-obscure catchings can be deciphered to some degree in the transformations of those whom we may barely glimpse.

Legacies of selfless encroachment and practices of abductive certitude in science, service, spiritual questing, conquests and everyday encroachments and invasions tend to produce more certitude and the ability to claim. Therefore the question of geography and attempting to really *be there* in anthropology as a particular place seems quite dependent upon the methodology and mode of the self that is mobilized. Whom an entity can or cannot meet and the contours of possible contact zones would then include configurations of relationship, legacies of disinheritance and lineages that exceed physical place. Von Uexkull’s notion of an *umwelt*, by demonstrating how mere proximity in space does not mean that entities share a world of perception, helps give outline to how a general sense of belonging can never be assumed or concretized.

I might worry that my aperture of perception is narrower than someone who may be differently configured in relationship. This begs the question of how some people or dogs could be considered to be more present in ethnographic encounters if they are somehow less caught in provincial scenes of engagement. If we return to this distinction that Bingham (2006) made about those who actually have a topological relationship to a ‘real’ environment and those who can only play with “idealized versions of remembered patterns” that I discussed in chapter five, then one question to ask would be how the exceedingly caught, instead of being trapped in a place or environment of the

anthropological imagination as Appadurai (1988) discussed, may have lost their ability for adaptation to the ‘real’ of any place of *being there*.

Or we could revisit Deleuze and Guattari’s discussion of Freud’s psychotics who cannot make out the form or use of a sock, but can only perceive “an aggregate of stitches” or “a multiplicity of pores” for the skin (1987). I have definitely entertained the possibility that this ethnography of dogs and humans in Delhi is giving you the dog lover and Delhi dog version of stitches, pores and remembered patterns, when I should have been able to make out the socks, the skin and the native adaptations. Yet it may be that in this being occupied or invaded by remembered patterns that I may or may not want to estrange myself from and flee, —such as those of the brain damaged son, the mother, and the ex-daughters in law—I am also invading and invaded by, as well as squatting in, the mother-in-law, the daughter-in-law, the voice of the mad woman and the dog in Delhi.<sup>274</sup>

If we again consider V’s struggles to loosen the grip of some of his histories of being caught while he attempts to also hold on to what he still can of his place in Delhi, as well as what is left of his mortal life, we could ask what is at stake in attempting to do ethnography as histories of becoming caught and attempting to see what one might not be able to, for both ethnographer and interlocutor, as opposed to having just the ethnographer change his understandings. Even siblings in D’s genetic formation of development and dog love are not caught in the same way. An ethnography of configurations of relationship and becoming caught in provincial legacies of inheritance and disinheritance would change discussions about the native and the cosmopolitan/refugee, the invasive and rightful inhabitation, the necessity to sometimes squat in the other and to sometimes flee, the parsing of enigma and understanding, and the desire for one’s own bed, tower or territory to encroach and invade.

### **Not Selfless and Not at Home...Trying to Wake Up**

There is not just one possible outcome or conception of the good at stake when one is no longer at home, either in their city, their family, their time or their self. Exile, estrangement or rootlessness, whether sought after or not, cannot always be formulated as tragedy. In Delhi today it is difficult to ascertain who is in exile as slum neighborhoods disappear, yet more people continue to come to Delhi in the shadow of a city master plan that imagines the possibility of massive rearrangements and even a mall next to the Jama Masjid. Even fully grown trees have been dug up and replanted in beautification programs in Delhi. I would not know how to start a conversation with V as an Indian, a Brahmin, a bourgeois or an old man. However, a certain kinship, *being there* or caughtness is possible with V through the aphorism of Bruno S, the wounds of dogs and other meditations on estrangement, death or what the WHO defines as turnover.

The space of the interstitial as opposed to the domestic of lineage and appropriate inheritance may be one location from which this sense of fleeing and squatting becomes the everyday of the appropriately reckless. V’s attempts at estrangements in multiple registers may be a very controlled practice of becoming strange. In contradistinction to attempts at selfless service, he encroaches upon the dog, but not without acknowledging

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<sup>274</sup> This would lead me to ask about the contours, properties and extensions of this interstice of dogs, the elderly and the female (Cohen 1998).

how he is specifically and not categorically caught as a being in the world. This wound is not a task for V as it is for the animal rights activist in chapter two. Since the interstitial is connected to death, one might claim that, following the thought of the philosopher and theologian Al-Ghazali, this configuration might be more real than that of the domestic.

And the domestic worker of V also becomes a very interesting configuration of experiment for V in terms of how he tried to renegotiate this relationship. As I said, he decided to pay her much more than he had been giving previously as an act of mindfulness on his part. He was then amazed that this dramatic increase in salary actually created a situation in his small apartment that he was not prepared for. V was trying to make sense of why, after the maid received this dramatic increase in salary, she became much more careless in her work. Things that he had described as the most routine tasks that she had always done perfectly became indifferently performed. In addition, she started to request that V help her get her son to live in Delhi also. V was to some extent perplexed about how his plan to pay the maid more money resulted in such a problematic domestic situation for him. His professional life was in organizational and management sciences and yet he could not make sense of how the maid was now encroaching upon his domestic space and sense of routine in a way that she had never done before.

What interests me about V and this servant's encroachments upon each other is that it seems that their domestic negotiations became a bit more like those of T and myself where the actual outcome of how we engaged with each other, as well as how we ignored each other, were less predetermined by any kind of expected form. V, in suddenly paying his worker much more money than he had ever in the past, seemed to have created a terrain upon which these new encroachments, negotiations and invasions startled V. V did not quite become the figure of the guest that I discussed in chapter five, but it does seem that he did blur understandings of expectations and what an acceptable encroachment might be.

V particularly caught me in terms of his project of specifically attempting to wake up before he dies. One aspect of being caught is possibly realizing that one is a certain creature. If one attempts a "recatching" in Favret-Saada's (1980) terms or an *umwelt* remodeling to use Von Uexkül's (1957), for the purposes of attempting to stretch his or her perspectival capacities, then each creature would not actually see from the perspective of an other, however configured. So much of the current work in multi-species ethnography and the turn to the animal is I think interested in this question of perspective that used to be discussed in terms of a native's mind in anthropology.

A problem also develops if one attempts to ask questions about the perceptions of others from an entanglement or a dispersed methodology in which the particular 'who' of the author or the researcher and his or her lineages of catchings and (dis)inheritances is severely bracketed.<sup>275</sup> This avoidance of talking about how one is caught is possibly a desire to starve the figure of the individual, conceived of as possibly a Cartesian, neo-liberal or Lockean figure floating around without a proper *umwelt*. However, either the denial of this caught author in assemblage, or the discussion of this creature's requirements in more categorical terms that deny the specificity of the 'who' in question, does not so much provincialize the neo-liberal individual, but make possibly another

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<sup>275</sup> Another issue would be to talk about these catchings in categorical or structural terms that avoid the specificity of what I am talking about.

terrain for a desiring selflessness to creep in and encroach without declaring itself or admitting that it can and most probably will at some point be invasive and antagonistic. The anthropology of entanglement can then become another position from which its authors cannot be approached or grasped in their specificity. We see this desire to not be so limited and caught in—the selfless servant, the Baconian instrument, the experimental automaton the positivist and the post-structuralist.

Yet in projects that attempt to dissipate the self, the ‘I’, and yes, the individual, there is often a seemingly conservative retention of a human consciousness in this dissipation, networking, assemblage or entanglement:

Randall Carter...feels his “self” reel and experiences a fear worse than that of annihilation: “Carters of forms both human and non-human, vertebrate and invertebrate, conscious and mindless, animal and vegetable. And more there were Carters having nothing in common with earthly life, but moving outrageously amidst backgrounds of other planets and systems and galaxies and cosmic continua...Merging with nothingness is peaceful oblivion; *but to be aware of existence and yet to know that one is no longer a definite being distinguished from other beings,*” nor from all of the becomings running through us, “that is the nameless summit of agony and dread” (Deleuze and Guattari 1987:240).

There is then this fantasy of being somehow “aware of existence and yet to know that one is no longer a definite being distinguished from other beings.” Therefore, it seems, as I discussed in chapter three, that there is this ‘persistent who’ that emerges even in work that attempts to dissipate this form. One could possibly claim that humans like to make ‘whos’.<sup>276</sup> As we see for the selfless servant, what often disappears with the denial of this form of a ‘who’ is the ability to acknowledge the petty disinheritances and invasions of the everyday, as well as the small violences, jealousies and irritations that might then be reduced to mere tasks to become completed by the selfless. Is it possible that to occupy the interstice, the street, or to be on the lam fleeing from the domestic of proper generation, one actually needs a body with some boundaries? The anthropology of the invasive and the reckless might require a finite body and perception that is at least a bit in dialog with death.

Yet there also may be no sanctuary or safe place for the reckless to occupy, unlike what D and R might be trying to create in their sanctuaries, or what I used to hope L the homeowner might provide for T. D knows that the manifestation of his dog sanctuary is not reasonable, but yet he is in the thrall of the gaze of the Delhi dog. And it is through my own ridiculous catching in this similar dog that sneaks and whines and lays around looking dead until its umwelt engages its most exquisite startle impulse that I can say that I understand D. He is not particularly an enigma to me and I love him as I do most of the people and dogs I have talked about in this dissertation.

V’s struggles impress me, catch me and startle me. We share the common problem of wondering if either of us can wake up at all before we die. I mentioned in chapter one that Deleuze thought that this losing of time or catalepsy was the price of any

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<sup>276</sup> Both Cassirer (1946), Von Uexküll (1957) and others talk about this tendency of the human to make ‘whos’.



human thought (1983). In these catchings of the melancholy and brilliant mother and the father whose “soft soil of his brain, the ground from which all his thoughts shot up, had been ruined forever,” I too wonder, in the words of the playwright Craig Lucas (2003), if the past is something one wakes up from or wakes up to?<sup>277</sup> V attempts to re-catch himself by touching the maggot-ridden wounds of dogs that have been held captive to a sanctuary of domestic love and death. I fall in love and into a dissertation project with a few specific Delhi dogs and their street life that I completely reconfigure. My particular Delhi dog, one of Pinky’s fawn-colored puppies, is sometimes encroaching and sometimes aloof and always working her own angle. She is a strategist. I am doing her bidding, I think. I know in some kind of disaster she would save herself first and I really love her for this, as well as for her inability to selflessly encroach or to be really trained. I think that if she could consider this problem, she would think that selflessness would be a stupid tactic for a mammal. I like D and R, and unlike K, could not leave this dog to the vagaries of the violent street and one day I shove her in a crate and get in a taxi to bring her to the Delhi airport cargo area where she and I wait near three coffins, one tagged for Kabul and one for London, until this Delhi dog goes off on her own journey. My mother picks her up and they have lived together fighting over bed space since that day. My mother and this dog are curious enough about each other. One grew up thinking that the razor was used to sharpen the belt and the other was the runt of her litter. One is not more or less trained than the other and they encroach upon each other just enough.

It is now too late to compare dog years or mother years or how many years a new light bulb should last, but I know that I have given both my mother and this dog the best of me by letting them encroach upon each other and this is a legacy. I refuse to categorically ‘domesticate’ these loves, mothers or dogs. This particular interstice then is not a place, a location, a there, or even an inversion of the domestic, but a grappling with being, encroachment, invasion, love, death, mothers and dogs, you know stubborn mammal problems.

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<sup>277</sup> Does the forty year plant-like father live through me and make the catalepsy and the lost decades happen (Kosinski 1999)?

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