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Becoming-Dog. Multi-species Ethnographic Approaches Around Companion Animals

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We are approaching the end of the second decade of the 21st century, and humankind —or at least a part of it— has reached an unprecedented technological development. In the same line, habitable settings have evolved towards scenarios of deep climate crises and planet-wide transformations putting at risk life forms known and yet-to-be-known as a whole.

However, deep relations between human beings and other living beings have remained almost the same. Particularly in modern collectives, and especially in the Western world, those bonds validate the culture/nature split, and ponder upon practices according to which human beings make part of the cultural sphere, while animals are a part of the natural sphere, the latter justifying mistreatment, exploitation, and/or annihilation. Parallel to this overview, certain relationships with animals are undergoing changes, especially those involving companion animals, conceivably, cats and dogs. Thus, in the last two decades, relationships between human beings and non-human animals have dramatically changed. This is observed particularly when we study dogs, who get involved in varied ways with human collectives: as companion species, as objects of consumption, as new families' members, as market objects and targets, as new gamechangers, as vehicles and subjects of medical

therapies, promoting social changes, in rights, ethics, philosophical thinking, medicine, social work, and anthropology, to quote some subject areas and social life instances. In this sense, we are interested in asking about the place dogs occupy in people's lives, dogs' role in contemporary social theory, and particularly in research methods that help us approach these interspecies relationships.

During the 1980s and 1990s, several fundamental questions concerning other living beings, and particularly other animals came under the spotlight: What is an animal? Do animals have rights on their own? Are we humans another animal? And of course, some questions about how human being, animals too (except for some cosmological views), have put distance so as to be situated out from animality and out from nature. In that line, we need to explore those conceptions between Western and non-Western groups, the first being framed within Modernity, one of whose pillars is the opposing binomial culture/nature. That «big dividing line» has given rise to great debates, and, as it happens when we focus on important questions, this gap has not been closed, but enlarged. At the same time, the above mentioned deploys in a context where we ask ourselves about animals (and we stumble into questions about different animals, all animals, and some animals that are deemed to be more important than others, which raises questions like Why are they more important? For whom are they more important? Responses can come from history, social work, anthropology, from each of social sciences and, even, from the more diverse natural sciences. In this *Tabula Rasa* monographic issue, we aim to address the abovementioned issues, from questions and theoretical proposals to modern approaches to address this complex human-animal relationship, as in the case of multispecies ethnography, and we are interested in inquiring into interactions between species in the modern/colonial world-system(s).

In this line, we specially encourage works exploring human relationships with dogs, as the latter are often forced to work, in many cases enslaved, as watch dogs, rescue dogs, assisted therapy dogs, shepherd dogs, dogs used for human entertainment in circuses, in dog fighting, in children's parties, as sexual objects, along with dogs as members of interspecies (human-dog) families, where they are considered as pets, buddies, sons, or objects of consumption or entertainment.

By studying human-dog relationships, we bring into question the relationships between companion species, the notion of «animal», from various disciplines. Are animals —particularly dogs— objects or subjects? As Donna Haraway points out, dogs are not surrogates for theory; they are not here just to think with. They are here to live with.

Thus, we are also interested in the ways how those interspecies interactions are deployed, how ethnography has become a tool for this, and what is the difference between multispecies ethnography and classical ethnography. Additionally, we aim to catch a glimpse of the potential in creating the concepts that will build this kind of ethnography, allowing us a more in-depth analysis and insight of the worlds of social relations between companion species.

To get more information or submit your manuscript complete with an abstract (in English, Spanish, or Portuguese languages), please contact Celeste Medrano celestazo@hotmail.com or Leonardo Montenegro (l.montenegro@revistatabularasa.org).

The deadline for manuscripts submission is June 1, 2021 .