BECOMING (WITH) ANIMAL OTHERS. IS THE ANTHROPOLOGICAL MACHINE SET UP IN THE ZOO?

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Abstract

The aim of my research is to problematize the role of the zoological garden in constructing the human/nonhuman boundary. By discussing the zoo in its historical context and emphasizing the interconnectedness of colonialism, the birth of the nation state, and the emergence of scientific disciplines in the nineteenth century that influenced the zoo's development into its current state as a modern public institution, I argue that the zoo is a paradigmatic biopolitical space.

My major theoretical tools are posthumanist theory and the framework of biopolitics. I apply the posthumanist approach of Donna Haraway, complicating it with Giorgio Agamben's biopolitical critique. The concept that is most central to this dissertation is Agamben's idea of the "anthropological machine", which enabled me to tackle philosophical problems of human/animal relations, within the scope of the ontology of becoming and the epistemological project of breaking binary oppositions. I also include a case study of the Budapest Zoological Garden.

I argue that the anthropological machine, being an optical device that creates the division between human and animal, can be challenged by the idea of "the gaze". As a subversive tool for becoming (with) animal others, what I term "the zoological gaze" opens up a space to think of relational ontologies. By demonstrating how animals' "gazing back" can destabilize the anthropocentric approach that has dominated philosophical thinking, I argue for centrality of vision in posthumanist theory.

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Introduction

The zoo is a peculiar space where entertainment is interlaced with science, where different animals are neatly categorized according to species in fabricated naturalness, and where most visibly in the form of bars the division between the human and animal is being constructed. In this work I problematize the role of the zoological garden as a living taxonomy of species. Using Giorgio Agamben's concept of "the anthropological machine" I argue that "the gaze" is the most important instrument of this modern device, which is constructing the human/nonhuman difference. My research questions are: if we assume that the Agambenesque "anthropological machine" is an optical device, as he suggests in *The Open*, what is the role of the gaze in creating the human/nonhuman divide? Can gazing serve as a subversive tool for becoming (with) the animal others, thus, opening up a space to think about relational ontologies?

As Michel Foucault shows, seeing is knowing, so in my analysis "the zoological gaze" of the modern "panoptical menageries" creates hierarchies and domination, and is a power-knowledge machine. I show how the modern "zoological Garden of Eden" is a place where humanness is being constantly negotiated. I ask: do contemporary bioparks with their ecological mission of wildlife conservation continue the anthropocentric approach of "quasi-taxidermic" animal collections? Is it possible to jam the anthropological machine? My proposition of challenging the zoological anthropocentrism is in dialog with Donna Haraway's idea of "becoming with" animal others and her notion of "companion species" that allowed me to think of zoontologies of *becoming* instead of fixed *being*.

The theoretical framework I in which I set my research is philosophical posthumanism. This theory is not yet well domesticated in the humanities, so in the first chapter I am mapping the posthuman, to clarify the concepts I use and philosophical traditions they are

derived from. In depicting this theoretical horizon I collapse Donna Haraway's posthumanist proposition of the new human/nonhuman relations with Agamben's biopolitical approach. I propose to analyze posthumanism as a possibility of "affirmative biopolitics" and to take a closer look at the ethical and political implications of such a framework.

The second chapter starts with a genealogy of the zoological garden, tracing the lineages and history of animal collections, moving along the continuum from menageries to modern bioparks. I put special emphasis on the interconnectedness of colonialism, the birth of the nation state, and knowledge production that is obsessed with categorizing and creating collections.

I decided to devote the third chapter to a case study of the Budapest Zoological Garden to *see* the anthropological machine in motion. I approached this particular zoo as a system of representations, analyzing its architecture, its website, and the film *Zoo in Budapest* from 1933 that was shot there. Placing this functioning institution in its local, national context, and at the same time seeing it as a part of global discourses of wildlife preservation, I observe a shift in legitimizing the role of the zoo – from a purely entertaining spectacle, to a scientifically supported ecological wildlife "asylum".

In the last part I put emphasis on vision and seeing as "focal points" of my analysis. Zoological gardens are places where animal others are perceived and represented predominantly in a visual manner. Advocating for what I call a "zoological iconoclast" of one-way seeing, I propose to treat animal gazing as a subversive tool for decentralizing the human.

The zoo is the most aestheticized space where humans can observe animals – in the wild they might actually be dangerous, and in the slaughterhouses the view might be too drastic to our sensitive eyes. The jammed anthropological machine and the crushed

human/animal boundary make way for a relational ontology of becoming an animal, that each of us therefore is. But is the complete erasure of this binary a necessary move in the ontological revolution proclaimed by advocates of becoming *with*? If posthumanism attempts to be a platform for non-binary thinking what would be the consequences of this move? I argue that posthumanism is always overshadowed by biopolitics, so that rethinking the human/nonhuman relation is not as simple as erasing the boundary between the two.

Agamben claims that there is a material space, where biopolitics is predominantly exercised, producing what he calls "bare life". For him, following Hannah Arendt's work on totalitarianism, such a paradigmatic space is the concentration camp. In contrast, Ruth A. Miller in her book *Limits of Bodily Integrity* proposes to treat the womb as a biopolitical paradigm of the modern state.[1] What if neither the camp, nor the womb should serve as a paradigm for biopower? Instead, in my research I propose to analyze the zoological garden as a paradigmatic modern biopolitical enterprise – a place where the difference between the man and the animal is most visibly being produced. To conclude, I want to rephrase Agamben's sentence and open it through turning it into a question instead of an indicative: "Does the total humanization of the animal coincide with total animalization of man?"[2]

[1] See: Ruth A. Miller, *The Limits of Bodily Integrity. Abortion, Adultery and Rape Legislation in Comparative Perspective* (Aldershot, Hampshire: Ashgate, 2007).
[2] Giorgio Agamben, *The Open. Man and Animal* (California: Stanford University Press, 2004), 77.

Chapter 1: Mapping the Posthuman

> *'Exactly,' said Spike, glancing at me. 'Humans have given away all their power to a "they". You aren't able to fight the system because without the system none of you can survive. You made a world without alternatives, and now it is dying, and your new world already belongs to "they".'*
>
> Jeanette Winterson, *The Stone Gods*

1.1 Introduction

Our times are marked with the prefix *post* – we live in *post*-industrial societies, experiencing *post*-colonial changes, we are contained in *post*-structural thinking and are being blurred by *post*-modernism. Recently even the humanness of the scattered subject has been put into question, and the era of *post*humanism gave way to reconsideration of the idea of the human and its relations to the non-human world. The prefix *post* suggests something coming after, the arrow of time moving forward to another (better?) stage, something subsequent to what was before. In this view posthumanism, being another critique of the legacy of the Renaissance and Enlightenment humanism or moving beyond the idea of fixed human nature, appears to be trapped in the Hegelian dialectic or the ideology of progress. Is it possible to abandon this linear trajectory? Should we perceive posthumanism as a rupture in tempo(real) linearity of history of human kind, or rather as a smooth shift from the era of humanism (by which I mean positioning the human in the center that involves scientific project of the Enlightenment), to something that goes beyond it, at least in terms of imaginary worlds we create?

In this chapter I want to analyze to what extent the theory of posthumanism as a critique of the human condition allows an understanding of the role of the zoological garden in constructing the human/non-human division. The "zoological Garden of Eden" can be seen

as an outdated artifact from the past in the middle of postmodern urban areas, or purely as a modern spectacle of human domination over nature - a modern myth of genesis, and regeneration of nature as we humans want to see it. I argue that as a neatly systematized collection of living animals the zoological garden is a paradigmatic institution of the modernization project which began in the Enlightenment. The very idea of anthropocentrism, which is the crucial point of humanism, needs a place to be enacted in – a place where the exclusion of the radical Other (for the human subject) becomes possible. Can we try to stop this process? Is it necessary to constantly prove the humanness of humans? My aim in this chapter is to present the posthumanist approach in critical theory, which for me is crucial for rethinking the human/animal relation. This uneasy relationship needs to be problematized in order to reconfigure politics in the world, where keeping the category of the human pure and untouched becomes more difficult. The zoo as a space of entanglement of science, spectacle, performance, and politics of life preservation is a potent area for posthumanist analysis. This living taxonomy of species is not an innocent place for a Sunday walk; every inch of this space is soaked with intense power relations that bring together modern science, colonialism, nationalism, patriarchy and biopolitics.[3] For me, posthumanism cannot be limited to a simplistic slogan like "Down with anthropocracy!" which would be always shouted by a human voice anyway. I want to develop a critical reading of posthumanist theory, by confronting Donna Haraway's version of philosophical posthumanism with the biopolitical approach to human/nonhuman relations presented by Giorgio Agamben.

[3] See: Donna Haraway, "Teddy Bear Patriarchy: Taxidermy in the Garden of Eden, New York City, 1908-1936", in *The Haraway Reader*, Donna Haraway, (New York and London: Routledge, 2004).

1.2 Between Scylla of the *Post* and Chyrybdis of the *Human*

In her book *How We Became Posthuman: Virtual Bodies in Cybernetics, Literature, and Informatics* written almost fifteen years after Donna Haraway's "Cyborg Manifesto" that inaugurated posthumanism as a new theoretical field, Kathrine Hayles asks, what does it actually mean to be posthuman? Emphasizing the historicity and contingency of the term, she points out some characteristics of posthuman subjectivity as opposed to a liberal humanist approach.[4] Hayles argues that "whereas the 'human' has since the Enlightenment been associated with rationality, free will, autonomy and a celebration of consciousness as the seat of identity, the posthuman in its more nefarious forms is construed as an informational pattern that happens to be instantiated in a biological substrate."[5] I think that in this understanding it is implied that the posthuman is a technological enhancement of the human that would find its closest example in the figure of the cyborg. The tension between the "biological substrate" and information technology develops more ways to surpass the limits of humanity. I propose a different understanding of posthumanism – in my view the most interesting thing is happening somewhere between "post" and "humanism". In this state of transition from one to the other (and back), the boundaries separating nature from culture, or subject from object are not being simply crushed, but rather constantly renegotiated so that the binaries are not just taken for granted. The problem with dichotomies is that even if one criticizes their existence, they are needed to enable social practice. Through questioning the significance of human subjectivity, posthumanism addresses anxieties about humanity in crisis as well as ethical and political concerns about the "posthuman condition". I would even say that human subjects are always trapped between the Scylla of "post" and Chyrybdis of "human".

[4] Katherine N. Hayles, *How We Became Posthuman: Virtual Bodies in Cybernetics, Literature, and Informatics*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 2-3.
[5] Katharine N. Hayles, "Unfinished Work: From Cyborg to Cognisphere", *Theory, Culture & Society* 23 (2006): 160.

In outlining the unstable zone between "post" and "human" of posthumanism it is necessary to recognize the indebtedness of this theoretical approach to the notion of biopolitics that seems to haunt every call for a positive change. I would like to introduce the distinction between the "utopian biopolitics" of posthumanism and the Foucauldian critique of society as war based on the collapse of war and politics. Can those two be combined, or are they inevitably distinct tendencies moving in different directions within the domain of posthuman theory? I argue that problems with politics of life highlighted by Michel Foucault were challenged in the realm of posthumanism in different ways. Donna Haraway represents a more utopian fraction of posthumanism, while Giorgio Agamben is more indebted to the regulatory notion of biopolitcs. This brings me to the question of whether we can talk about just one posthumanist approach, or maybe of posthumanisms in the plural? In this sense my attempt is not only to complicate the subsequent logic of "the posts", but also to show that there is no radical break with the past but rather a multiplicity of diverging and yet related trajectories of posthumanist thought. I want to show that adding "posthumanism" to the philosophical dictionary would not be possible in the singular, and more importantly, would require rethinking many other entries. Moreover, as Donna Haraway proposes in the "The Cyborg Manifesto", decentralizing the human subject leaves the way open to finding "*pleasure* in the confusion of boundaries and for *responsibility* in their construction."[6] This double non-anthropocentric perspective from below challenges the monopoly of the Cyclopic vision of God's eye trapped in the divine triangle somewhere up there, imposing certain understanding of worldliness.

I propose to imagine a possibility of "affirmative biopolitics" and to look closer at the ethical and political implications of such a framework. Biopower that is usually associated with an oppressive mode of government that regulates populations, and that is conflated with

[6] Donna Haraway, "A Manifesto for Cyborgs: Science, Technology, and Socialist Feminism in the 1980s" in *The Haraway Reader*, Donna Haraway (New York and London: Routledge, 2004), 8.

totalitarianism (e.g. Hannah Arendt's studies) has the potential to be understood in a positive way. The term "affirmative biopolitics" I propose here would be an attempt to turn the inevitability of biopolitical governance over life into a liberatory project for posthuman politics. Are we already posthuman? Or maybe we have never been human at all?

1.3 From Ontology to Ethico-Politics of Life (and back again)

When one tries to avoid binary thinking by creating a chiasm of the two poles that seem to be in opposition, there simultaneously emerges a specific kind of ontology that does not differentiate between fixed identities organized in a hierarchical manner. In this sense dichotomies enable this ontological revolution. Moreover, whether we talk about *cyborgs*, *hybrids,* or *bare life,* an ontology of dynamic rhizomatic relations, one that I would call monist, gives way to a new kind of ethics. Although this leads to the abstract grounds of philosophical speculation, this purely theoretical reflection has palpable political and ethical implications, because the way we act in the world is based on the way we perceive and understand it. If the goal of posthumanist ontology is an ethics with emancipatory potential to overcome the hegemony of the Enlightenment humanist neutral, universal, and fleshless subjectivity, we need to turn to a theoretical mapping of new landscapes for the journey of *becomin*g, not necessarily *being*. In this way the emphasis is put on the relation itself as the most important unit of inquiry.

In her essay "Posthumanist Performativity: Toward an Understanding of How Matter Comes to Matter", Karen Barad recognizes the double role of language as a tool of making materiality dissolute in the discursive ontology, and at the same time through the notion of performativity of discursive practices as a tool for contesting the constructivist power of words. According to Barad, the replacement of matters of "fact" with matters of signification can be challenged by using performativity as a theoretical tool for materialist and

posthumanist redefinitions of ontology. She points out that epistemological representationalism creates ontological divisions between entities that are represented and representations themselves. This production of binary reality can be questioned by acknowledging the active agency of matter in the constant process of "becoming". Barad critically examines representationalism as "so deeply entrenched within Western culture that it has taken on a commonsense appeal"[7], and thus, she marks it as a humanist legacy of the Enlightenment. Our access to the world is being mediated by language and representations. Following Joseph Rouse, Barad claims that this approach is a by-product of the Cartesian separation of the *res extensa* from *res cogitans* and its consequences for human exceptionality as a knowing subject. This separation disproportionately affected humans and non-humans, turning the latter into mute objects of representation. In the posthumanist ontology proposed by Barad differential boundaries between the fixed categories of "human" and "nonhuman" are put into question and destabilized. She writes:

> What is needed is a robust account of the materialization of *all* bodies—"human" and "nonhuman"—and the material-discursive practices by which their differential constitutions are marked. This will require an understanding of the nature of the relationship between discursive practices and material phenomena, an accounting of "nonhuman" as well as "human" forms of agency, and an understanding of the precise causal nature of productive practices that takes account of the fullness of matter's implication in its ongoing historicity.[8]

Advocating for "agential realism", Barad tries to bring back the body, nature and materiality into the grounds of the new relational ontology of becoming. The significance of "becoming" over "being" lies in the promise to overcome the frozen modes of being and of representation that make some of the ontological entities untouchable and conceptually tied. As Rosi Braidotti proposes in her *Metamorphoses*, "(…) the point is not to know who we are, but

[7] Karen Barad, "Posthumanist Performativity: Toward an Understanding of How Matter Comes to Matter", *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, vol. 28, no. 3 (2003): 806
[8] Ibid: 810

rather what, at last, we want to become, how to represent mutations, changes and transformations, rather than Being in its classical modes."[9]

What Barad calls "agential intra-action" allows the abandoning of the fixation on fleshless "words" and "significations", so typical for poststructuralism. I think that the concept of "intra-action" is a very promising theoretical device that contributes to the posthumanist project of breaking the binaries. In contrast to the usual notion of "interaction", intra-action does not imply the existence of the phenomena before knowing. The emphasis put on agency has to be taken into account when one wants to define intra-action as the production of agents of change in an open practice of becoming.[10] In the ongoing flow of agency in the process of intra-acting the boundaries between human and nonhuman are shifting and matter is not prescribed to any pre-existing subject. It is important to keep in mind that intra-actions are always exclusionary, such that they still constrain certain figurations of matter. Nevertheless, by keeping the process of becoming open intra-actions are opposed to simple determinism. As Barad notes: "Agential intra-actions are specific causal material enactments that may or may not involve "humans." Indeed, it is through such practices that the differential boundaries between "humans" and "nonhumans," "culture" and "nature," the "social" and the "scientific" are constituted."[11] I think that this approach provides an important insight into how reworking and performing the relations between human and nonhuman animals in the space of the zoological garden might look like.

As I depicted it earlier, every time I think about the posthumanist project of breaking the binary oppositions and making way for a liberatory ontology of cyborgs or hybrids with its proposition of politics of alliances and co-evolution, there is always a shadow (ghost) image of a more dystopian biopolitics derived from the Foucauldian tradition. It is especially

[9] Rosi Braidotti, *Metamorphoses. Towards a Materialist Theory of Becoming* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2002), 2.
[10] I would like to point out that the posthumanist notion of agency is most severely criticized by advocates of neo-liberal fear of moral relativism caused by giving agency to nonhumans.
[11] Ibid, 817.

visible in language – can I innocently use the term "nonhuman" without the risk of being accused of de-humanizing the subject? If I say "we" and "them", am I reenacting the binary opposition again? Can a posthumanist politics (especially the one directed at nonhuman animals) be subversive without being shadowed by the totalitarian politics that aimed at reducing some lives to an animal existence? That is why I find it helpful to use theory from Agamben, who is not afraid to pose difficult questions about the meaning of the human and nonhuman in relation to Auschwitz. I do not mean to create another binary opposition here, but rather I want to emphasize the historical and theoretical continuity of posthumanism(s). I will now sketch a brief genealogy of posthumanism(s) that I see as deriving from the political theology of sovereignty, where nature and culture are unified under the political rubric of the biological.

Through creating the category of "Otherness" the "Self" can be created and put on the pedestal, so that there is always a hierarchy, not a symmetry between the two. What happens if we try to collapse those two sides of the binary? I argue that in this move of clashing the polarities we create an in-between zone, which can be seen either as a success of biopower in the figure of vulnerable life of the *homo sacer,* or as its failure in the liberatory figure of the cyborg or hybrid – opening up possibilities for new ways of living and thinking. Before dissolving any kind of binary, the political and ethical consequences of this action should be taken into account – there is a danger in carelessly collapsing the human-animal dichotomy. In my view being aware of this risk is important to prevent the posthumanist project from being easily hijacked by neo-liberal eulogists of the apocalypse.[12] Thus, it is crucial not to forget to look closer at what emerges in the transitional zone of in-between. What exists in the zone of the clash between nature/culture, and human/non-human, can be the "bare life" of a

[12] For example, Jurgen Habermas or Francis Fukuyama are successfully adopting a posthumanist framework to express their concerns about the future of human nature, liberal democracy and even human bodily integrity. See: Jurgen Habermas, *The Future of Human Nature* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2003) and Francis Fukuyama, *Our Posthuman Future: Consequences of the Biotechnology Revolution.* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2002)

refugee or an assemblage of naturalcultural chimeras. I will now examine those two contrasting constructions.

1.4 The Biopolitical Shadow of Posthumanism(s)

Let me first analyze the "darker" side of biopolitics as it is presented by Giorgio Agamben. In the beginning of his book *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life* (1998), he recalls the ancient Greek distinction between two kinds of life: *zoē* and *bios*. The first one was used to express "the simple fact of living common to all living beings (animals, men, or gods)"[13] and the latter to indicate "the form or way of living proper to an individual or a group."[14] For example, when Aristotle defines man as *politikon zoon* he refers to humans as a race or species, not as individuals. What is remarkable, Michel Foucault argues, is that "for millennia, man remained what he was for Aristotle: a living animal with the additional capacity for a political existence; modern man is an animal whose politics places his existence as a living being in question."[15] Foucault in his lecture "Society Must Be Defended" describes the new mode of power as applied to man-as-living-being, or to put it in a more straightforward manner, man-as-species in the multiplicity of populations.[16] In this sense, what he called the biopolitics of the human race seems to be a technology of domination over life that is not necessarily seen as human (read: legitimate). What is the main figure of this domain of power over life?

According to Agamben, "the fundamental activity of sovereign power is the production of bare life as originary political element and as threshold of articulation between nature and

[13] Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1998), 1.
[14] Ibid, 1.
[15] Michel Foucault, "Right of Death and Power over Life," in *The Foucault Reader*, ed. Paul Rabinow (New York: Pantheon, 1984), 265.
[16] Michel Foucault, *"Society Must Be Defended" Lectures at the College de France 1975-76*, eds. Mauro Bertani and Alessandro Fontana (New York: Picador, 2003), 242.

culture, *zoē* and *bios.*"[17] Following Hannah Arendt's notion of the "naked lives" of the refugees from her *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, Agamben develops the concept of *homo sacer*, a sacred man who may be killed and yet not sacrificed. It is an individual reduced to bare life that is without any political significance and thus is totally stripped of humanity and citizenship. Living a naked life means to be reduced to biological existence, being just one ray from the stream of life expressed by *zoē* and being submitted to the sovereign's state of exception. According to Agamben, "it can be even said that the production of biopolitical body is the original activity of sovereign power (…) Placing biological life at the centre of its calculations, the modern State therefore does nothing other than bring to light the secret tie uniting power and bare life."[18] Biology here is not a coincidental reference – the discourse of sciences of life is mostly present as power-knowledge in any biopolitical context.

The emergence of biopolitics is dated by Foucault at the dawn of the 18th century, exactly at the same time when scientific disciplines became more distinguished from each other. It is interesting how in the book *The Order of Things. An Archeology of the Human Sciences* Foucault pays a lot of attention to the natural sciences, so also to the non-human world of animals and plants that started to be neatly categorized in order to show the "continuity of nature as such"[19], so that "Nature" is specifically represented in this genealogical study of human sciences. In fact the natural sciences put by Foucault under the name of "human sciences", are mirroring the human understanding of nature, from which the human subject displaces himself at his own risk.[20] He also mentions that the idea of taxonomy is all about representing a certain vision of the world of the "others" by taking "samples" of their reality and putting them into a certain temporal frame where they are made visible in a

[17] Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, op. cit., 102.
[18] Ibid., 11.
[19] Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things. An Archeology of the Human Sciences* (New York: Vintage Books 1998), 148.
[20] I deliberately refer to this subject as male, because that is exactly the point of criticism I want to make later about this project.

specific order. Tables, collections, classifications, jars with body parts, dried up herbariums – they all resist the passing time, create myths of origin and shape history, themselves being preserved in a non-temporal space of museums, curiosity cabinets, or zoological gardens. Foucault writes:

> It is often said that the establishment of botanical gardens and zoological collections expressed a new curiosity about exotic plants and animals. In fact, these had already claimed men's interest for a long while. What had changed was the space in which it was possible to see them and from which it was possible to describe them. To the Renaissance, the strangeness of animals was a spectacle: it was featured in fairs, in tournaments, in fictitious or real combats, in reconstitutions of legends in which the bestiary displayed its ageless fables. The natural history room and the garden, as created in the Classical period, replace the circular procession of the 'show' with the arrangement of things in a 'table'.[21]

I think that this intersection of visibility and temporality can be also applied to the zoological garden. In this sense, I see the zoo as a taxonomic area of visibility that is a locus of biopower, especially as power-knowledge. This time the power is exercised on the other species that are visually dominated in the image of an Arcadian, organized structure of living beings.

Foucault diagnoses a radical transformation of politics after the Enlightenment that since then focuses on life. This shift from a rhetoric of death, to a discourse of life remains unclear and even oversimplified in Foucault's works. However, with the new protagonist, *homo sacer*, that is the embodiment of a simple biological and anonymous existence of *zoē*, it is not only life that is significant and important for the biopolitical state. The sovereign's sword is still held in the air, ready to terminate the stream of insignificant bare life, in the name of the protection of politically qualified life, exercising its power also through thanatopolitics. Agamben argues that "if there is a line in every modern state marking the point at which the decision on life becomes a decision on death, and biopolitics can turn into thanatopolitics, this line no longer appears today as a stable border dividing two clearly distinct zones."[22] Thus, for Agamben, biopolitics is a rather oppressive and totalitarian form of power that can easily

[21] Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, op. cit, 143.
[22] Ibid, 72.

slip into thanatopolitics that is focused on "life unworthy of being lived" (or "life devoid of value") with its technologies of mass dispossessions, eugenics, and even genocide. *Homo sacer* in modern biopolitics exists on the boundary between the human and the nonhuman, between the citizen and its shadow, the refugee as an indefinite, vulnerable exception of natural life.

It is worth noting that Agamben decided to turn to examining the human/nonhuman divide more closely in his work *The Open* (2002), where he engages in posthumanism much more than in his earlier works. This new approach rests on the idea that if one wants to understand the bare life's liminality it is necessary to trace the way in which the human species has managed to occupy a privileged position amongst other beings, and what are the political consequences of separating humanity from animality. In his work Agamben brings up Linnaeus, the founding father of the modern scientific taxonomy, and specifically he describes Linnaeus' problem with placing the human being in the *Systema naturae*. Agamben argues that from this scientific obstacle, the idea of the man who "is the animal that must recognize itself as human to be human"[23], emerges. Emphasizing the empty (or open) abyss between the man and the animal, Agamben seems to reconceptualize the zone of indistinction that he described in *Homo Sacer*.

1.5 The Extended Family of Cyborgs and Companion Species

Is it possible to think of biopower as an affirmative politics that is productive and can help in abandoning the anthropocentrism of Enlightenment humanism? Can there be a more subversive inhabitant of the boundary between nature and culture, or human and nonhuman than the sad figure of the *homo sacer*? The answer can be found in the figure of the cyborg – a truly posthuman entity that I cannot even innocently term a "subject". According to Donna

[23] Giorgio Agamben, *The Open. Man and Animal* (California: Stanford University Press, 2004), 26.

Haraway's definition from the famous "Cyborg Manifesto" (1985), "a cyborg is a cybernetic organism, a hybrid of machine and organism, a creature of social reality as well as a creature of fiction. Social reality is lived social relations, our most important political construction, a world-changing fiction.(…) This is a struggle over life and death, but the boundary between science fiction and social reality is an optical illusion."[24] Nature and culture are unified in this hybrid which escapes many other divisions so that it exists in a post-gender, post-capitalist world. If one writes a manifesto, she usually attempts to enunciate political revolution or at least proclaim some major change. While making the cyborg a new ontological destiny Haraway notes that "Foucault's biopolitics is a flaccid premonition of cyborg politics, a very open field."[25] She makes a significant and clear distinction between this and her proclaimed new form of politics and biopolitics. In another place she underlines that "the cyborg is not subject to Foucault's biopolitics; the cyborg simulates politics, a much more potent field of operations."[26] She refers to the cyborg as a myth of political identity simulating politics, because what she wants to emphasize is the liminality of this figure that escapes any kind of identity building techniques of liberal politics.

Why does Haraway want to distance herself so much from a Foucauldian approach? Maybe it shows that the shadow of bare life is haunting the cyborg politics? Is the line of division between one and the other clear and sharp, or is this boundary also easily deconstructed? Nevertheless, Haraway's analysis is deeply involved in recognizing modern technoscientific power as manipulating and making docile concrete bodies right now, not somewhere in the late eighteenth century. By dislocating the fixed and comfortable human subject in its male, white appearance, she draws attention to the body and its materiality as a

[24] Donna Haraway, "A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century", in *Simians, Cyborgs and Women: The Reinvention of Nature*, Donna Haraway (New York: Routledge, 1991), 149.
[25] Donna Haraway, "A Manifesto for Cyborgs: Science, Technology, and Socialist Feminism in the 1980s" [in:] *The Haraway Reader* Donna Haraway (New York and London: Routledge, 2004), 8.
[26] Ibid, 22.

result of crosscutting cleavages of not only gender, race, and class but also the major divide between the human and nonhuman, that allows her to imagine new alliances, agencies and kinships in the power-saturated knowledge production systems.

Questioning the construction of humanist ideals after World War II in the Western context, she positions her analysis beyond the Agambenesque notion of the Holocaust as the threshold of modernity. Instead, Haraway focuses more on colonialism and racism as intertwined with transnational capitalism and technoscience, rather than fascism, to build a basis for "self-critical practice of 'difference'."[27] I think that in this move she shows that the cyborg is not simply a celebratory and utopian illusion of a new mode of power, but rather a symbol of a coherent and non-nostalgic project of redefinition of power. As Rosi Braidotti notes, "while sharing a great deal of Foucault's premises about the modern regime of truth as 'bio-power', Haraway also questions his redefinition of power. Haraway notes that contemporary power does not work by normalized heterogeneity any more, but rather by networking, communication redesigns and multiple interconnections."[28]

Haraway's posthumanism is not only post-anthropocentric, but also feminist in the way in which she challenges androcentric visions of many contemporary theoreticians, including Foucault – who is able to talk about sexuality as the crucial way of exercising biopower, without mentioning gender. Unlike him, Haraway acknowledges that reproduction is not an empty signifier of a silenced gender and her cyborg-feminism is a project that fights back by diminishing the power over production of identities. In fact, in her analysis biopower fails in producing subjectivity and subjection, because non-fixed, non-unitary cyborgs, tricksters, oncomice and companion species, those peculiar creatures that dominate her theoretical horizon in hi-tech culture, are successful in destabilizing the ontology of fixed *being* by

[27] Donna Haraway, "Ecce Homo, Ain't (Ar'n't) I a Woman, and Inappropriate/d Others: The Human an a Post-Humanist Landscape" in *The Haraway Reader*, Donna Haraway (New York and London: Routledge, 2004), 48.
[28] Rosi Bradotti "Posthuman, All Too Human: Towards a New Process Ontology", *Theory, Culture & Society* 23(7–8) (2006), 198.

loosening the conceptual regime of unitary subjectivity. As she writes: "cyborg unities are monstrous and illegitimate; in our present political circumstances, we could hardly hope for more potent myths for resistance and recoupling."[29]

In search of "livable politics and ontologies" Haraway introduces a new protagonist of the posthumanist story – the figure of "companion species". In fact she broadens the category of relational ontology in order to "(…) see cyborgs as junior siblings in the much bigger, queer family of companion species, in which reproductive biotechno-politics are generally a surprise, sometimes even a nice surprise."[30] The word "companion" is derived from Latin *com* – "with" and *panis* –"bread" and means a "read fellow, messmate", someone with whom you share your meal. The idea of "companion animals" does not equal "companion species" and is more connected to treating some species of animals as pets, partners in sports, workers or laboratory animals. What links all animals in this category is human agreement that we do not eat companion animals.[31] In Haraway's story of co-habitation and co-evolution "fellow entities" are breaking the binaries between the human and nonhuman, nature and culture in a slightly different way than the cyborgs did. In the figure of the cyborg the emphasis is put more on the embodiment of technology and the human/machine relation, while companion species serve as a metaphor for a more relational idea of co-existing in posthuman world, where networks of rhizomatic relations form "biosocial modernity". Nevertheless, this new figure is not purely metaphorical – Haraway makes it clear that companion species are "fleshy material-semiotic presences in the body of technoscience, (…) not surrogates for theory here."[32] In this way, she wants to warn against creating empty signifiers and double-bottom-ontology that has no relation to materiality. There is no place for abstract representational

[29] Donna Haraway,) "A Manifesto for Cyborgs: Science, Technology, and Socialist Feminism in the 1980s" in *The Haraway Reader*, op. cit., 13.
[30] Donna Haraway, "Cyborgs to Companion Species: Reconfiguring Kinship in Technoscience" in *The Haraway Reader*, Donna Haraway (New York and London: Routledge, 2004), 300.
[31] Ibid, 301.
[32] Ibid, 298.

animal imagery, animal emblems and disembodied metaphors in Haraway's work. The flesh and bone species we are dealing with here are involved in praxis of egalitarian politics of becoming, where both human and animal are companion species, because of the synergy that exists materially between them.

Haraway has gone to dogs – literally and metaphorically. She writes: "unfairly, I will risk alienating my old doppelganger, the cyborg, in order to try to convince my colleagues and comrades that dogs might be better guides through the thickest of technobiopolitics in the Third Millenium of the Current Era."[33] By looking specifically at the long history of dogs' and humans' mutual shaping, Haraway gives a new sense to evolutionary theory and ecological theater. The canine story of origin is not a simplistic one-sided "domestication" of one actor by the other. It is rather a mutual shaping in "networks of co-constitution" that is deeply imbedded in both species' behavior, molecular genetics, as well as the biochemistry of their bodies.

I argue that the idea of becoming with the animal others, whether they are dogs, horses, laboratory rats, or elephants in the zoo, bears traces of a biopolitical approach. Species is a category that emerged from the modernistic and humanist obsession with classifications and creating typologies. However, biological species just as a population is a larger unit of analysis that can easily become a subject of biopower. In fact, Haraway's example of dogs and humans as companion species in the Canine Diversity Project that she described in detail, is also a perfect example of modern nonhuman biopolitics, in the sense that this particular co-evolution results in a rich biodiversity of pedigree dogs and is linked to regulatory processes of capitalism.

The management of different species in the zoological garden is an almost Godly task of deciding which endangered species will be let into the "Zoo Ark" and which will not. As a

[33] Ibid, 298.

place that is also highly involved in the capitalist system the zoo keeps certain animal populations that are highly profitable, or desired by the audience of the spectacle. On the other hand, the notion of the companion species opens up multiple possibilities to rethink the roles of animals in our lives. However, if anyone thinks that Haraway is an advocate of human or animal rights discourse, one would be disappointed to hear that the idea of the companion species has nothing to do with this kind of approach, represented for example by Peter Singer. Instead, Haraway writes:

> The story requires considering seriously "companion animals" and complex moral-scientific action outside the straight-jackets of much animal rights discourse, feminist and otherwise. "Companion species" is not a very friendly notion for those "animal rights" perspectives that rely on a scale of similarity to human mentality for assigning value. Both people and their partners are co-constructed I the history of companion species, and the issues of hierarchy and cruelty, as well a colleagueship and responsibility, are open and polyvalent, both historically and morally. (…) The point is to engage "ontological choreography" in the yearning for more livable and lively relationships across kinds, human and non-human.[34]

"Companion Species Manifesto" is a politico-ethical project. It also involves feminist politics in the sense that it decompresses the hermetically sealed individual of the liberal discourse. The companion species are liberatory figures, because as Haraway frames it "they do this right in the belly of the monster – inside biotechnology and the New World Order, Inc."[35] Moreover, Haraway complicates the story, by making the suffering female black slave the paradigmatic figure of humanity. This goes in line with the biopolitical horizon of bare life, depicted by Agamben, but it is also a kind of critique of his approach. The naked life for Agamben is potentially any kind of life, to this extent it seems to be universally applicable. Conversely, Haraway gives this neutral non-citizen particular gender, race, and class characteristics. She writes: "black women were constituted simultaneously racially and sexually – as marked female (animal, sexualized, and without rights), but not as woman (human, potential wife, conduit for the name of the father) – in a specific institution, slavery, that excluded them from "culture" defined as the circulation of signs through the system of

[34] Ibid, 316-317.
[35] Ibid, 308.

marriage."[36] The problem is that in this light humanity does not seem to be emancipatory at all, contrary to what Haraway was trying to argue in "Ecce Homo, Ain't (Ar'n't) I a Woman, and Inappropriate/d Others: The Human an a Post-Humanist Landscape". As humanity is overshadowed by biopolitics, the posthumanist project seems to provide a real opportunity to overcome hierarchical dependencies of biomodernity.

Posthumanism as presented by Haraway is a project of creating new relations with animal others. The questions are: Are the zoo animals significant others for us? How can we approach the fact that these animals are captive and that their living bodies were (and still are) being used in building multiple discourses: national, colonial, imperial, capitalist, patriarchal? As Haraway emphasizes, the relationship we are talking about here is not always an easy and pleasant one. The idea is that posthumanism is an ethical project. If the zoological garden is a taxonomical space of visibility, than posthumanism should be its iconoclast!

[36] Donna Haraway, "Ecce Homo, Ain't (Ar'n't) I a Woman, and Inappropriate/d Others: The Human an a Post-Humanist Landscape", op. cit., 55.

Chapter 2: History of the Zoological Garden

> *Recognizing the continuing centrality of humans in the history of animals has two consequences that can upset the wider anthropocentric attitudes. The first is a reexamination of the past and a reassessment of the ways in which humans have perceived and treated animals. The second emerges out of the first, and is a new assessment of our own status as "humans."*
>
> Erica Fudge, "A Left-Handed Blow: Writing the History of Animals"

2.1 Introduction

Imagine a sunny Sunday afternoon. A perfect day to explore the city, or to find your way (back?) to Nature. You can do both at the same time by visiting a special place that is supposed to be an island of wilderness in the middle of urban environment – the zoological garden. What is so special about this place? First of all the zoo is a peculiar space where entertainment is interlaced with science, where animals are neatly categorized according to species in fabricated naturalness, exposed to the burning gaze of visitors. People go to the zoo to know something about animals; hence to watch them, look at them, observe. Exotic animals, lions, tigers, zebras, giraffes, elephants, monkeys, live next to domesticated ones, donkeys, horses, miniature pigs, sheep, goats – the children's beloved ones… Nature is beautiful, but can be cruel and dangerous, so it is better to experience wildlife in the safe space of the zoological garden where nature is properly regulated. However, what is most important from my point of view is that the zoo is also a space where most visibly – in the form of bars, fences or glass barriers – the division between human and nonhuman is being constructed.

In this chapter I want to de-romanticize and unpack the symbolic meaning of the zoological garden by showing that it is not such an innocent place for a Sunday walk as it

seems to be at first glance. My main theoretical tool is the concept of the "anthropological machine" coined by Giorgio Agamben to explain how the boundary between human and animal is produced.[37] I start with a genealogy of the zoological garden, tracing the lineages and history of animal collections, moving along the continuum from menageries to modern bioparks. I put special emphasis on interconnectedness of colonialism, birth of the nation state and knowledge production obsessed with categorizing and creating collections. I argue that the zoo is a biopolitical space in Foucauldian terms, and moreover, that it serves as a paradigmatic form of expressing the ideas of humanism, which I understand as a philosophical trend that started in the Renaissance. However, I focus on the Age of Enlightenment, which I mark as the period when modern zoological gardens gained their function of separating what is purely and uniquely human from animality, which had to become knowable. This is also the time when "the light of reason brightened up the darkness of ignorance". The omnipresent metaphor of light in Western culture is linked to the idea of "seeing as knowing"[38]; therefore sight and gaze appear to be central to the humanist project of the Enlightenment – that we might see as a coherent movement or historical event from a postmodern perspective. That is why I put special emphasis on the visual aspect of the zoo; this allows me to analyze the architecture and the administration of space, as well as the relation between the human audience of the zoological spectacle, and the animal others trapped in cages. I argue that the zoo as a living taxonomy is primarily a *visual* classification of species, and as a modern panoptical menagerie keeping wild animals imprisoned it is also part of power-knowledge system.

In the last part of this chapter I will briefly sketch how it is possible to use the notion of visibility and especially the gaze to establish new relations with animals that can become

[37] See: Giorgio Agamben, *The Open: Man and Animal* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2004).
[38] It is especially apparent in the use of language, for example we say "from my *perspective*", "*bright* thoughts", "point of *view*", "philosophical *reflection*", "at first *glance*" something become "*clearer*" after explanation, etc.

what Haraway calls "companion species".[39] In fact, this move that undermines the imperative of one-way observation that is usually practiced in zoos is for me a way to create alternative "zoontologies"[40], or even relational ontologies of posthumanist *becoming*, instead of the fixed humanist *being*. My argument is that the gaze can serve as a subversive tool to decentralize the human subject that has been well domesticated in the centre of the Western universe for too long now.

2.2 Genealogy of Zoological Gardens

In *The New Organon* Francis Bacon, known as a philosophical advocate of the scientific revolution, wrote: "We must make a collection or particular natural history of all the monsters and prodigious products of nature, of every novelty, rarity or abnormality in nature. But this must be done with the greatest discretion, to maintain credibility."[41] Known as the "Baconian method", this drive to create lists, collections, classifications and to organize everything in tables became the dominant method in modern science that aimed at exerting power over the natural world. Bacon's program of the reform of science set up rules for total domination of nature. He specifically advised that in order to separate the divine order from the order of human knowledge, empirical tools such as a cabinet of curiosities (Kunstkammer, Wunderkammer), a library, a garden, and a laboratory were needed to systematize samples of the natural world into a coherent whole of organized knowledge.[42] Out of those microcosmic representations of reality, the modern institutions of museums, laboratories, botanical gardens and zoos appeared, still sustaining the imperative of taxonomic

[39] See: Donna Haraway, *When Species Meet* (Minneapolis, London: University of Minnesota Press, 2008).
[40] See: Cary Wolfe ed., *Zoontologies: The Question Of The Animal* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003).
[41] Francis Bacon, *The New Organon*, eds. Lisa Jardine and Michael Silverthorne (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 149.
[42] Francis Bacon, "Gesta Grayorum", in eds. J. Spedding, R. L. Ellis, D. D. Heath, *The Works of Francis Bacon*, (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt 1962, vol. 8), 335.

order. Animals in this order were seen as objects that satisfied human curiosity. This objectification was possible thanks to the emergence of the scientific method of knowing and philosophical efforts to explain human mastery over nature. For example, Cartesian mind/body dualism or the Kantian denial of duty and moral obligations to animals enabled the display of "mechanical" bodies of objectified animal-anomalies.

In this context, in the Renaissance first menageries with live wild animals were established. Those animal collections were usually private, and animal-anomalies kept in those quasi-taxidermic menageries were often diplomatic gifts, and served as symbols of power and prestige. Animal collections as an extravagant form of luxury could be possessed only by the most wealthy people, because exotic animals were difficult to acquire and expensive to maintain. Only a few social groups could afford it: popes and bishops, sovereigns, aristocrats and wealthy patricians. A visit to such place was a privilege of limited social classes. The oldest menagerie in Western Europe was at Palermo in Sicily, where Saracen emirs, and later emperors, kept their expensive trophies. In the fifteenth century pope Leo X created the first menagerie in the Vatican.[43] Often kings and sovereigns had so called game parks, where hunting deer or bears was much easier, so that a lengthy expedition to the woods was not necessary. Moreover, game parks served not only for entertainment; the ritual of hunting also proved the sovereign's capacity to protect his subjects from the forces of wild nature, this being another symbol of power and superior social position.

According to Vernon N. Kisling, Jr.:

> Animal shipments increased between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries as new lands were settled, as scientific knowledge evolved from a generalized natural history into specialized disciplines, as transportation improved, as the popularity of animals increased among the public, and as the number of collections increased. The nineteenth century became the heyday of professional collections and popular natural history. It was an era of *omnium gatherum*, when everything in nature was deemed worthy for someone to collect and study.[44]

[43] Vernon N. Kisling, Jr., ed. *Zoo and Aquarium History: Ancient Animal Collections To Zoological Gardens* (Boca Raton London New York Washington D.C.: CRC Press: 2001), 81.
[44] Ibid., 33.

With expanding European colonization, more and more exotic animals were gathered in private menageries the main purpose of which were to give pleasure to their owners. There was also a type of traveling menagerie that went from town to town, usually showing one species of animal, for example a rhino or an elephant. Those colonial exhibitions were expressions of domination over the newly "discovered" lands. When Columbus returned to Europe he brought some living animals – that soon became regular cargo.[45]

Stationary menageries developed a certain architectonic style. An important characteristic of classic menageries was their circular layout, with a pavilion in the middle. An example of such architecture was the menagerie of Versailles in France, that was built in 1662 by the architect Le Vaux for king Luis XIV in the plan of an octagon. This panoptical form allowed the observation of animals enclosed in "transparent" cages from the walking paths surrounding the main building and aviaries. Visitors could watch displayed animals just by looking around, while the confined animals were always potentially under surveillance. Michel Foucault in *Discipline and Punish* wondered if Jeremy Bentham could have been inspired by the French royal menagerie in his project of the prison. He writes: "one finds in the programme of the Panopticon a similar concern with individualizing observation, with characterization and classification, with the analytical arrangement of space. The Panopticon is a royal menagerie; the animal is replaced by man, individual distribution by specific grouping and the king by the machinery of a furtive power."[46]

[45] Ibid., 29.
[46] Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage Books, 1995), 203.

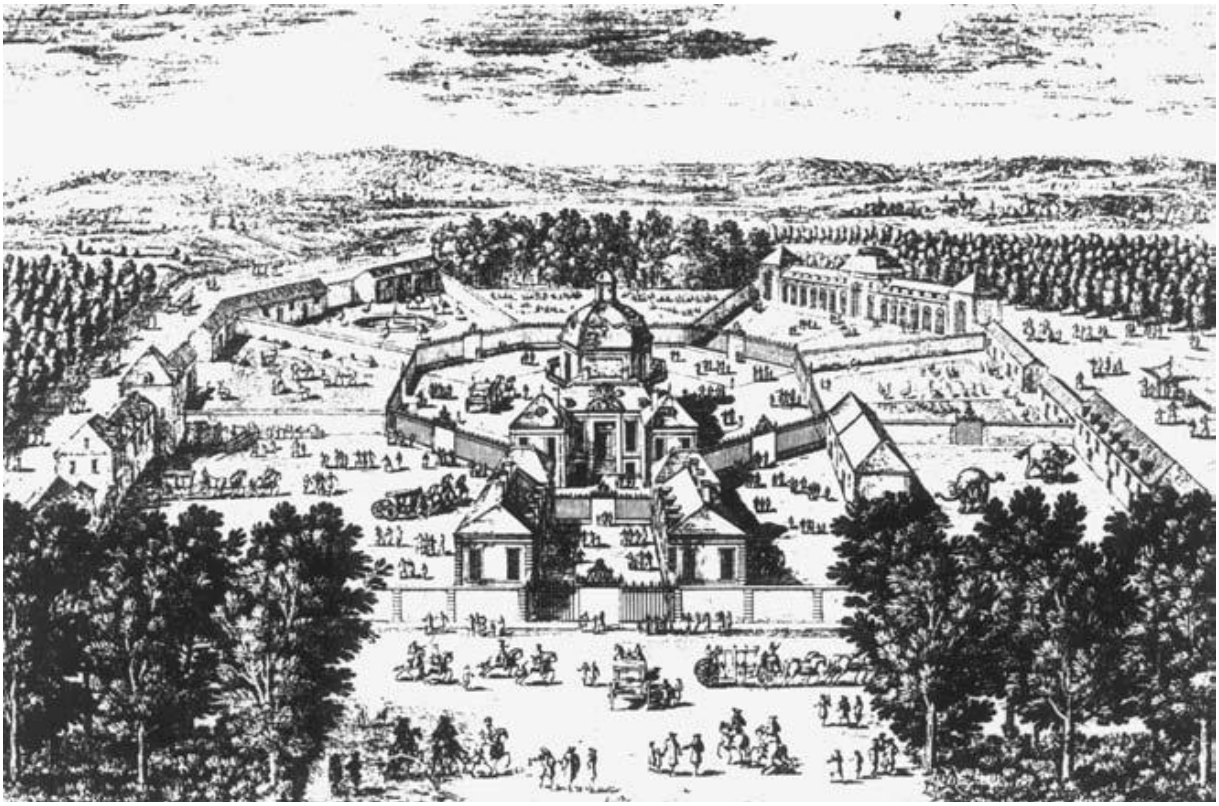

Figure 1. "Versailles menagerie, Paris. From an engraving by A. Perelle as it appeared in *Histoire des ménageries de l'antiquité à nos jours* by Gustave Loisel." Source: Vernon N. Kisling, Jr., ed. *Zoo and aquarium history: ancient animal collections to zoological gardens* (Boca Raton London New York Washington D.C.: CRC Press: 2001), 31

According to Harro Strehlow, the first modern zoo was established when after the French revolution the animals from the Versailles were transferred to the Museum of Natural History at the Jardin des Plants.[47] The transition from private menageries to modern zoos was marked by major changes in European societies in the eighteenth century. With the forces of industrialization, emergence of the new social classes of the bourgeoisie and proletariat, developments in science (especially its fragmentation into many disciplines), and the beginnings of corporate capitalism, the zoological gardens had to undergo changes too. What is interesting is that the rise of the zoo as a "public" space coincides with the rise of democracy. The zoo was therefore a site of the political project that gave access to knowledge to just certain social classes. Knowledge had to become public and the zoo that was

[47]Vernon N. Kisling, Jr., op. cit., 82.

constructed as an enlightening institution, was the perfect place to enact this kind of politics – so animal collections were first opened to the public, and eventually institutionalized. In the time of intensive nation-building influences, a zoological garden became a symbol of national pride. It is important to bear in mind that this kind of entertainment was made available not only for the bourgeoisie as a social class that was already alienated from wild or domestic animals and food production, and to whom nature could be re-appropriated and sold. Although mystifying nature and animals to the peasantry was almost impossible, in the process of mass migration from the countryside to the cities and intensified urbanization in Europe, this social class became a target of the zoo as public spectacle as well. This shows that on the other side of the fence, the allegedly unified "human subject" is also a more complex category. In this sense, the zoo I am writing about is a product of a specific representation of nature and wildlife that has been modeled for different social groups.

Displaying domestic fauna was a part of the nation-state's grand narrative of the "natural origin" of the nation and its proximity to the land, and being a collection of exotic animals it served as a manifestation of colonial power and domination. As the mass migration from villages to the cities proceeded the new public "demanded" entertainment, such that in the nineteenth century every major city in Europe attempted to establish a zoological garden with a rich animal collection. First, zoos in the continent appeared in harbor cities that were centers of trade – in Amsterdam in 1838, Antwerp in 1843, Marseille in 1855, and in Rotterdam in 1858.[48] The support of zoological and scientific societies that started to spread in Europe was also an important factor in institutionalizing former menageries. "Between 1858 and 1914, zoos opened in more than forty towns throughout Western and Central Europe. Some only existed for a short time, but most are still extant. In some cities two or more zoos existed simultaneously, or successively."[49]

[48] Ibid., 91.
[49] Ibid., 97.

Linking education, recreation, research and conservation, early modern zoos displayed not only animals, but also plants and the "culture" of origin of their specimens. The growing popularity of zoological gardens transformed them into cultural institutions that mirrored "other" cultures (in the plural) and the diversity of nature (in the singular). In this fabricated environment some remarkable buildings for animals were very similar across different zoos: bears as royal trophies usually lived in castles, deer had their miniature woods, different species of monkeys were displayed together in monkey-houses, elephant houses were built as imitations of Hindu temples, and birds populated aviaries. These institutions existed as something between urban natural parks and amusement spectacles. Exotic architecture was also "transplanted" to European zoos in the form of castles, mosques, Indian palaces, or Arabic houses.

Philipp Leopold Martin was one of the proponents of the exotic style, which he presented in his book, *The Practice of Natural History*. Strehlow writes about this precursor of exotic style: "His basic idea was to show how animals should be exhibited in houses that mirror the cultural characteristics of the areas from which they came. Sometimes, however, he wrote about the natural environment of the animals, which could be demonstrated using greenhouse exhibits."[50] In my view this representation of nature and certain styles of exhibiting animals are linked to the bourgeois fantasy of reconnecting with nature. This urban social class underwent a sort of a crisis of identity, when the heyday of industrial revolution, civilization, and progress started to pose a threat to wilderness. The ideas of romanticism, especially, as a reaction to the industrialization and rationalization of nature, influenced the aesthetic setting and styles of exhibiting animal collections. In that time social casts of poets, artists, writers, and thinkers could escape the urban sprawl and seek out the authenticity of the natural world, and have access to wild beauty in the zoological garden

[50] Ibid., 100-101.

Because early modern zoos did not put much emphasis on breeding the captivated animals, they were more similar to museums, except that they had living artifacts. In the nineteenth century what became highlighted was the so called "systematic zoo". The popularity of taxonomy influenced the way in which animals were exhibited in long rows of cages organized in systematic order, from lower to higher organisms. In *The Order of Things* Foucault notes:

> It is often said that the establishment of botanical gardens and zoological collections expressed a new curiosity about exotic plants and animals. In fact, these had already claimed men's interest for a long while. What had changed was the space in which it was possible to see them and from which it was possible to describe them. To the Renaissance, the strangeness of animals was a spectacle: it was featured in fairs, in tournaments, in fictitious or real combats, in reconstitutions of legends in which the bestiary displayed its ageless fables. The natural history room and the garden, as created in the Classical period, replace the circular procession of the 'show' with the arrangement of things in a 'table'. What came surreptitiously into being between the age of the theatre and that of the catalogue was not the desire for knowledge, but a new way of connecting things both to the eye and to discourse. A new way of making history.[51]

Another crucial change in zoological gardens is known as the "Hagenbeck Revolution", taken from the name of the German merchant of wild animals who broke the classificatory and museological principle of the zoo. In 1874 he opened a second zoo in Hamburg, called the "Carl Hagenbeck's Thierpar", where inspired by ethnological and circus shows, he introduced the idea of exhibiting several species from the same ecological or geographical environment in one place.[52] The "panorama", as his innovation was called, gave the audience an illusion of natural harmony, but in fact, the separate enclosures for each species in this landscape were just not visible to the visitors, who could experience a piece of African savannah or Antarctic landscape in the middle of Germany. This theatrical setting, with artificial rocks, hidden barriers, and technological infrastructure camouflaged under the surface of the natural habitat, is the zoological equivalent of the Foucauldian shift from

[51] Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things. An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (Routledge: the Taylor and Francis e-Library, 2005), 143.
[52] "Zoo and Aquarium Visitors", http://www.zandavisitor.com/forumtopicdetail-411-Hagenbeck_Tierpark_und_Tropen-Aquarium-Zoos, Retrieved, 08. 04. 2010

confinement to modern biopower.[53] Chains, metal bars, fences and cages were no longer needed, but the control over the animals' bodies was now more subtle and invisible in fully fabricated wilderness. As an illusion of paradise, the zoo becomes the re-creation of the idyllic Garden of Eden. It is worth noticing that Hagenbeck was also famous for his anthropological-zoological exhibition, where in the form of a show human beings of different "races" and "tribes" were displayed.[54]

Nighel Rothfels argues that the early-twentieth-century Tierpark is the origin of contemporary "immersion exhibits", where visitors were convinced that they were inside a native environment of wild animals. He describes the Bronx's Zoo Congo Gorilla Forrest exhibit:

> According to the Wildlife Conservation Society, for example, the "Congo" comprises 6.5 acres and contains representatives of 75 animal species (including 22 of the namesake gorillas), "15,000 living plants of more than 400 species," and "ten miles of fabricated vines, great fabricated trees (epoxy, steel and urethane), replicas of giant *Ceiba* trees, stilt rooted *Uapacas*, [and] trees damaged by elephants." "The Congo," the website declares with little sense of irony, "holds the distinction of being the largest African rain forest ever built" ("Fast").[55]

Civilized man feels safe among the beasts, and the illusion of an impossibly "better" nature and abstracted wilderness is supposed to work for the benefit of both human and animals. It also seems that animals find their paradise in the "almost-jungles", with plenty of food, an all-day service of vets and keepers who combat illnesses and parasites, and who even take care of mating and reproduction, where the light and humidity are regulated by hi-tech computers. However, Rothfels proves that new zoological Gardens of Eden are not so different from their nineteenth and twentieth century precursors. It is still all about the human pleasure and animal spectacle, but now anthropocentrism is masked as wildlife conservation just like the speakers imitating "sounds of nature" in immerse exhibits camouflaged in the "wilderness". "The new

[53] See: Michel Foucault, "The Great Confinement", in Rabinow, Paul (ed.)*The Foucault Reader* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984).
[54] Randy Malamud, *Reading Zoos. Representations of Animals and Captivity* (New York: New York University Press 1998), 86.
[55] Nigel Rothfels, "Immersed with Animals" in Rothfels, Nigel (ed.), *Representing Animals*, (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2002), 199.

Ark, we are told, is not simply filled with two of every kind being ushered safely into a better future world; in the new Ark animals can look forward to genetic immortality as cryogenically preserved gametes and tissue samples."[56] – he writes, pointing out later that Species Survival Programs might be not only noble projects of preserving endangered species, but a necessity of the multi-million-dollar business to assure specimen, that are now difficult to get from the wild due to international treaties and commerce laws.

The scientific background of modern zoological gardens reflects major changes in biology, etiology and especially genetics. Now, almost every zoo has a research institute, and the biggest form a separate mega-laboratories with sophisticated equipment allowing to generate more spectacular exhibits and "produce" the most desired animal-celebrities of this spectacle (now we experience "panda-mania", but other bears, primates and marine mammals are also on the peak of their popularity). Often those newly born rare species become emblems and pride of the city, or even nation. For example the polar bear Knut that was born in the Berlin Zoo in 2006 and was rejected by his mother, became a star of global media show, and his every step was watched by millions of internet users worldwide.[57] Knut brought record crowds to the Berlin Zoo (500 thousands visitors in 50 days), which registered him as an official trademark in 2007, what resulted in doubling of its shares at the Berlin Stock Exchange in a weeks time.[58] "Knutmania" continued and the little bear appeared on the cover of Vanity Fair, was photographed by Annie Leibovitz, his life story was featured in a movie[59], his name branded series of toys, sweets (special gummy bears)[60], and was a subject of several

[56] Ibid., 217.
[57] Tristana Moore, "Baby bear becomes media star" BBC News, Berlin, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/6486993.stm, Retrieved, 08. 04. 2010
[58] *"Berlin Zoo Stock Leaps as Polar Bear Fever Grows", 04. 04. 2007 Reuters, http://www.planetark.org/dailynewsstory.cfm/newsid/41236/story.htm, Retrieved, 08. 04. 2010*

[59] "Move Over Brad Pitt Polar Bear Knut to Become Hollywood Star", Der Spiegel International Online, 31. 12. 2007, http://www.spiegel.de/international/zeitgeist/0,1518,525955,00.html, Retrieved, 08. 04. 2010

[60] "Haribo expands Knut gummy bear production", 20. 04. 2007 Reuters, http://uk.reuters.com/article/idUKMOL06186920070420, Retrieved, 08. 20. 2010

songs. He also had his contract for a publishing campaign for raising awareness of global warming issues. Whether as a symbol of the fight against climate change, or simply of the city Berlin, Knut is a living prove that the time of animals as emblems and the cosmology of animal semantics has not entirely gone away with the scientific revolution.

Transition to modern zoos was marked with expansion of space arrangement. Wildlife reserves are now usually situated in the suburbs, forming zoogeographic megazoos, where visitors will not encounter metal bars or cages, but rather vast landscapes that imitate freedom and natural habitats. Increasing popularity of safari parks and educational bioparks is connected to the emergence of another scientific discipline, namely ecology. Post-colonial, postmodern zoos are developing towards better falsification of naturalness and authenticity of experience, while still sustaining the anthropocentric principle by their peculiar practice of "pseudo-eco-ethics" of wildlife preservation.

In this sense animals inhabiting zoological gardens all over the world live what Giorgio Agamben calls "bare life". Living a naked life means to be reduced to biological existence, as a form of life that can be easily made killable. According to Agamben, "it can be even said that the production of biopolitical body is the original activity of sovereign power (…) Placing biological life at the centre of its calculations, the modern State therefore does nothing other than bring to light the secret tie uniting power and bare life."[61] Bare life is also that one that has to be protected just like endangered species in modern zoological gardens.[62]

[61] Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1998), 11.

[62] Agamben writes: "On the other hand, the very rights of man that once made sense as the presupposition of the rights of the citizen are now progressively separated from and used outside the context of citizenship, for the sake of the supposed representation and protection of a bare life that is more and more driven to the margins of the nation-states, ultimately to be recodified into a new national identity." Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer,* op. cit., 78.

2.3 Do Not Feed Humans! The Anthropological Machine in the Garden of Eden

The relation between human and animal that is constantly exercised in the zoological garden marks an essential boundary that we have to confront, whether we like it or not. In *The Open* Agamben notes: "It is as if determining the border between human and animal were not just one question among many discussed by philosophers and theologians, scientists and politicians, but rather a fundamental metaphysico-political operation in which alone something like "man" can be decided upon and produced."[63] This ultimate difference that we have built to elevate humanness and to prove its uniqueness is now being contested.

As I have shown above in the history of displaying animal collections, the origins of zoological gardens are to be found not only in human curiosity, but first and foremost in taxonomic organization of human knowledge. I would like to focus on a particular device that I argue is the most important part of the zoological garden's equipment. I am thinking here about the Agambenesque "anthropological machine" that produces what is human, through human/animal opposition. Agamben writing about Linnaeus brings his maxim that "man is the animal that must recognize itself as human to be human."[64] Humanism needs a device to produce man, and to continue the everlasting philosophical quest in search of 'true human nature'. In his critique of the legacy of humanism Agamben introduces the concept of the "anthropological machine" – a device that fueled by the inclusion/exclusion mixture produces a state of exception, in which the zone of indifference forms a space of constant negotiation of humanness. Thanks to this apparatus *Homo sapiens* is suspended somewhere in-between animal and human. Agamben stresses that "like every space of exception, this zone is, in truth, perfectly empty, and the truly human being who should occur there is only the place of a ceaselessly updated decision in which the caesurae and their rearticulation are always dislocated and displaced anew. What would thus be obtained, however, is neither an animal

[63] Giorgio Agamben, *The Open: Man and Animal* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2004), 21.
[64] Ibid., 26.

life nor a human life, but only a life that is separated and excluded from itself-only a *bare life.*"[65]

The anthropological machine has two symmetrical variants, modern and ancient. The ancient machine works by inclusion of the outside (the natural world) to the inside (human subjectivity), so that the nonhuman is actually a humanized or civilized animal. The examples brought by Agamben are man-ape, the wild child *enfant sauvage*, *Homo ferus*, the "wild man" that was one of the human races described by Linnaeus[66], but also the slave, the barbarian and the foreigner. Symmetrically the machine of the moderns functions by excluding the not-yet-human from the inside, so that the non-human is obtained by animalization of man: *Homo alalus* – a term used by "Ernst Haeckel to label any primate existing between ape and Man"[67], *neomort* ("brain dead"), ape-man and also the Jew, as in-human produced within the domain of human.[68] In zoological gardens the boundary separating humans from animals is being pushed from one side to the other. In fact, humanness is being negotiated in the zoo to this extent, that human beings, especially from foreign, exotic cultures, were exhibited in animal cages for a long time. Those humans as freaks were part of circuses, but also embodied what Agamben described as animalized humans – barbarians, pagans, slaves, uncivilized almost-animals. For example the Ota Benga, a Congolese pygmy was displayed in the Monkey House of the Bronx Zoo in the beginning of the twentieth century. There was a sign on the cage where he was kept: "The African Pigmy, "Ota Benga" Age, 23 years. Height, 4 feet 11 inches. Weight, 103 pounds. Brought from the Kasai River, Congo Free State, South Central Africa, by Dr. Samuel P. Verner. Exhibited each afternoon during September."[69]

[65] Ibid., 38.
[66] Ibid., 30.
[67] Luigi Romeo, *Ecce Homo!: A lexicon of man* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins B.V., 1979), 6.
[68] Giorgio Agamben, *The Open*, op. cit., 37.
[69] "Man and Monkey Show Disapproved by Clergy. The Rev. Dr. MacArthur thinks the exhibition degrading. Colored ministers to act; The Pygmy has an orang-outang as a companion now and their antics delight the Bronx crowds." *The New York Times*, September 10, 1906, 1.

I would like to emphasize one special characteristic of the anthropological machine: its visual function. Agamben writes: "It is an optical machine constructed of a series of mirrors in which man, looking at himself, sees his own image always already deformed in the features of an ape. *Homo* is a constitutively "anthropomorphous" animal (that is, "resembling man," according to the term that Linnaeus constantly uses until the tenth edition of the *Systema),* who must recognize himself in a non-man in order to be human."[70] What is the role of this visual construction of the human/animal division in the space of zoological garden? I argue that visual aspect of the anthropological machine plays crucial role in functioning of the zoo, and I propose to treat "the gaze" as the most important and at the same time the most ambiguous part of this optical device.

2.4 The Zoological Garden as a Colonial Spectacle

As I stated earlier the zoo is a peculiar space where entertainment is interlaced with science, animals are categorized according to the modernist hegemony of the "table", and most visibly the division between human and animal is constructed. But is this the only function that animal collections serve? In this part I want to analyze the role of zoological gardens in building colonial domination. I argue that especially when we look closer at the history of the zoos, they are not simply a display of wild animals (including *Homo sapiens* until the late twentieth century), but rather they serve as appropriation of native subjectivity and are the manifestation of power of the colonizers. It is interesting how culture is located and re-created as nature, in a space that becomes an exhibition and a spectacle at the same time. I will show how from menageries to zoological gardens hegemonic power of the West was built in parallel with the project of modernization, that in European context allowed to connote the colonized Other with exotic animals. By giving the example of the so called

[70] Giorgio Agamben *The Open*, op. cit., 26-27.

"human zoo", I will prove that this semantic link was sometimes very direct and had a material dimension.

The transition from private menageries to zoological gardens in the late eighteenth century was fueled by changes in European societies – industrialization, emergence of new social classes, developments in science and the beginnings of corporate capitalism were just part of the picture. In my opinion colonization was the key factor in modernization of animal collections. Exotic animals were not only part of the "package" from the colonies, in fact, they contributed to colonization of other lands by serving as emblems of colonial power, and thus, by building the image of mythical Others.

I will analyze the interconnection between the zoo and the modernization project. Following Homi Bhabha's suggestion from his *The Location of Culture*, I treat modernity as an epistemological structure, to avoid reducing this historical event to some simple slogans (Reason, Progress, or Enlightenment). Bhabha writes: "and it is this 'taking place' of modernity, this insistent and incipient *spatial* metaphor in which the social relations of modernity are conceived, that introduces a temporality of the 'synchronous' in the structure of the 'splitting' of modernity."[71] Taking this perspective allows me to put emphasis on the interconnection of science in creating knowledge about the Others with the process of spectacularization of the Other, as well as analyzing the *spatiality* of the zoo as a modern institution. Systematic zoo was reflecting the Enlightenment epistemological principle of categorizing the phenomena in tables, collections and taxonomies. But in this way by using the "Baconian method" not only the natural world was controlled and systematized, but also other cultures were dominated through treating them as "natural" objects of Western knowledge. Labeling different species in the space of the zoo could be compared to the colonial discourse on the "native experience".

[71] Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London and New York: Routledge, 2004), 344-345.

In the nineteenth century the *topos* of primordial nature was exhibited in the "zoological garden of Eden", where the new myth of origin of the nation-state was build on colonial specimens depicting the state of nature that preceded the creation of civilized state. Linda Kalof states that: "Fuelled by the growing interest in natural history, increased exploration activities and the expansion of colonialism, the nineteenth century was a time of spectacular displays of animal 'specimens'."[72] My suggestion is that the zoological garden was the first place, where masses of people in the West experienced other cultures. Despite the obvious fact of trading channels that enabled the creation of exotic animal collection, most importantly thanks to the zoo modern racism could be practiced not only in the scientific cabinets and laboratories, but also on a mass scale. Therefore, the zoo is another colonial institution which, as Theodor Adorno said, "paid symbolic tribute in the form of animals."[73] Moreover, placing "barbaric savages" on the lower level of development as "primitive" was partly enacted in zoological gardens. Through displaying the exotic nature of the colonized lands, "primitive" societies were pictured as a-historical, as closer to nature and its laws. For example, exotic architecture was "transplanted" to European zoos in form of castles, mosques, Indian palaces, Arabic houses, imitations of Hindu temples. The way that animals were exhibited was designed to mirror the cultural background of the specimens, so that the zoo was also an early form of tourism. In this way Western subjectivity was created in opposition to the colonized Other. The mechanism of creating Western identity as a mirror image of the Other has been described by Edward Said in his *Orientalism*.[74] This colonized Other had to be properly and entirely visible and knowable, just like animals in the zoo, where panoptical spectacle allows the visitors to "know" and experience wild Africa or Asia.

Timothy Mitchell argues that "orientalism (…) illustrates not just the strange ways in which the West has treated the "outside world"; it illustrates how the Western experience of

[72] Linda Kalof, *Looking at Animals in Human History* (London: Reaktion Book, 2007), 145.
[73] Theodor Adorno, *Minima Moralia. Reflections From a Damaged Life* (London: Verso, 1978), 116.
[74] See: Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (London: Penguin, 1977).

order and truth, epitomized in the exhibition, depended upon creating the very effect of an "outside", of an "external reality" beyond all representation."[75] The West had to invent the "outside world" in such a form that would help elevating the superior value of Western civilization. Using the old and proven nature/culture divide, the "savage" was invented as something existing in a space between both sides of the binary. In this sense, "hybridization" would be a parallel to the process of "otherization" – the term hybridity is used in postcolonial theory to denote the ambivalence of colonial domination and its productivity in shifting fixities. According to Bhabha, "hybridity is the name of the displacement of value from symbol to sign that causes the dominant discourse to split along the axis of its power to be representative, authoritative. Hybridity represents that ambivalent "turn" of the discriminated subject into terrifying, exorbitant object of paranoid classification (…)."[76] Bearing in mind this definition, the way in which animals-emblems are categorized in the space of the zoological garden, their typology and neatly constructed order of cages and enclosures is an example of this "paranoid" attempt to avoid the non-recognizable, dangerous hybrid. However, it is important to note that this comparison is far from Bhabha's idea of colonial mimicry that is linked to his notion of hydridity.

In *Colonising Egypt* Mitchell described the visit of Egyptian delegation to the World Exhibition in Paris in 1889. The idea of exhibiting the world in miniature, was an attempt to epistemologically and symbolically organize and posses the globe. Mitchell writes:

> This discernability, between a representation and the original object or idea to which it refers, is the principle on which exhibitions exist. It is the method by which our effect of an original 'reality' is achieved. The same principle was at work, moreover, outside the exhibition. It was at work in museums and zoological gardens, in Orientalist congresses and libraries, in statistics and legal codes, in works of art and Alpine scenery, in the commerce of department stores and in the architecture of the city.[77]

[75] Timothy Mitchell, "The World as Exhibition", *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 31, No. 2 (Apr., 1989), Cambridge University Press, 218.
[76] Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London and New York: Routledge, 2004), 162.
[77] Timothy Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt* (London: University of California Press, 1988), 172.

At the same World Exhibition in Paris that brought the icon of France the Eiffel Tower, among many peculiarities of the New World a "Negro Village" (village nègre) was presented. Visited by 28 million people, the 1889 "Exposition Universelle" displayed 400 indigenous people as the major attraction.[78] Human zoos were popular in the nineteenth and twentieth century as spectacles of 'primitive' cultures, that Western explorers came across during their colonizing missions. Not only curiosity of the masses demanding entertainment contributed to the practice of exhibiting humans in cages, but also the development of modern racism that was based on scientific theories of Social Darwinism and newly emerged disciplines of anthropology and ethnology. Placing the kidnapped indigenous populations somewhere between the apes and humans shows how in the space of the zoological garden "hybridity was being tamed and appropriated". Hierarchy between the races and anatomical differences could be visualized and thus, public display of non-Europeans reinforced the dominant Western ideology of progress. But most importantly the transition from scientific racism to modern mass racism was enabled thanks to those "first encounters with the Other". "Civilized" audiences enjoyed the spectacle of the "real" exotic people and beasts, taking a walk on Sunday afternoon, after going to church - a nice family entertainment… Populations exposed to the curious Western gaze were not only objectified, but also essentialized, de-contextualized, animalized and often feminized. Reduced to monolithic backward examples of the unknown land's inhabitants, the "specimens" of the human zoos were displayed with the emphasis put on some of their peculiar (for the Europeans) features, like Ota Benga's triangular teeth[79], or Saartjie Baartman's sexual bodily features.[80] However, it is important to

[78] Nicolas Bancel, Pascal Blanchard and Sandrine Lemaire "Ces zoos humains de la République coloniale." *Le Monde Diplomatique,* August 2000, 16-17.

[79] Ota Benga, a Congolese pygmy was displayed in the Monkey House of the Bronx Zoo in the beginning of the twentieth century. "Man and Monkey Show Disapproved by Clergy." *The New York Times*, September 10, 1906, 1.

[80] Saartjie "Sarah" Baartman was women from a South African Khoikhoi tribe, who wes exhibited as freak show attractions in 19th century Europe under the name "Hottentot Venus". See: Clifton Crais; Pamela Scully,

notice that in some cases brutal naturalization and animalization of the Other was disguised under the figure of the "noble savage" that represented the nostalgia after the lost connection with the natural world of the civilized man. Did the millions of visitors of the zoological gardens and colonial fairs go there to discover the "savage", or rather to discover who they were not (or didn't want to be)? Pascal Blanchard, Nicolas Bancel, and Sandrine Lemaire argue that from today's postcolonial perspective, human zoos do not tell us much about the colonized. According to the authors:

> The vocation of these zoos, fairs, and parks was indeed to exhibit the rare, the curious, the strange, and all forms of the unusual and different. It wasn't to provide a chance to encounter individuals or cultures. The transgression of the values and norms that Europe considered to constitute civilisation was a driving force behind the West's "animalisation" of exotic peoples. Denied an entirely human nature, they were thus colonisable and needed to be domesticated and tamed to turn them - if possible - into civilised men. This mise en scène helped to legitimise the West's colonial action.[81]

To sum up, human zoos were both symbolic and actual exhibitions of colonial domination. Although human zoos were suppressed in our collective memory, the consumption of exoticism still continues as travel companies offer safari trips to the poor suburbs and favelas, to experience "the real" culture of the visited country and meet flesh and bone people from the street. The problem is that those "human safaris" produce new postcolonial subalterns. I argue that also the ideology of multiculturalism creating an illusion of global arcadia and aesthetic diversity turns the world into another exhibition or a giant zoo.

If one wonders what the role is of a wild jungle in the bowels of the empire, I think that the key function of this institution is to serve as an instrument of colonial domination and modern racism. As suggested in the last part of this chapter I think that even current zoological gardens are symbols of continuation of the supremacist colonial ideology. For example the ongoing practice of giving African names to the gorillas in American and

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Sara Baartman and the Hottentot Venus: a ghost story and a biography (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009).

[81] Pascal Blanchard, Nicolas Bancel, and Sandrine Lemaire "From human zoos to colonial apotheoses: the era of exhibiting the Other", http://www.africultures.com/anglais/articles_anglais/43blanchard.htm, Retrieved 14. 04. 2010

European zoos is literally using colonialist language. In my view both, the bodies of the zoo animals and the animalized bodies of exhibited humans were taking part in the one-side benefit colonial spectacle. I think that regarding the history and purpose of creating the zoological garden, its decolonization is impossible. No matter if the zoo displays beasts and savages, or "just" animals, it still remains a legacy of the colonial era.

Chapter 3: Case Study – The Budapest Zoological Garden

3.1 Introduction

I do not like zoos. Maybe I should have made it clear before, but I do not feel comfortable or entertained in those places that for many are as unproblematic as any other kind of park, opera house or theater that every city should be proud of. Nevertheless, writing with a premise to problematize the zoo I decided to visit this venue of human/nonhuman encounter to *see* the anthropological machine in motion. In this chapter I am going to look closer at a particular zoological garden in order to provide a specific analysis of a functioning institution, its history, discourse, and context in which it is set. I decided to do a case study of a zoo, because following the methodology proposed by Donna Haraway in her "Situated Knowledges"[82], I want to situate theoretical claims I make and try to apply the idea of partiality of knowledge that is being produced within theoretical debates of posthumanism. The partiality of knowledge implies epistemological re-thinking of the dominant doctrines of disembodied scientific objectivity, so that whenever I use the imagined "we" or "they" it should be not left unproblematized. This chapter is a story of a zoo, in this case, the Budapest Zoo.[83]

My research is mainly based on my visits to the Budapest Zoo, where I was observing both the nonhuman animals in cages and human animals on the other side of the fence. Equipped with a photographic camera that enabled me to register my findings I entered the

[82] See, Donna Haraway, "Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective" in *Simians Cyborgs, and Women. The Reinvention of Nature*, Donna Haraway (New York: Routledge, 1991).

[83] I have chosen to study the Zoological Garden in Budapest because it is one of the oldest zoos in Europe, what gave an opportunity to track the development of this institution from its foundation in the nineteenth century. I am particularly interested in the transition from private gardens to modern zoos. Another reason for making a case study on the zoo in Budapest was that by looking at a European zoological garden I wanted to see if colonial and nationalist patterns are being preserved in that public space.

zoo as a social scientist in disguise.[84] Using photography as a specific technology of vision that is often compared to the practice of hunting, I was trying to capture the zoological area of visibility, that I argue is primarily fueling the anthropological machine as an optical device. My method of observation might seem paradoxical, but as Roland Barthes states in his *Camera Lucida*, "(…) the Photograph separates attention from perception, and yields up only the former, even if it is impossible without the latter; this is that aberrant thing, *noesis* without *noeme*, and action of thought without thought, and aim without target."[85] With a device that helped me concentrate my attention on certain issues I was interested in the zoo I became an observer in the zoo – an observer searching for some discrepancies in the image of this biopolitical institution, tracing cracks in the wall separating the animal from the human. I also analyze the history of the Budapest Zoo, the zoo website as a representation of its goals and marketing strategies, and the movie *Zoo in Budapest* from 1933, that was shot on location and adds an interesting perspective to the mystical symbolic surrounding the zoological garden. My aim here is to show the zoo in its wholeness and to expose its particularities at the same time. I am especially interested in changes in space arrangement and management of animal life in the zoo. By depicting the historical development of the zoo in Budapest and placing it in the national and geographical context I want to expose the work of "zoopolitics" in which animals become tools for human "identity-craft" and tokens for human values.

[84] I was not the only one doing research in the Budapest Zoo. However, other scientists I have met were etiologists studying the behavior of captivated animals. No one besides me was interested in studying behavior of human animals, not to mention relations between the two.
[85] Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida. Reflections on Photography*, trans. Richard Howard (New York: Hil and Wang A Division of Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1981), 111.

3.2 History of the Budapest Zoological Garden

"As a modern zoo, we serve nature conservation, research, recreation and education purposes, but we have a long and exciting history, and a unique architectural heritage."[86] – this information can be found on the Budapest Zoo's website. As presumably "modern" institution the zoological garden in Budapest distances itself from the past practices of displaying animals and emphasizes its role in wildlife conservation. How did this past look like?

The Budapest Zoo was opened in 1866 and thus, is the second oldest zoo in Europe. It is a result of cooperation of wealthy aristocrats, who created a private non-profit company devoted to establish the first zoo in Hungary. The stakeholders and initiators of this enterprise were among others Janos Xantus (a traveler and naturalist), Jozsef Szabo (a university professor), Jozsef Gerenday (director of the University Botanical Gardens), and Agoston Kubinyi (director of the Hungarian National Museum).[87] The Hungarian scientific elite supported the project not only financially, but also by convincing the Budapest municipal council to locate the new enterprise in the city park's botanical garden.

In the beginning the zoo kept approximately 500 animals, some of them donated by wealthy Hungarians, others transported from the Vienna Zoo. The zoo had 11 buildings, among them artificial ruins of a castle where owls and wolfs were kept.[88] Most of the architecture mirrored Swiss and Hungarian peasant style. From the beginning native fauna was exhibited in the zoo, that was famous from breeding domestic animals like for example originally Hungarian dog breeds (the puli, puni, and vizsla), the great horned Hungarian cattle. Exotic animals arrived later: the first giraffe was bought from the Schönbrunn

[86] EAZA Zoohorticultural Group, "Budapest Zoo. 144 years of Budapest Zoo" http://www.zoobudapest.hu/ezg/index.php?page=9, Retrieved 01. 06. 2010
[87] Vernon N. Kisling, Jr., ed. *Zoo and aquarium history : ancient animal collections to zoological gardens* (Boca Raton London New York Washington D.C.: CRC Press: 2001),142.
[88] Mirtse Áron, Mirtse Zsuzsa, eds., *Ablak A Természetre. Évszázadok Állatkertje Budapesten* (Fővárosi Állat - és Növénykert: Budapest, 2001), 15.

Menagerie in 1868, the first African elephant arrived in 1875, while the Indian elephant came in 1883, and a rare Sumatran rhino was bought in 1894.[89]

It is important to mention that nation building tendencies were present in the Budapest Zoo from its foundation. Emphasis put on reintroduction and purity of typically Hungarian breeds was turning animal bodies into physical manifestation of national identity. In 1896 country's Millennium was celebrated. While impressive monuments were erected in the Heroes' Square to commemorate the Hungarian conquest, major celebration of the birth of the nation took place in the Budapest Zoo. Although the investment in animals was huge, the celebration was a failure, because visitors expected a spectacle that the zoo did not provide. Facing financial difficulties in years 1873-1906 and radical decline in the number of visitors, the zoo was turned into an amusement park, offering a carnival spectacle, circus performance. There was even a lottery in which one could purchase a wild animal, but without possibility of taking it out of the zoo if it was dangerous.[90] The expanding entertainment industry reached Budapest and soon the zoo became a welcoming place for any kind of curiosity exhibition or a freak show. Among many others, Carl Hagenbeck's famous traveling ethnographic and zoological show was performing in Budapest in 1870's, showing wild exotic animals and indigenous people.[91]

The biggest attraction that brought crowds and ensured financial stability to the zoo in that time was the exhibition of "Miss Krao – the Missing Link". I want to briefly present her story here, because it perfectly exposes how thin the line is that separates the zoo from the circus, and struggles in the zoo's image that is trapped between science and entertainment. Krao was a girl from Indochina, who was exhibited in freak shows around Europe, because

[89] Vernon N. Kisling, Jr., ed., op. cit., 143.
[90] Mirtse Áron, Mirtse Zsuzsa, eds., op. cit, p. 16
[91] Ibid., 17.

her dark-skinned body was covered in hair.[92] She was advertised by her impresario G.A. Farrini as "A Living Proof of Darwin's Theory of the Descent of Man".[93] So called "transitional species", half-humans, half-animals became extremely popular in the second half of the nineteenth century and the concept of the missing link was the way in which people imagined and envisioned Charles Darwin's evolutionary theory. Being sold as a living proof of Darwinian theory, Miss Krao was not constructed as a freak of nature, but rather a scientific specimen. Therefore, she was not studied by teratologists, but ethnologists and naturalists. Nadja Durbach in her *Spectacle of Deformity* argues that "Krao was an extremely popular freak show act because her exhibition capitalized on late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century preoccupations with the interrelationships among Darwinism, imperialism, and the sexuality of the "primitive" body."[94] The eroticism and exoticism of her hairy body played an important role in commercialization of her act in the realm of international freak show circuit disguised as a scientific and educational exhibit. Emphasizing her simian features and accentuating her family's abnormal hairiness was crucial in building her status as a liminal species. Adopted by her impresario, Krao was constructed as a grotesque figure, whose animal and sexual features were exaggerated in order to distinguish her savagery from civilized Europeans she was being shown to. "Hairy woman" was usually positioned in a jungle setting, leaning against a rock. Interestingly, this image can be read as both *enfant sauvage* and ape-man that Giorgio Agamben sees as two different examples of non-humans produced by the anthropological machine – one being a product of an ancient, and the other the modern variant of the device. Miss Krao seems to occupy a position of a double in-betweeness – as a product of the anthropological machine she is a liminal being, but then she

[92] Her original name is unknown – she was adopted by her first impresario and took his last name Farrini. See: Nadja Durbach, *Spectacle of Deformity: Freak Shows and Modern British Culture* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2009).
[93] Nadja Durbach, *Spectacle of Deformity: Freak Shows and Modern British Culture* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2009), 89.
[94] Ibid., 89.

is also between the two versions of the machine; she is both animalized human and humanized animal. To finish this story, the income from Miss Krao's exhibition in Budapest Zoo financed the building of the main gate of the Budapest zoological garden that became its trademark. [95]

The formal separation of the zoological garden from the circus took place in 1912.[96] The first major re-building of the zoo happened as a result of change in its legal status in 1907. The private company that owned the zoological garden went bankrupt and municipal government took over the zoo, introducing important reforms. Before that, it was reported that due to problems with space caused by constant and uncontrolled purchasing of new specimens, the cages were made smaller to squeeze more animals, so that their living conditions were getting worse. Many of the animals died, because there was no interest in feeding them regularly, providing enough space, nor veterinary care. It is worth to mention that it was just in 1927 that the first vet was officially hired in the zoo. After the city council took over, the mayor, "István Bárczy had all the buildings demolished and commissioned famous architects to build new ones."[97] The period of revival started with Adolf Lendl's reforms; he proposed to reorganize the way of exhibiting certain species according to Darwinian tree of species accompanied by careful representation of their natural habitats. The transition from the "chaos" of the freak show to taxonomic order started, and the new zoo was build in the place of the old structure. Most of the buildings raised in that time reflected the architecture typical for the areas where the displayed animals came from originally. For example the Elephant House was built in oriental style, reminding of an Indian Temple.

The "Hagenbeck's Revolution" (chapter 2) in displaying animals also affected the Budapest Zoo in that time. In 1912 his idea of the "panorama", a vast space with different

[95] Mirtse Áron, Mirtse Zsuzsa, eds., op. cit, 16.
[96] Ibid., 24.
[97] EAZA Zoohorticultural Group, "Budapest Zoo. 144 years of Budapest Zoo" http://www.zoobudapest.hu/ezg/index.php?page=9, Retrieved, 01. 06. 2010

species from the same geographical area shown together in a designed landscape, was introduced and the visitors could enjoy the "African Panorama" in the center of Budapest. One of the most important investments in this project was the construction of an artificial mountain, in consultation with the Hungarian Geological Institute in order to build a perfect imitation. It is even possible to go inside the mountain and see the pillars supporting the construction, revealing the fakeness of this "piece of natural environment". Moreover, in the early twentieth century inside the mountain a cinema called "The Cave Cinema" was opened.[98]

The war period was very difficult for the zoo located near the strategic railway system. During World War I the zoo was opened but faced problems due to food shortages. The bombings in the World War II destroyed the zoo severely. Out of 2500 animals only 15 survived the war. The zoo was reopened in 1945, but the second major rebuild was undertaken in 1956. During socialism much more scientific control was imposed on the zoo, and in the 1960's a research institute started to function, and more emphasis was put on education. By then the zoo started to become famous from breeding rare species: mostly the white rhino and several species of anthropoids.

Recently, the zoo tries to counter the old paradigm of displaying animals and thus emphasizes its role in natural life preservation. "Conservation" seems to be the new paradigm of this institution – not only animals are being preserved here, but also the emphasis is put on restoring the original Art Nouveau architecture. "Several animal houses have been restored to their former glory, such as the Palm and Elephant Houses, while others have been modernised. The reconstruction was aimed not only at preserving and enriching the zoo's environment and buildings as historic monuments, but also at improving living conditions for

[98] The "Cave Cinema" is functioning now too.

animals."[99] Currently, the zoo exhibits 954 animal species (6870 specimen) and approximately 3500 plant species[100] and is visited by 1 207 000 visitors per year.[101] I was just supposed to become one of them.

3.3 "Nature Under Construction!" Notes From My Visit to the Budapest Zoo

My visit to the Budapest Zoo was preceeded by some investigation on the institution. Stepping to the zoo through the Art Nouveau gate that I already knew was financed by the income from Miss Krao's performance, I had some presumptions about what I would see and discover inside. I have to admit that the zoo still surprised me in many ways and while some of my assumptions were confirmed, others appeared to be false.

The location of the zoo reminds one of its past – the circus that once was part of the zoo is still functioning just next to it. In front of the entrance there were information signs warning the visitors about temporary inconveniences due to the fact that some facilities (the Great Lake, the Rock Garden, the Buffalo House and the Giraffe House) are being renovated In fact it was very interesting to see "Nature Under Construction" in the zoo and to look behind the scenes of the spectacle. Wires, machines, and workers walking on the bottom of the dried lake revealed hidden artificiality of the spectatorship of this urban jungle and exposed the bowels of the zoological performance. Nevertheless, the artificiality of the space in the zoo is overwhelming. Starting from tree branches that are made from plastic, concrete imitations of stones and rocks, ending with landscapes painted on the walls inside the cages, the conventionality of the zoo is obvious, although it aspires to provide an *authentic* way of knowing animals.

[99] EAZA Zoohorticultural Group, "Budapest Zoo. 144 years of Budapest Zoo" http://www.zoobudapest.hu/ezg/index.php?page=9, Retrieved, 01. 06. 2010
[100] Ibid.
[101] Mirtse Áron, Mirtse Zsuzsa, eds., op. cit, 117.

Figure 2. The reconstruction of the African Lake.

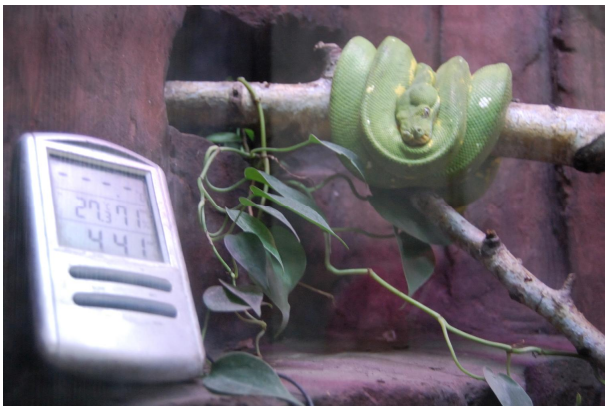

Figure 3

Figure 4

First, I would like to concentrate on the architecture of the Budapest Zoo; its restoration to its "former glory" seemed to be a priority for the "rebirth of the zoo". Many of the old buildings are designed to mirror the architecture of the geographical areas they represent and thus, the places where animals now kept inside would naturally inhabit. The exoticism is being enhanced by many details that refer to certain cultures – "native"

sculptures, indigenous carvings and paintings on the walls, totem polls, oriental umbrellas, aboriginal ornaments, etc. It is important to mention that none of those artifacts are original – they are all stylized. For example the Elephant House is a palace designed in an oriental style, with a sculpture of the Hindu god Ganesha who has the head of an elephant, inside (Fig. 5.). In many closed buildings on the floor there are footprints of different species of animals stamped in the concrete, so that the visitors literally "follow animal traces". All buildings have rich animal-symbolism details, emphasizing even more the purpose of the institution – keeping and representing animals. Nonhumans exist in the space of the zoo in double form – materially, through the presence of their encaged bodies, and symbolically, braided in the architectonical details.

Figure 5. The African Mouse.

Figure 6. Aboriginal ornaments on the Australian House.

Figure 7 The entrance to the South East Asia House.

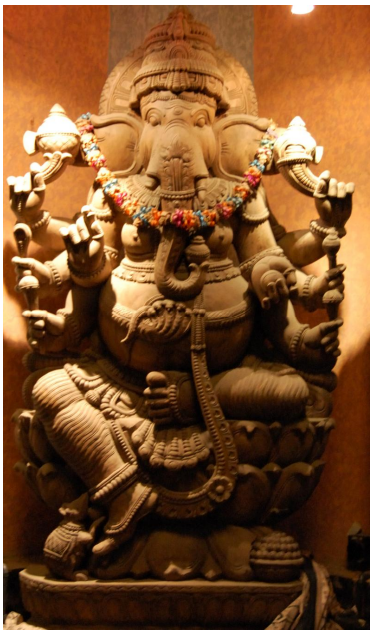

Figure 8. Representation of the Indian god Ganesha in the Elephant House.

There are also many representations of humans visible everywhere in the zoo. As Randy Mamalmud notes: "zoos incorporate imperial subjects – including, besides animals, an array of entities related to the places where the animals naturally exist, or symbolically

evoked by their display: people, resources, biotas – in a system of representation (…)."[102] What is crucial, all of the representations of humans in the Budapest Zoo are racially differentiated. White people appear only in the romantic "Climate Maze" as ancient sculptures whose bodies "harmonically coexist with nature" or as travelers, colonizers and adventurers. In contrast, representations of people from other parts of the world than Europe are accentuating their "exotic" and traditional features – always in traditional clothes, as sculptures of shamans, or ritual masks. The other form of representation of non-Europeans available in the zoo is constructing them as dangerous to wild animals in their natural environment – they appear as poachers on posters titled "Killed Wildlife", "Killing Them" with drastic images of decapitated gorillas. This kind of "zoo propaganda" is not only legitimizing its new role in endangered species conservation, but actually constructs the zoo as a refuge or asylum, saving animals from dangers that lie in wait for them in natural habitats. The ideology of the zoo as Ark providing safety for the endangered species constructs the representations of certain humans as those *who* endanger them. There is no mention of industry and multinational corporations causing deforestation as major threat to many species' survival.

Figure 9. Romanticism in the Climate Maze.

Figure 10. Information poster about poaching in Africa.

[102] Randy Malamud, *Reading Zoos. Representations of Animals and Captivity* (New York: New York University Press 1998), 71.

The second thing I want focus my attention on describing my findings from the zoological garden is visibility. Although architecture and the notion of representation are part of the visual analysis, this time I concentrate on the idea of watching the animals. Observation is facilitated by the fact that most of the bars and walls in the zoo have been replaced by transparent glass barriers. Malamud argues that "visitors watching caged animals may ignore the fact of confinement; they may somehow rationalize the need for the cage, or they may on some level enjoy the sadistic spectacle."[103] Cramped and narrow cages separating each animal belong to the past, giving way to vast, open displays of several species.

Figure 11. Photographing in the Aquarium.

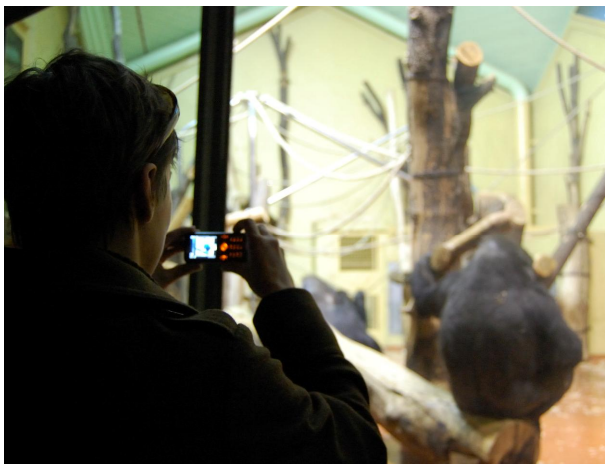

Figure 12. In the Ape House.

The omnipresence of gaze can be felt in the zoo not only in the spatial arrangement. Most of the visitors in the zoo were devoted to one activity – photographing. Myself, being engaged in taking pictures, I understand the power of technologically enhanced photographic gaze. The specificity of the photographing eye lies in its selectiveness and possessive nature. As Susan Sontag points out, "photography's ultra-mobile gaze flatters the viewer, creating a false sense of ubiquity, a deceptive mastery of experience."[104] Whether using a high class

[103] Ibid., 105.
[104] Susan Sontag, *On Photography* (New York: RosettaBooks LLC, First electronic edition, 2005), 64.

professional camera, or just the one in a mobile phone, visitors were mostly perceiving the animals' world through the photographic lenses, trying to capture animal look in a best shot, without making the barriers visible, what would reveal the fact that the images of wild animals come from a zoo. Sontag sees photography as creating a kind of visual code of *to-be-look-at-ness*, and as being "a grammar and, even more importantly, and ethics of seeing."[105] Humans need a nonhuman encounter, they need to *see* the difference, or *see* the link. In the zoo this ethics of seeing is facilitated, because it is obvious that looking at animals in these circumstances is a legitimized way of knowing the animal others. By taking pictures one possesses the image of an animal in an act of freezing its being into a cultural artifact. Moreover, Sontag notices:

> Guns have metamorphosed into cameras in this earnest comedy, the ecology safari, because nature has ceased to be what it always had been—what people needed protection from. Now nature—tamed, endangered, mortal—needs to be protected from people. When we are afraid, we shoot. But when we are nostalgic, we take pictures.[106]

What I was looking for in the zoo was the anthropological machine. Is it reasonable to look for a machine in a place that is supposed to represent nature? According to Donna Haraway, "nature is such a potent symbol of innocence partly because "she" is imagined to be without technology."[107] However, I argue that zoological garden is a visual technology that produces representations of natureculture, rather than purely separated "Nature" and "Culture" entities. I actually found a perfect representation of the Agambenesque anthropological machine in the Budapest Zoo. In the Australian House there is a section devoted to extinct species, where visitors can see stuffed animals that no longer exist in nature.[108] Among those taxidermic specimens there is an interactive game to play. The last task of this game is to open a little door with a sign "Intruders" above it. What one sees

[105] Ibid., 1.
[106] Ibid., 11.
[107] Donna Haraway, "Teddy Bear Patriarchy: Taxidermy In the Garden of Eden. New York City, 1908-1936" in *The Haraway Reader*, Donna Haraway, (New York and London: Routledge, 2004), 186.
[108] The other place to see stuffed animals is in the zoo shop – those are actually toys.

behind the door is herself/himself, because there is a mirror behind. The anthropological machine would be exactly this – a mirror hidden from a curious gaze behind a door in room filled with taxidermic reminders of the power over life. I found some more interesting optical devices in the zoo, for example a painting of the "Gorilla Family" with holes cut out for faces, so that anyone can "become" the part of the primate family. In fact, especially in the Monkey House the proximity between simians is emphasized by posters showing faces of an orangutan, a gorilla, a chimpanzee and a white woman with a slogan "Almost Human?" Just next to those images there is a representation of a nicely colored DNA chain with printed information that we share 98,8% of genetic information with simians followed by a sentence "We are relatives and this can be seen!" Another poster shows Jane Goodall with a gorilla, surprisingly not in its natural habitat, but in the zoo; the title of the poster is "Women in Wilderness". This is another form of zoo propaganda, trying to legitimize keeping the animals in captivity for their own good, just this time using a face of an "ecological celebrity".

Figure 13. Simian Family

Figure 14. "Becoming" animal others.

The last thing I would like to mention in this section is the role of consumption in the zoological spectacle. Everywhere in the zoo one can buy food, snacks and drinks. Behind every corner there is an ice-cream booth or a vending machine. The visitors consume food and the animals' visibility constantly. It is also possible to adopt an animal in the zoo, so that

for example Bactrian camels are adopted by the Budapest Water Works. Animals as emblems are still marketable products.

3.4 The Virtual Zoo – The Biopolitcal Story

The zoological garden in the twenty first century is not just the material place – it is an institution that exists on multiple levels. The Budapest Zoo combines scientific research with education and entertainment. I argue that it is also enmeshed in business, so that the laboratory that is successful in breeding wild animals does not do it just for the sake of their survival, but also to provide rare specimens to other zoos. Regardless of the rhetoric of saving the endangered species the Budapest Zoo is part of the international zoo industry. In this section I will analyze the zoo's webstite that shows the way in which it is being marketed and legitimized. The discourse presented there is a valuable source of information about how the image of the "modern zoo" is being built.

I argue that what can be observed in the zoo discourse is the shift from the image of zoological garden as a cruel institution confining animals, to modern legitimization of its existence as an asylum that ensures animals' survival. Distancing itself from former practices of displaying animals that were severely criticized, the reborn zoo is emphasizing its role in wildlife conservation and rescuing the endangered species. We read in the website: "The traditional tasks of zoos have changed a lot in the past decades. The original show-presentations were followed by descriptive zoological, ethological, physiological researches. Later the educational purposes appeared as well as the efforts for conservation of endangered species. This change of mind helped numerous animal species to survive the 20th century."[109] In my view this successful image makeover was enabled by the ecological enlightenment that

[109] Budapest Zoo & Botanical Garden Website, "Budapest Zoo and Botanical Garden – as a professional conservation workhouse for survival of endangered creatures", February 09, 2009 http://www.zoobudapest.com/conservation, Retrieved, 04. 06. 2010

brought concepts of sustainability and biodiversity into play. The change mirrors the shift, from the age of confinement to modern biopower pointed out by Michel Foucault. Traditional approach of exhibiting wild animals that involved oppressive power has been replaced by the principle of "scientific" life preservation. After all, life becomes central also in terms of the emphasis that is now put on reproduction in the zoo, what fits excellently into Foucauldian analysis of biopower.

The most important information provided on the main page of the Budapest Zoo are short articles about new animal babies – "Gorilla baby ready for visitors", "Baby at the Orangutans, Too!", "Capybara babies were born!", "Suricate babies were born!", "Another successful rhino birth in Budapest Zoo!".[110] The newborns become main attractions for the public, or even a kind of zoo celebrities. For example, reading about the birth of the new southern white rhinoceros, one gets to know that its mother, Lulu, is already a "world famous" breeder. Later we can read a passage about the significance of human agency in this reproductive success: "this birth again is a major sensation in the world of biological research regarding wildlife conservation, since Lulu was conceived through artificial insemination but this time with use of frozen sperms of a male rhinoceros (Simba) from Colchester Zoo, UK. Both veterinarians of Budapest Zoo and specialists of the Leibniz Institute for Zoo and Wildlife Research (Leibniz Institut für Zoo- und Wildtierforschung) have worked very hard for such a successful achievement."[111] The zoo breeds mostly species that are key attractions for the public, and thus the animals become subjects of full reproductive control involving biotechnological intermediation. The language being used in the zoo news is highly anthropomorphizing even to the point of imposing human social structures and power relations on the animals. For example in the information about the arrival of the new female

[110] Budapest Zoo & Botanical Garden Website, "Main page", http://www.zoobudapest.com/english#, Retrieved, 04. 06. 2010
[111] Budapest Zoo & Botanical Garden Website, "Another successful rhino birth in Budapest Zoo!" October 22, 2008, http://www.zoobudapest.com/english/news/another-successful-rhino, Retrieved, 04. 06. 2010

gorilla to the Budapest Zoo, in an article titled "Golo's harem" we read that the main goal of the transfer was to increase the breeding possibilities in the zoo. We can also read: "The recently renovated huge Gorilla Park provides plenty of space to make Golo, the dominant male feel comfortable enough to approach the 'girls'."[112]

Even though most of the animals are given names and are being referred to as subjects, it is another form of anthropomorphism. In this sense, the life preserved and reproduced in the zoo is completely "naked". I argue that what Agamben calls the bare life is exactly the animal life being managed in the zoological garden. He writes: "bare life is no longer confined to a particular place or a definite category. It now dwells in the biological body of every living being."[113] Although I would still argue that in Agamben's philosophy bare life is understood as belonging more to the category of the human, especially as a form of life ascribed to an ontological species he classifies as *Homo sacer*. Nevertheless, thinking of zoo animals as bare life, that is a form of life still somehow included in the political realm to constitute the power of *polis*, makes the zoo part of political apparatus of sovereignty, not only an innocent spectacle. One of the most important qualities of bare life is the need of the sovereign power to protect it and preserve, so that the rule of the sovereign is legitimized.

Figure 15

Figure 16

[112] Budapest Zoo & Botanical Garden Website, "GOLO'S HAREM", November 06, 2008, http://www.zoobudapest.com/english/news/old-golo-harem, Retrieved, 04. 06. 2010

[113] Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1998), 81.

Another aspect of the virtual zoo is the notion of visibility and gaze. Thanks to the website it is possible to watch videos of the animals that are currently not visible for the visitors, for example newborns that are still protected by their mothers. The camera's eye can take the curious to the place where their eyes cannot reach, where animals are hidden from human sight. They cannot hide from human gaze even in the space that supposed to be inaccessible to the public. Webcams penetrate the space of the zoo so that every place becomes accessible for the privileged gaze. The area of visibility is enhanced with the help of technology.

3.5 The Zoo in the Silver Screen

Can the zoo be an appropriate place for a romance? The Budapest Zoo became a set for a U.S. movie directed by Rowland V. Lee in 1933.[114] The melodrama *Zoo in Budapest* with Loretta Young and Gene Raymond was shot with nonhuman actors as well – the animals from the Budapest Zoological Garden were used in that American production. I decided to analyze this film, because it provides a representation of a zoological garden that is rich in interesting references. The human and nonhuman world are represented as being in constant play.

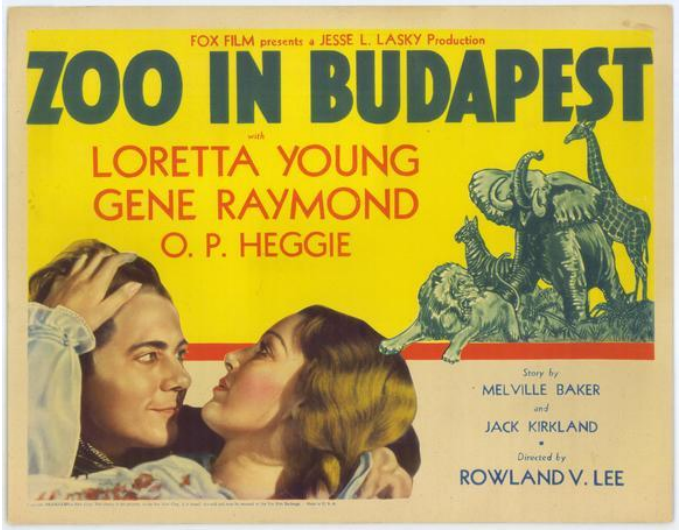

Figure 17. Movie poster, Source: http://www.moviegoods.com/movie_poster/zoo_in_budapest_1933.htm, 05.06. 2010

[114] Melville Baker, Jack Kirkland, Dan Totheroh, Louise Long, Rowland V. Lee, avi. digital format, *Zoo in Budapest*, Directed by Rowland V. Lee (USA: Fox Film, 1933).

The main character Zani (Raymond) is a young zookeeper who grew up in the Budapest Zoo and does not know the world outside, nor does he respect its rules. Lack of that knowledge and his love to animals brings him into trouble, because he tends to steal rich ladies' fur coats and burns them because he thinks that people should not kill animals and wear their fur. The director of the zoo, respected Dr. Grunbaum, who is presented as a caring and warm father, always defends his favourite, but when Zani steals a fur from a wealthy woman ready to make a complain in the police station, the "zoo-boy" becomes a fugitive in a place that he know inside out. The second character is Eve (Young), a young and beautiful orphan, who falls in love with Zani observing him during weekly trips to the zoo from the orphanage. Eve just turned 18 and to avoid being sent to work as an indentured servant she decides to escape from the strict orphanage and hides in the zoo. The two runaways meet and Zani helps Eve to hide in the empty Bear Castle. Both characters are constructed as somehow not belonging to the world of the humans: Zani feels better among animals, while Eve is herself like an animal - trapped in the orphanage just like an animal in the zoo. The parallel between Eve's captivity in the orphanage and imprisonment of the zoo animals seems to be obvious, but then finally her real escape happens to be marriage with the kind-hearted zookeeper. In the last scene, when Zani and Eve live together in a cottage where they can take care of the animals, Eve is happy that now they can live like other people. This implies that before they were somehow different from normative citizens. Eve is portrayed as someone who needs to be taken care of. Zani is also not entirely human, for example when he says phrases like "thinking is bad, feeling is good", or saying to Eve "just act naturally, you don't have to make believe for animals"[115] he is constructed almost as a "wild child" just raised by the zoo, not wild animals.

[115] Melville Baker, Jack Kirkland, Dan Totheroh, Louise Long, Rowland V. Lee, avi. digital format, *Zoo in Budapest*, Directed by Rowland V. Lee (USA: Fox Film, 1933).

Figure 18. Movie poster showing Eve and Zani,
Source:
http://www.moviegoods.com/movie_poster/zoo_in_budapest_1933.htm, 05.06. 2010

The zoo is presented as a magical and idyllic place, where majestic elephants decorated with feathers carry children on their backs walking calmly between the visitors. Among the laughter of entertained children, people enjoy not just looking at the animals, but also feeding the seals or watching the dangerous lions being fed. Immediately one can notice that the zoo is pictured as an egalitarian, public institution. The image of the audience gives a full class overview: there are members of the elite and the middle class, the proletarians are mostly represented by the zookeepers wearing identical uniforms, and the peasantry can be recognized by traditional Hungarian clothes. For example watching the governess' cousin Freda we immediately know by her clothes and behavior that she has to be a cousin from the countryside (watching the seals Freda asks her "educated" cousin if those are the alligators).

Figure 19. Movie poster,
Source: http://www.moviegoods.com/movie_poster/zoo_in_budapest_1933.htm, 05.06. 2010

In the movie there is series of interesting dialogues from which one get to know how different people perceive the role of the zoological garden. In one of the introductory scenes we can see an upper class couple stopping by the cage with wild boars. The Countess is so disguised by the smell of the animals that she has to take out a perfume from her purse. The dialog between the lady and the Count is worth citing:

"- What do you expect when you come to the zoo? Don't you know every animal smells?

- I already discovered that fact.
- Well, you're an animal.
- So are you!

- I know it, and just imagine how we must smell to the other animals."[116]

After that the lady puts on her pince-nez to look closer at the wild boars and one more time repulsed she throws a laconic "Disgusting!"

In another scene the director's strict assistant Garbosh says: "Well, people come to a zoo to see *wild* animals! And they find Zani petting ferocious lions and tigers as if they were housecats!" Dr Grunbaum himself gives another definition of the zoo: "We believe the zoo is more sanitary than most homes – a refuge for animals, where they are well fed, housed and protected from their natural enemy. A place of enlightenment and education for our citizens." This principle seemed to survive 80 years and is in power even today.

What about the animals? How are they represented in the film? In my opinion there are two symmetrical ways in which the animals "play" in the movie: the first one is by providing an image of totally anthropomorphized animals, the other is by representing human beings as animalized. In both versions the animal serves just as an analogy for the human. Here are some examples of humanizing the animals in the film. Some animals are presented as workers – the elephant (whose name doesn't leave any doubts that he is Indian) Rajah is helping in moving cages with other animals. A sick chimpanzee Zeppo is taken to the hospital. The vet examining Zeppo and the director talk to the animal just like if he was human – he is also being transported to the hospital on a stretcher. The human/nonhuman relations in the zoo seem to be harmonious at first glance. But then, there are some discrepancies in this Edenic representation of the zoo. The director's office is full of safari-like trophies in form of stuffed animals. Dr. Grunbaum is the sovereign in the zoo world and his power over life and death is proven by those taxidermic artifacts that are symbols of prestige. Other crack in the perfect harmony of the manmade paradise is shown when as a result of an accident dangerous animals are being released from the cages. Lions, tigers,

[116] Melville Baker, Jack Kirkland, Dan Totheroh, Louise Long, Rowland V. Lee, avi. digital format, *Zoo in Budapest*, Directed by Rowland V. Lee (USA: Fox Film, 1933).

leopards and elephants are still wild and bestial, so the existence of bars and cages is being fully legitimized. If those forms of oppression are not sustained, then the danger of chaos threatens the ideal harmony between men and nature.

As for animalizing the human, zoo creatures serve as symbols for human characteristics. The richest system of allegories is built around the figure of Eve. She is being compared to a frightened, skittish doe. When the zookeeper is looking for her, he calls her making a sound that people make to call domestic birds. In other occasion Zani tells that Eve has molted (changed feathers) when she changed her clothes. The other clear animal symbolic is attached to the villain – repulsive, lazy and vicious zookeeper Heinie is being called a hyena by his co-workers.

To sum up, this film could be read as a critique of the repressive social order in the beginning of the twentieth century by comparing it to life of captivated animals, with a vision of a cathartic revolt of animals escaping from their cages. However, in my opinion it is rather a more naïve representation of the zoo as a different world that exists in the heart of a large European city, which is an asylum and a refuge for animals. The zoo becomes as nostalgic symbol of confinement and exile. It is also showing how “the human” always relies upon “the animal” in creating meaning.

3.6 Conclusions

In this chapter I provided some representations of the zoo and of the animal others imprisoned there. This move could be a dangerous one, because I could fall into the trap of reiterating cultural patterns of representing zoo animals that inscribe in discourses that at first glance are innocent and unproblematic, but in fact as I argue they touch on most fundamental binaries that organize human ways of knowing the world. Crossing the gates of the zoo I believed that I entered a natural world in miniature, with animals being displayed as samples

of each kind. What I found was a complicated entanglement of different systems of representation that perfectly mirrors the biopolitical modern mode of governance. The zoo is not only a representation of nature as it could be expected – it is rather a hybrid operating on the boundary between nature and culture, where both are being negotiated and mixed constantly. Maybe the postmodern dream of blurred boundaries does not cancel the binaries at all. In social theory dualisms started to function as obscure and undefined entities – maybe it is time to move beyond the vague postulate of "deconstruction" and try to understand the mechanism of nature/culture mélanges. In my opinion the zoo gives a perfect opportunity to anchor theoretical analysis of the binaries.

Chapter 4: Zoological Iconoclast

> *I was walking along a eucalyptus-lined avenue when a cow sauntered out from behind a tree. I stopped and we looked each other in the eye. Her cowness shocked my humanness to such a degree – the moment our eyes met was so tense - I stopped dead in my tracks and lost my bearings as a man, that is, as a member of human species. The strange feeling that I was apparently discovering for the first time was the shame of a man come face-to-face with an animal. I allowed her to look and see me – this made us equal – and resulted in my also becoming an animal – but a strange even forbidden one, I would say. I continued my walk, but I felt uncomfortable … in nature, surrounding me on all sides, as if it were …watching me.*
>
> Witold Gombrowicz, *Diary: 1957-1961*

4.1 Introduction

In previous chapters I outlined the theoretical framework and historical background for my analysis of the zoological garden as a space where human and nonhuman animals are being symbolically represented, but also through their material existence the boundary between the two is being drawn. As I was trying to show, vision and seeing are crucial to my study of the zoo. In this chapter I want elaborate on that, and find out if gazing can serve as a subversive tool of becoming *with* the animal others. Becoming *with* as I described it earlier is a function of relational ontology that has a very material dimension. My aim here is to imagine an iconoclast of the regime of the one-way gaze that gives human observers a position of privileged supremacy. In this sense, posthumanist theory is helpful for me to consider nonhumans as actors of "social" change, but not in the sense of animal resistance towards human oppression, but rather as an epistemological breaking of the anthropological machine that served as my major theoretical concept. Usually an alternative to the vulgar zoological spectacle comes from the perspective of animal rights movement, or deep

ecological anti-speciesism – my aim is to move away from this discourse, and find some challenging ideas in the posthumanist theory, especially in Donna Haraway's proposition of becoming companion species in a technocultural world. I focus specifically on the visual layer of the zoological spectacle, and I am trying to find out whether gazing understood in terms of relational ontology of living beings can jam the anthropological machine. I argue that zoological iconoclast would take form of an ontological revolution. My question here is: can the meeting of an animal's eye in the zoological garden make the visitor "shocked in hers/his humanness to such a degree" that the exceptional human position would be put into question? Is being face-to-face with other animals possible in the zoo?

4.2 Looking at Animals

Why do we keep animals confined in zoological gardens? The answer seems to be simple: to look at them. In an essay "Why Look at Animals?" John Berger claims that we, the humans, have marginalized the role of other animals in our lives by transforming them into mere spectacles. He writes:

> The eyes of an animal when they consider a man are attentive and wary. The same animal may well look at other species in the same way. He does not reserve a special look for man. But by no other species except man will the animal's look be recognized as familiar. Other animals are held by the look. Man becomes himself recurring the look.[117]

For Berger this exchange of gazes trough a "narrow abyss of non-comprehension" is a highly loaded power relation. But is it possible to change or disrupt the hierarchy of this relation? Is it possible that being a viewer, one can be unexpectedly turned into an object of the gaze? This inversion of roles, from viewer to being viewed, from looker to being looked at, from subject to object, and omnipresence of the gaze could create an unusual transgression and relation between the human member of the audience and the captivated animal in a zoo.

[117] John Berger, *About Looking* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980), 4-5.

However, Berger notes that animals are always the ones being observed – "the fact that they can observe us has lost all significance. They are the objects of our ever-extending knowledge. What we know about them is an index of our power, and thus an index of what separates us from them. The more we know, the further away they are."[118] When he describes the emergence of zoos as marking "the epitaph to the relationship which was as old as man"[119], Berger remains equally reluctant to the idea that animal's gaze could have a subversive power. He notices that people go to the zoo to look at animals and to study them, but yet always something goes wrong – the view is out of focus. This is because the object of observation is alive and zoo-goers cannot have full control over it and make properly visible every time they want to watch it. His main argument is that in fact animals' bodies have been rendered marginal in Western culture, because what we care about are just our human sentimental representations of nature and the wild that animals in zoos should exemplify. Animals are reduced to tokens that are expected to behave in a proper way, but what visitors encounter in the zoo, are apathetic, lethargic, or hyperactive, bored living specimens in illusionary environment of fake trees and painted rocks. In their natural habitats, animals do not have to adjust to the schedule of human visits like it happens in captivity. In this performance of wilderness with its theatrical props the main actors are not the displayed animals, but rather the human eye that is hungry for the spectacle. Berger compares the zoo, to other sites of marginalization – ghettos, prisons, madhouses, concentration camps, making the human/animal dualism the first step to modern totalitarianism.[120] In this sense, zoological garden is a paradigmatic biopolitical space for the human/animal relation, from which all the other dualistic relations of power emerge to confine and protect bare life in the space of indifference produced by the anthropological machine. Agamben's posthumanist theoretical

[118] Ibid., 16.
[119] Ibid., 21.
[120] Ibid., 26-27.

apparatus becomes crucial in understanding the zoo as biopolitical institution and seems to be more applicable than Haraway's more utopian proposition.

This brings me to a conclusion, that after all the spectacle we turned animals into is still all about the human knowing subject. Randy Malamud in his *Reading Zoos* states that "zoos are neat paradigms, metaphors, not for animals but for *our* animals: for what people have done with them and to them; how we value them; and most essentially, how we observe them, and what this process shows about how we perceive ourselves to relate to them."[121] Whether the prisoners of a concentration camp are bestialized by having numbers tattooed on their arms like cattle, or animals are humanized in the zoo by bearing individual human names, the categories of the "beast" and the "human" in both cases remain intact entities staying in functional distance. What is relevant is that the animal is always lower in the hierarchy of these symbolisms. There is no relation upon which one might build an alternative understanding of the role of animal within the all too human, not yet posthuman nature/culture divide.

Berger concludes that "(…) nowhere in a zoo can a stranger encounter the look of an animal. At the most, the animal's gaze flickers and passes on. They look sideways. They look blindly beyond. They scan mechanically."[122] Is this sad conclusion the only way we can imagine visual relation between man and animal? Are the zoo animals really incapable of looking at us, or gazing back so that the human spectators would be ashamed in their humanness? Jacques Derrida in his book *The Animal That Therefore I Am*, described exactly this experience of feeling shame and embarrassment under the animal's eyes. He examines his experience of being caught naked by the gaze of his cat. Derrida writes: "as with every bottomless gaze, as with the eyes of the other, the gaze called "animal" offers to my sight the abyssal limit of the human: the inhuman or the ahuman, the ends of man, that is to say, the

[121] Randy Malamud, *Reading Zoos. Representations of Animals and Captivity* (New York: New York University Press 1998), 15.
[122] John Berger, op. cit., 28.

bordercrossing from which vantage man dares to announce himself to himself, thereby calling himself by the name that he believes he gives himself."[123] In this understanding, I am arguing that the gaze can serve as a subversive tool, that could jam the anthropological machine and this way disrupt the zoological production and consumption of animals' visibility that requires commodification of looking. It is usually assumed that the power of gazing is a one way relationship, while I want to prove that the response is possible. It is so unexpected from a "mute beat" that it frightens and embarrasses the (hu)man in himself.

It is also by no accident that this subject I am referring to as human or man has been framed grammatically as a male. Carol J. Adams writes about the "arrogant eye" of the human male gaze that objectifies others in order to establish itself as a subject. She argues that this paradigmatic relation requires the property of *to-be-looked-at-ness* of the others (she sees women and animals falling into this category). Adams also claims that "in patriarchal culture, the gaze is an essential aspect of subjectivity – the act of looking is an aspect of being self-identified, active, assertive, knowing who one is. We are a visually oriented species, but the ways in which we look are socially constructed."[124] Although this kind of argument emphasizes visual aspect of the zoological spectacle, it fails to destabilize the hierarchical dissymmetry between the observer and the object of vision, falling easily into the trap of binary thinking oversimplifying the process of identification. It is a move that is often used in theorizing about the gaze as possessive and penetrating – for example by comparing the act of observation in the zoo to pornography.[125]

I would like to challenge this line of argumentation that simply positions women and animals in the realm of the "others". In my opinion it is possible with the use of Donna

[123] Jacques Derrida, *The Animal That Therefore I Am*, ed. Marie Louise Mallet, trans. David Wills (New York: Fordham University Press, 2008), 12.
[124] Carol J. Adams, *Neither Man nor Beast. Feminism and the Defense of Animals* (New York: Continuum, 1995), 40.
[125] Ralph Acampara, "Zoos and Eyes: Contesting Captivity and Seeking Successor Practices", in eds. Susan J. Armstrong, and Richard G. Botzler, *The Animal Ethics Reader* (London, New York: Routledge, 2008), 501-506.

Haraway's figure of the cyborg, that is not female by accident. By making a science-fiction character a political actress of the technoscietific story a twist in the usual pattern of simultaneous "otherizing" women and animals is possible. Haraway makes a far more sophisticated point in designating the kind of link that could be made between the position of women and animals in the tangled web of human/nonhuman, racial, sexual, ethnic relations – she advocates for politics of "inappropriate/d otherness". This term means occupying an ambiguous position of in-between, that goes beyond the regime of self/other dichotomy, where one side is always creating its authenticity in relation to, or with the other. For Haraway to be inappropriate/d other "is not to fit in the *taxon*, to be dislocated from the available maps specifying kinds of actors and kinds of narratives, not to be originally fixed by difference. To be inappropriate/d is to be neither modern nor postmodern, but to insist on the *a*modern."[126] In my opinion this posthumanist proposition is much more revolutionary than the classical feminist claim presented by Adams that slips into essentialism. Inscribing in the project of creating new relations or even ontologies with nonhuman animals posthumanist alternative forms a certain political proposition that attempts to rethink the dominant narrative of the collective life and allows non-human agents to be recognized. It is interesting that Haraway specifically mentions the *taxon* as a category to be avoided in political project of posthumanism. From my point of view it is an important trope in deconstructing the taxonomic area of visibility of the zoological garden.[127]

[126] Donna Haraway, "The Promises of Monsters: A Regenerative Politics for Inappropriate/d Others", in *The Haraway Reader*, Donna Haraway, (New York and London: Routledge, 2004), 69-70.
[127] I would also like to note that Haraway's claim to amodernity, that inscribes in the critique of the enlightenment-derived concepts of nature and culture, is a reference to Bruno Latour's *We Have Never Been Modern.*

4.3 Premises and Promises of Modernity

It is easy to talk about the zoological garden locating it in the great story of modernity. In the very begging of my research project I thought that it will be appropriate to talk about the zoo as a space where only nature is being produced, enacting the modern nature/culture binary. In fact, I soon realized I was wrong and when I started to look closer at the zoological garden things got much more complicated than I primarily thought. Taking modernity and specifically the Age of Enlightenment as a point of departure became impossible and instead the project turned out to be "undoing modernity", or at least complicating its taken for granted linearity. I argue that what is being crafted in the zoo is not only a romanticized vision of nature, but actually a naturalcultural mixture that is being given a careful narrative appropriated for the human eye. The final product is being consumed by a specific kind of audience, and the changes in displaying zoological collections reflect the changes in the "human subject" that is being produced by the anthropological machine. In this sense, zoological garden is a visual technology that keeps watch and ward over the hygiene of production of permanence of nature and its separation from culture. Nevertheless, because this neat separation always fails, the zoological garden becomes a liminal space where the humanness of the modern subject is being negotiated.

Why the work of isolating nature from culture is doomed to failure as I assumed above? I think that the answer can be found in the idea of another modernistic machine parallel to Agamben's anthropogenesis, this time described by Bruno Latour. In his book *We Have Never Been Modern* Latour challenges the attempts to "retie the Gordian knot" of Nature and Culture. We often remain blind to the existence of some mixtures of those two entities, that cannot be reduced neither to "natural" things in themselves, nor to the "social" world of humans among themselves. Latour argues that paradoxically the more "the Westerners" try to separate nature from culture, the more impossible it is. It seems that the

practice of compulsive drawing the line of demarcation between what we think are Nature and Culture, the thicker the line becomes and thus more and more entities can exist on the "boundary" that is being blurred with every "separatist move". If this boundary is imagined as a wall, the thicker the wall becomes, the easier it is to walk on it, and later on even run or live on this stable boundary. In Latour's version of the modernist story, because the Westerners think they are modern they have to get rid of the quasi-objects and quasi-subjects that do not fit into any of the fixed and designated spaces. Latour argues that to be truly modern means to engage in two practices: *translation*, that creates the natural-cultural hybrids, and *purificati*on, that creates two distinct ontological zones of Nature and Culture.[128] For example, if the nineteenth century scientists found a mute "wild child" that neither fully belonged to the human world, nor was purely animal, then the work of purification is visible in the need to categorize this phenomenon and proving the child's humanness or animality. The whole work done by scientists to argue for one or another is a series of translations that happen between the material "child" and the language of science that makes it intelligible for the audience. It is important to keep those two practices separated if one wants to call herself/himself modern. This is the heart of what Latour calls the Modern Constitution – a theoretical device that the Moderns think is crucial in the organization of their world. Modern Constitution consists of three guarantees that result in paradoxes of Nature and Society. According to Latour, the power of the Moderns lies in their double language that has made them think they are invincible. He writes:

> If you criticize them by saying that Nature is a world constructed by human hands, they will show you that it is transcendent, that science is a mere intermediary allowing access to Nature, and that they keep their hands off. If you tell them that we are free and our destiny is in our own hands, they will tell you that Society is transcendent and its laws infinitely surpass us. If you object that they are being duplicitous, they will show you that they never confuse the Laws of nature with imprescriptible human freedom.[129]

[128] Bruno Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993), 10-12.
[129] Ibid., 37.

The unresolved constitutional tension produces an obscure area of in-between – a sphere full of mixed networks, of double-faced monsters, hybrids, cyborgs in which Nature and Culture are intertwined and which escape any modernists explanation. In this sense for Latour modernity has never begun. The Modern Constitution somehow works in the world but it has never been ratified. There is nothing purely natural or purely social. The Great Divide seems to reiterate other divisions, but in fact it produces more hybrids, mélanges of what it wants to separate. The parallel between the work of the anthropological machine and modern constitution is mostly visible in production of the zone of indistinction. Those series of Great Divides that are never ultimately completed lead to another conclusion: that maybe "we have never been human".[130]

The focus of my research on the transition from menageries to what we might call a modern zoological garden in the nineteenth century is not a coincidence. This framing allowed me to analyze the intersection of colonialism, nation state building, emergence of new social classes, modern capitalist system, scientific disciplines, and the principles of humanism. If one adds all those ingredients together, the result is a process of modernization started in the Enlightenment that seems to be a coherent project. However, I would like to avoid the simplistic reification of the Age of the Enlightenment as a monolithic spatio-temporal event. In this sense, the zoological garden becomes not a paradigmatic space for the modernity era, but rather a place where the rupture in the vision of "modernity with smooth edges" is observable. Latour's "amodern" stance enables this kind of critique. The common narrative of modernity as homogenous, fixed and purely Western historical period is reproduced even by such theorists like Foucault. Not to fall into this trap I propose to treat the zoological garden as a material reality that in spite of being designed in order to build the

[130] Donna Haraway in her book *When Species Meet* titled its first part "We Have Never Been Human" paraphrasing Latour. She writes: "modernist versions of humanism and posthumanism alike have taproots in a series of what Bruno Latour calls the Great Divides between what counts as nature and as society, as nonhuman and as human." Donna Haraway, *When Species Meet* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), 9.

barrier between the natural and the cultural, the human and the nonhuman, always turns out to mix the two. Jim Mason expressed this paradox by calling the zoo "a relic of a nature-alienated culture."[131] Inherent ambiguity of the space of the zoo as a modern institution is a product of the anthropological machine and the project of modernization that is never fulfilled.

Timothy Mitchell argues that modernity is understood as predominantly European event staying always in relation to the non-West. Giving that allegedly universal concept a specific location in time and space, Mitchell tries to avoid "retelling the story of the West" just by contextualizing modernity in a global framework, and he points out that the project of modernization was instable from its philosophical foundation. He writes: "If the presence of modernity occurs only as representation, this representing is not a phenomenon limited to the deliberate methods of making meaning on which accounts of the modern and the postmodern tend to focus, such as the modern novel, news reporting, museum displays, mass media, or the organization of medical, statistical, and other forms of official knowledge."[132] I would add, that zoological gardens just as novels, museums or mass media, are representations that are not fixed and gain new meanings in the process of constant transformations and appropriations justifying their presence in (post)modernity.

4.4 From Wittgenstein's Lion to Derrida's Cat

Ludwig Wittgenstein in his *Philosophical Investigations* states that "if a lion could speak, we could not understand him."[133] This paradox known as the "Wittgenstein's lion" draws attention to language as the dominant and most important feature that distinguishes

[131] Jim Mason, *An Unnatural Order: Uncovering the Roots of Our Domination of Nature and Each Other* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1993), 255.
[132] Timothy Mitchell, "The Stage of Modernity", in *Questions of Modernity* ed. Mitchell Timothy (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 2000), 20.
[133] Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, trans. G. E. M. Anscombe (Upper Saddle River: Printice Hall, 1958), 223.

humans from nonhumans. This communicational abyss seems to mark the most basic difference between the two, and justify years of "bestial" anthropocentrism. For example, Heideggerian notion of "poverty in the world"[134] that characterizes animal cognition rests on the dream of human exceptionalism derived from the human ability to use language. However, I would like to propose to move away from linguistic analysis of human/nonhuman relation and instead focus on vision as a crucial notion in rethinking human/nonhuman relation. I called this move a shift from Wittgenstein's lion to Derrida's cat, but it has nothing to do with domestication. As I mentioned earlier Derrida focuses on the animal's sight as destabilizing the firm position of the human subject. Therefore, I would like to make an argument for centrality of vision in posthumanist theory.

Although Wittgenstein in his hypothetical example did not exclude the possibility of interspecies communication, his lion is a creature from a different world to which we have no access. In contrast, Derrida's cat gains much more agency – this small cat is not a metaphorical figure or an allegory, and by looking back at no more less real and carnal philosopher the cat escapes the linguistic-semiotic trap set by canonical Western philosophers. For Derrida in his bathroom, where he encountered his cat's gaze it was not important whether the cat could speak, but rather what was interesting for him was the possibility of the response itself. Equalization of the parties of this interaction opens up the door to the world of the 'other', but the philosopher decided to stay on his side. Donna Haraway notes that "(…) with his cat, Derrida failed a simple obligation of companion species; he did not become curious what the cat might actually be doing, feeling, thinking, or perhaps making available in looking back at him."[135] Nevertheless, Derrida's move significantly undermined the common trend in representing animals as "subalterns" whose translators we, humans become by

[134] Martin Heidegger, *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics: World, Finitude, Solitude*, trans. William McNeill and Nicholas Walker (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1995), 271.

[135] Donna Haraway, *When Species Meet* (Minneapolis, London: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), 20.

claiming to understand their position. Allowing yourself to observe animals or represent them just as metaphorical figures denoting "the human" without meeting the gaze of the "objects" of this representation is no less imperialist than broadening the category of "the human" to give some rights to newly added animal subjects. Instead, what is needed are "naked words" engaging animals as possible partners of interaction and giving an open way for animal gazing back.

Haraway asks "what if not all such Western human workers with animals have refused the risk of an intersecting gaze, even if it usually has to be teased out from the repressive literary conventions of scientific publishing and description of methods?"[136] I ask, what if the zoo animals look back at human visitors or zookeepers? Does the technology of vision constructed in the zoological garden allow for any subversive gazing back? The possibility is unquestioned – if one creates a transparent cage to observe the "other" at some point one has to count that the vision is reciprocal and the transparency works both ways. Contemporary zoos trying to distance themselves from exploitative and cruel past started to expand their territories and move away from the panoptical setting, where one side of the spectacle occupied a privileged position of being able to observe without being seen. Vast spaces and imitated cagelessness result in the more realistic possibility of intersecting gazes. But the trick is that most of the zoogoers still remain blind to this destruction of the one way vision that dominates human world, that paradoxically proves its immerse poverty. According to Malamud, "the more pervasive zoos become as mediating institutions between people and animals, the more impoverishment and degradation we can expect to characterize any of our numerous cultural practices that interact with the realm of animals."[137]

How would becoming with animal others look like? The human/nonhuman visual encounter is a game of co-shaping both partners, who actually become what they are in this

[136] Ibid., 21.
[137] Randy Malamud, op. cit., 34.

myriad of entangled beings. For Haraway "the partners do not precede their relating; all that is, is the fruit of becoming with: those are the mantras of companion species."[138] I argue that the contact zone between companion species is visual. Even the word "species" from Latin *specere* in one of its meanings echoes words "looking" and "watching". In times of technoculture the meanings can be easily transformed in the rhizomatic web of dependencies, so if one responds to that, the message sent back is *respecere*, that staying in etymological ground of wordplay, links to respect and responsibility as necessary conditions of becoming *with* animal others. "Looking back in this way takes us to seeing again, to *respecere*, to the act of respect. To hold in regard, to respond, to look back reciprocally, to notice, to pay attention, to have courteous regard for, to esteem: all of that is tied to polite greeting, to constituting of the polis, where and when species meet."[139] – says Haraway. We already live in a multispecies polis, whether we like or not. That makes the reciprocal vision and responsiveness a political claim, another kind of manifesto for changing the "optics of politics". This optical intervention into politics might result in reclaiming the ethics, that I claim has been hijacked by political liberalism, that is attaching certain meanings to "tolerance", "respect" or "responsibility" making them frozen values disabling any action that would undermine the anthropocentric order. Likewise, Haraway in her essay "Promises of Monsters" writes:

> My diminutive theory's optical features are set to produce not effects of distance, but effects of connection, of embodiment, and of responsibility for an imagined elsewhere that we may yet learn to see and build here. I have high stakes in reclaiming vision from the technopornographers, those theorists of minds, bodies, and planets who insist effectively – i. e., in practice – that sight is the sense made to realize the fantasies of the phallocrats. I think sight can be remade for the activists advocates engaged in fitting political filters to see the world in the hues of red, green and ultraviolet, i.e., from the perspectives of a still possible socialism, feminist and anti-racist environmentalism, and science, for the people.[140]

[138] Donna Haraway, *When Species Meet,* op. cit., 17.
[139] Ibid. p. 19
[140] Donna Haraway, "The Promises of Monsters: A Regenerative Politics for Inappropriate/d Others", in *The Haraway Reader*, Donna Haraway, (New York and London: Routledge, 2004), 64.

To look and to be looked at – that is the relation I focused my attention on in analyzing the zoo. If the anthropological machine is a made of mirrors in which humans just see their own reflection as Agamben suggests, than the possibility of gazing back might crush this illusionary hall of mirrors.

4.5 How to Challenge the Zoological Gaze?

Donna Haraway in one of her essays examines an exhibition in the American Museum of Natural History in New York, where Nature's story of origin is being told with a deadly precision of scenes composed of animals' stuffed bodies. Haraway writes that it is "(…) natural that taxidermy and biology depend fundamentally upon vision in a hierarchy of the senses; they are tools for the construction, discovery of form."[141] Likewise, in the zoological garden the "natureculture hybrid under construction" is predominantly perceived visually with "fingery eyes" of the visitors staring at the exposed animal bodies.

But what if this spectacle turns out to be a mystification and the ones that supposed to be "possessed visually" are capable of looking back? Gazing is usually criticized as a power relation that inevitably subjugates its objects and instrumentally turns them into machinelike dead things. The penetrating control of vision over the observed object is taken for granted. Visual and representational objectification gained a special position in feminist critique that condemns the "arrogant eye" of the observer who is aligned with oppressions of sexism, racism and colonialism. I am not trying to say that this critique is not legitimized – after all, animals in the zoo are subjugated to biopower as long as their bodies are being aesthetically appropriated for the display and their reproduction is fully controlled for the entertainment of humans. However, I argue that the gaze can serve as a subversive tool operating in the

[141] Donna Haraway, "Teddy Bear Patriarchy: Taxidermy In the Garden of Eden. New York City, 1908-1936" in *The Haraway Reader*, Donna Haraway, (New York and London: Routledge, 2004), 166-167.

ambiguous space of nature/culture mélange that is not only possessed by human beings. As Haraway writes: "The ethical regard that I am trying to speak and write can be experienced across many sorts of species differences. The lovely part is that we can know only by looking and by looking back. *Respecere.*"[142]

In a posthumanist framework the emphasis is put on the relationship itself shaping the entities taking part in it. In the case of zoological garden the encounter of the animal eye might not be expected, but nonhuman response-ability is part of the relationship enabled by vision from the point of view of posthumanist ontological desire. Therefore, what I call a "zoological gaze" is not necessarily an instrumental and exploitative one, but it rather forms a possibility for rethinking the roles in the process of "becoming with". The zoological gaze understood as creating a relational ontology between the One and the Other (the latter being always a "significant other", not abstracted from the relation) can destabilize the anthropocentric comfort with which humans observe captivated animals. Paradoxically, the point of becoming with animal others is not to give the nonhumans status of subjects, which actually often occurs as giving animals a kind of temporary pseudo-subjectivity. It is rather a more radical process that undermines the constant work of anthropogenesis. Becoming with animal others requires a total transgression of the human/nonhuman dualism in which the subject is not reformulated or reworked, but totally erased. In new ecologies of becoming the human can be lost in the union that is not a metaphorical, but very carnal metamorphosis. I want to emphasize that it is not a claim for humanizing animals that often actually takes the form of objectification disguised as subject formation. Instead, the relational ontology that is shaping new kinships of becoming appears to be lethal for the subject.

Haraway's concepts of "companion species" and "becoming with animal others" are useful in depicting the theoretical horizon for the zoological iconoclast breaking the

[142] Donna Haraway, *When Species Meet*, op. cit., 164.

monopoly of one way vision during the vulgar zoological spectacle. What is at stake here is an ontological revolution. It does not mean that now all the zoo animals should be immediately set free, the cages destroyed and aquariums crushed – reformation in the zoo world will be a lengthy process, requiring dethronization of the messianic figure of the new Noah of the "zoo ark". In fact human/nonhuman relations are not always easy – there is reciprocity, but not necessarily symmetry or mimesis. I would like to point out that the term companion species, that is used here to reshape those relations, does not only apply to relations between people and pets – that would be making a shortcut towards coarse anthropomorphic categorization of other species. I argue that in the zoological garden it is possible to think of different kind of relations with the captivated animals, especially if humans fight their own "impoverishment in the world" and open up to worldly becoming with zoo animals, that would not be merely specimen anymore. Following Haraway's illustration of the laboratory animals and their people in *When Species Meet*, I propose to enter the zoo armed with her conceptual lenses and see how it is possible to challenge the taxidermic gaze. The idea is to abandon the comfortable position of the observer, so that animal's sight enters human vision. The taxonomic order imposed by empirical sciences that kept animals out of tune and out of sight for a long time can be challenged by the new model of interspecies communication. As Haraway writes about becoming with animal others: "The parties in intra-action do not admit of preset taxonomic calculation; responders are themselves co-constituted in the responding and do not have in advance a proper checklist of properties. Further, the capacity to respond, and so to be responsible, should not be expected to take on symmetrical shapes and textures for all the parties. Response cannot emerge within relationships of self-similarity."[143]

[143] Donna Haraway, *When Species Meet*, op. cit., 71.

How to practically address this iconoclastic gaze? Is an ethical zoo possible? Some scholars like Ralph Acampara suggested that there are some possible reforms and changes in the zoo, transforming it to an institution organized according to animals' needs and around their interest. He notes that "to open the possibility for genuine encounters with animal other, it is necessary first to strip the zoo of its exoticism."[144] I think it is possible to imagine that people working in the zoo are well trained companions for different species of other animals they take care of. Their everyday face-to-face with zoo animals would not fit into the romantic myth of ideally anthropomorphized nature. As Haraway points out: "once "we" have met, we can never be "the same" again. Propelled by the tasty but risky obligation of curiosity among companion species, once we know, we cannot not know. If we know well, searching with fingery eyes, we care. That is how responsibility grows."[145] However, the problem with having an ethical zoo lies in the good adaptive skills of this institution to the changing circumstances and a certain dose of resistance towards the inevitable revision of its anthropocentric and imperialist inclinations. Nevertheless, there is an observable shift from the rhetoric of "Man as tamer of the beasts" to the icon of the "new Noah", the savior of endangered species. I would even say that the zoo always had an aura of religious mission – the other observable shift would be from the zoo as representation of the idyllic Garden of Eden tracing the origins of life, to the zoo seen as Ark saving endangered species from extinction.

Today's zoological garden is not only restricted to the space that is open for the public eye – there is a lot going on behind the scenes, in the laboratory where a frozen zoo of genomes sustains the global biocapitalist market of "endangered species". With the emergence of discourses of biodiversity and doctrines of sustainability 'extinction' became a marketable category. Populations of captivated animals in the zoos are part of what Haraway

[144] Ralph Acampara, "Zoos and Eyes: Contesting Captivity and Seeking Successor Practices" in *The Animal Ethics Reader*, eds. Susan J. Armstrong and Richard G. Botzler (London, New York: Routledge, 2008), 504.
[145] Donna Haraway, *When Species Meet*, op. cit., 287.

calls the "apparatus of apocalyptic wildlife biology."[146] This sophisticated biotechnological production of wildlife under a label of "survival plan" inscribes to the rhetoric of zoological garden as the new biopolitical Noah's Ark that now has a form of a genetic reservoir. Haraway comments on that:

> (…) an irony infusing the life-interest-enhancing and management work of behaviorist trainers in zoos and other captive animal facilities is that one of the few remaining powerful justifications offered for these places is that they are essential to keep the individuals and species in their care from extinction in their vanishing habitats. Animals in zoos, for all their dabbling in the rewards of behaviorism, have never been more enmeshed in compulsory reproductive biopolitics than they are in the twenty-first century![147]

In my opinion even within the biopolitical framework in technocultural, biosocial modernity the idea is not to remain blind to the complexity of natureculture assemblages that co-shape our companion worlds. To cure the blindness of human exceptionalism we need optics of becoming *with*, that is imaginable thanks to the acknowledgment of the animal gaze that helps reformulating networks of power. Under the eyes of our animal companions, or in the optic touch of non-unitary vision, the category of human starts being a pointless and even embarrassing reminder of taxonomic fantasy of an ordered and organized world. But with alternative ontologies being shaped through this relation, human/nonhuman entanglements appear to be rather messy chimeras in sticky networks. As I suggested before, what emerges from this relational ontology is an ethics of responsibility and respect that helps in rethinking the role of the zoological garden. According to Haraway, "the ethics is in the whole ontological apparatus, in the thick complexity, in the naturecultures of being in technoculture that join cells and people in a dance of becoming."[148]

[146] Ibid., 145.
[147] Ibid., 223.
[148] Ibid., 138.

Conclusions

In his "Rules for the Human Zoo: A Response to the Letter on Humanism", Peter Sloterdijk enters a dialog with Martin Heidegger. To unpack the idea of humanism Sloterdijk proposes to look at it as a constant tension between bestializing and taming "the human". The title of the article suggests that the basic idea of humanism, as a political and philosophical trend, is to save men from bestiality mainly by the principle of the organization of civilization, just like the categorization and taming of wildlife that is taking place in the zoo. If, as Sloterdijk suggests in his essay, that "the latent message of humanism, then, is taming men"[149]; what is the message of posthumanism? I think that posthumanism allows the abandoning of the privileged position of the disembodied gaze – this allegedly "objective" God's perspective that humans ascribe to themselves, that petrifies every action as concentrated around the human subject. If in the humanist framework the zoo is all about constructing the category of the human, then the message of posthumanism is to repack this monolithic category and look at the space of the zoo in all its particularities as the human/nonhuman contact zone, where mutual becoming can potentially take place. Above all, it is all about acknowledging animal agency in this worldly becoming. This leads to a conclusion that even if the history of the zoo shows that everything about this institution reflects human values and is a demonstration of a relational mastery, there still exists an inherent ambivalence in drawing the boundary between the human and nonhuman animals. I find the best way to open up this posthumanist, transpecies space of becoming *with* in the destabilization of the anthropological machine. If the whole regime of objectifying animals is founded on the hegemony of unitary vision, then challenging this process has to take place on the same level. "Fight fire with fire", one could say - "Gaze back!" would be the slogan of the

[149] Peter Sloterdijk, "Rules for the Human Zoo: a response to the Letter on Humanism", *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 27 (2009): 15.

posthumanist iconoclast crushing the hall of mirrors in which the human subject has been trapped. In my opinion the responsiveness of the gaze opens up ways for new relations between humans and nonhumans. The etymology of the word "responsibility" can be found in the capacity to respond, thus, this new relationship could become a foundation for a multidimensional ethics of responsibility.

Operating in the realm of binary oppositions of nature/culture and human/nonhuman, I attempted to destabilize the boundaries that I thought were fixed and hermetic. However, one of my major findings is that dichotomies that are often being fetishized and demonized in the humanities, were never separated from each other well enough. In fact, the boundaries are already leaky and places like the zoo are full of natureculture hybrids. Those ambiguous entities can be celebrated as liberatory figures that are enabling alternative ontologies, or might be seen as dangerously falling into the vulnerable position of "bare life". This collapse of biopolitics between the affirmative politics of life and dystopian biopolitics made me realize that one cannot talk about just one version of posthumanism.

My study of the zoological garden as a paradigm of a biopolitical space that can be challenged by the posthumanist notion of "becoming with" animal others developed into a huge project. Addressing all the issues that came up during my work was impossible because of the limitations of the thesis. Nevertheless, I believe that I managed to set up important theoretical foundations for further studies in analyzing the human/nonhuman encounters in the zoo. The potentialities for such studies are multiple: I think the visual analysis that I proposed to make central to my study could be pushed further, and I see visual arts as a new site of challenging the anthropocentric approach and re-articulating the human/nonhuman boundary. Contemporary art as a social practice engaged in "doing" things brings about many examples of bodily becomings (with) animals. I argue that we can even talk about "Zooart" (the art of the zoo) that makes visible the character of the relation that we as humans have

with nonhuman animals in the peculiar quasi-taxidermic space of the zoological garden. How does becoming with animal others look like? How can the controlling arrogant gaze can be challenged? I found the best illustration of these processes is an artistic performance of Timo Vartiainen. His project "Human being" was a part of an art symposium "ZOOART" that took place in Poznań's (Poland) public space in 1994. The artists were invited to work in the space of the two zoological gardens: the so called Old Zoo (19th century arrangement) and the new space of the Zoological Park.[150] Vartiainen decided to undertake his project in the Old Zoo, where he locked himself in an empty cage for animals. On the fence there was a plaque with the name of the species being displayed – "Homo Sapiens – Human Being". In the zoo that was open to public, the unprepared visitors were being photographed from behind the bars by the specimen. By using a photographic camera as a technology of watching, the artist somehow enacted the zoological "gazing back" and also "tamed himself" as a human, as Sloterdijk would say.

This evening I got a message from my friend with a link to an article entitled "Orang-utans 'like looking back at zoo visitors'". Through a series of experiments scientists from University of Melbourne discovered that orangutans from the Melbourne Zoo enjoy gazing at the visitors – "A study of orang-utan behaviour suggests that just like many of us they regard "people watching" as a pleasurable way to spend an afternoon." [151] Although it is obvious from the article that the researchers' goal was to prove that animals in captivity do not suffer from stress due to the high number of visitors, I still found this information interesting from the point of view of my study. The zoo animals do gaze back! At least the orangutans do.

[150] Kurzwelly Michael ed. *ZOOART – Exhibition Album*, (Poznań: International Artists Centre, 1994)
[151] "Orang-utans 'like looking back at zoo visitors'", Telegraph, http://www.telegraph.co.uk/science/science-news/7808406/Orang-utans-like-looking-back-at-zoo-visitors.html, Retrieved, 08. 06. 2010.

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