

Animals and Archives: Making Sense of the *Discurso Filosofico Sobre el Lenguage de los Animales*¹

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Abstract:

This essay examines the multiple ways that animals figure, both textually and literally, in historical archives. In discussing overlapping archival references to animals from the Spanish colonial world, I discuss how my research led me to an anonymously penned eighteenth-century heretical text, the *Discurso Filosofico Sobre el Lenguage de los Animales*, which broaches the topics of animal language, sentience, communication, and souls. I seek to make sense of the *Discurso Filosofico* in light of transatlantic exchange of ideas about animals and through the subjectivity of the translator, who Americanizes this European philosophical discourse. Overall, I argue that in order to more meaningfully contextualize animals and representations of animals in the past, we need not only to search for physical and textual traces of animals in archives, but also to expand our notion of the archive as a complex zoo-bio-political space. Especially in a colonial context, animals exist in archives as representations, real presences, absent-presences, and phantasmagorical beings through which “humanity” was given meaning in relation to other colonized beings.

“Yo veo a un Perro venir quando le llamo, lamerme quando le acaricio, temblar, y huir quando le amenazo, obedecer quando le mando, y en fin, dar todas las muestras exteriores de diversos sentim[ien]^{tos} de tristeza, alegria, y temor, y deseo de las pasiones, amor, odio, &c. De aqui concluio inmediatam[en]^{te} que el Perro tiene en si mismo un principio de conocim[ien]^{to}, y de discurso qualquiera que sea” (AGN 1525-I, exp. 3)²

“Si los brutos tubiesen una alma espiritual, esto seria inmortal, y capaz de merito, y de demerito, como tal digna de premio ô castigo, y seria necesario tuviese para los animales Ynfierno y Paraiso; siendo los brutos una especie de hombres ô los hombres una especie de brutos, consecuencias no sostenibles segun los principios dela religion” (AGN 1525-I,exp. 3, f. 45r.)³

-*Discurso Filosofico Sobre el Lenguage de los Animales*, eighteenth-century text confiscated by the Holy Office of the Mexican Inquisition

In a self-referential mode that revolves around one particularly quixotic archival document—the anonymously penned *Discurso Filosofico Sobre el Lenguage de los Animales* (“Philosophical Discourse on the Language of Animals”)—this essay discusses animal presence and meaning in historical archives. Here I first outline some of my initial encounters with animals in archives, and then go on to discuss the ways animal meaning is

produced through archival practices, concluding with a discussion of the above-cited document, which broaches the topics of animal language, sentience, and souls in a particular context of transatlantic exchange of ideas about animals. Finally, I urge scholars to pay more attention to the haunting presence of animals in archives. Several years ago, while conducting the archival research necessary to complete my doctoral dissertation on criminalized sexuality in colonial Mexico, I began to notice the fraught textual and physical presence—and absence—of nonhuman animals in historical archives.⁴ The animal was relevant to my project, as the crime of bestiality figured in the colonial court system, confessional manuals, and the social imaginary in the agricultural world. My initial archival encounters with the domesticated animals of colonial Mexico were thus passed through the thematic of sodomy and other “unnatural” acts (and desires) in New Spain, between the years of 1530 and 1821. In pursuit of my archival data, I went first to the national archive of Mexico, the Archivo General de la Nación, where I located and transcribed a number of late colonial criminal and Inquisition cases dealing with both sodomy and bestiality. My research subsequently led me to dozens of state, municipal, notarial, and judicial archives throughout Mexico, Guatemala, and Spain, as well as to a number of special collections in the United States, including the Bancroft Library, the Huntington Library, the Newberry Library, and the John Carter Brown Library. These archives yielded over three hundred cases of sodomy and bestiality, crimes which were conflated conceptually through the theological and legal formula “against nature,” *contra natura*—an unstable category that shifts in meaning with the context of its use (Puff 2004, 235).

These particular archival utterances, which emerged from the depths of the highly bureaucratic Spanish colonial state, were fascinating but somewhat enigmatic, posing the question: how were we to make historical sense of the colonial vision of the animal, trapped within the Spanish opposition of nature and the unnatural? To answer these questions, I argue in this essay that we must pay close attention to the presence of animals in archival materials, and to how they are present (and absent) in more ways than we might expect. Animals clearly have a story to tell to those who are willing to listen, and it is the historian’s task to determine what that story is. At the same time that I was putting together a corpus of colonial bestiality cases, other references to (and representations of) animals began to stand out to me in the archives. One document that caught my attention in particular was an undated and anonymous thirty-six-folio handwritten text titled the *Discurso Filosófico Sobre el Lenguaje de los Animales*. While I will only briefly treat this philosophical treatise on the language of animals in the present essay, I intend to use my long-term interactions with this text—and my struggles to contextualize it historically—as a way of orienting the reader to both mundane and sometimes bizarre archival references to animals and what they reveal about how animals and animal representations exist, sometimes surprisingly, at multiple levels within archives.



ARCHIVO GENERAL DE LA NACIÓN, MÉXICO. INQUISICIÓN 1525 (I), EXPEDIENTE 3, f.43-78

Templed as I am to offer a sustained analysis of the *Discurso Filosofico Sobre el Lenguage de los Animales*, I would like to leave this task for a later date.⁵

Here I conduct a more general and theoretical discussion of animals and archives as I have experienced them through my researches in colonial archive records. It is in this reconstructed environment of meanings that I came to encounter the *Discurso Filosofico Sobre el Lenguage de los Animales* in Mexico's national archive. My reading of this text, as a historian, is shaped by my readings of other records in which animals emerge from either the center or the margins, depending on the document in question. The *Discurso Filosofico* was different, as its title shows, from other texts due to its explicit focus on animal language and communication, and it raises several questions. Not the least among them, how did this enigmatic text end up in the files of the Mexican Inquisition? When did this happen, and why? But I want to suspend that question here. I first need to trace my own journey as a researcher among the archives. It was there, in pursuit of the meaning of certain "archive stories" by and about animals, that I came upon the *Discurso Filosofico Sobre el Lenguage de los Animales*⁶

Archives and Animals in Colonial Mexico

In interpreting the references to animals in the archives, we should keep in mind the symbolic power invested in certain animals as a consequence of Christianity's long tradition of using animals allegorically, metaphorically, and symbolically (Salisbury 1994). A case in point is the role played by animals throughout the early modern world in public processions of shaming. Such rituals should be seen within the larger historical context of the Columbian exchange and the immense ecological changes brought about by the introduction of European microbes, plants, and domesticated animals to the New World (Crosby 1972). On the one hand, after the export of European draft animals and livestock to the New World, animals were mundanely used for food, commodities, labor, and transportation. On the other hand, animals were ritualistically used in the procession of condemned heretics and prisoners, stripped to the waist up or occasionally arrayed in penitential garments like the *sanbenito*, and led through the streets of Mexico City and other urban centers on the backs of saddled horses or mules to the public plazas either to be executed or reconciled in an auto de fe. In a spectacle meant to celebrate the power of the Inquisition or of secular justice, every aspect of public processions of shaming and punishment was given meaning through ritualistic acts, including the juxtaposition of animals and human offenders.

When a fourteen-year-old Maya named Pedro Na, from a small town near Mérida in

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Mexico's Yucatán Peninsula, was convicted of the crime of bestiality in 1563, he was sentenced to be taken from prison on horseback, with his hands and feet bound and the corpse of the turkey with which he had fornicated hanging around his neck, to the central plaza, where he was to be publicly castrated and then permanently expelled from the province of Yucatán. In this case and others involving "unnatural" crimes, nonhuman animals make their presences known in archival documents, perhaps (silently?) protesting the uses to which they were put in the past. Yet in each instance of animal representation, the nonhuman being is somehow effaced as it is put to mundane and ritual use, used as an entity upon which to project human desires (sex, labor, transportation, commodification), and imbued by *human* officials, participants, bystanders, and notaries with multiple and simultaneous meanings. Animals then not only provide a backdrop against which the ignominy of the crime in question was exacerbated, but provide the very context through which the human-animal boundary could be both defined and transgressed.

Less violent representations of animals in archives also abound. At least for early Mexico, there are multiple references to exotic animals being put on display in zoological gardens, such as the various species of birds, canids, and reptiles that were housed in the menageries in the Aztec capital of Mexico-Tenochtitlan, which inspired awe and wonder among Hernando Cortés, Bernal Díaz del Castillo, and the other Spanish conquistadors in the early sixteenth century. In another realm, animals—or, better stated, animal flesh and animal commodities—occasionally served as important markers of religious heterodoxy: there are thousands of denunciations, preserved in the archives of the various tribunals of the Inquisition in the Iberian world, of individuals who, presumably being Jews or Muslims, failed to properly fast and abstain from meat during Lent. The late eighteenth century provides us with one example of an individual whose eating meat on Fridays was read as one of multiple signs pointing toward his irreligiosity. In the late 1780s in Mexico City, numerous individuals denounced the French medic, Dr. Esteban Morel, for eating meat on Fridays, denying the existence of the soul, failing to administer the sacraments to his dying patients, and espousing seditious French ideas and atheist beliefs (AGN 1379, ff. 228-286). On 11 February 1795, the Inquisition prison guards found Morel dead with a self-inflicted fatal wound on the left of his throat. In a symbolic move against his "memory and reputation," an effigy of the doctor was made to participate in a Mexico City auto de fe in August of 1795.

If archives give us an indication of how the meat diet imported from the Iberian Peninsula was permeated with symbolic meanings for the Iberian government, the Catholic Church, officials, and laypersons in the colonies, they do so in a radically different way for native peoples of the New World. In one phenomenal case from 1558, Juan Teton, a native ritual specialist in central New Spain, was apprehended and tried by Spanish religious authorities for having preached against the Spanish invaders and religion (García Garagarza, 2013). In the Nahuatl language, Teton persuaded native lords to wash away the waters of Christian baptism, and asserted that because the Spaniards were converting

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people into cattle, nobody should eat the meat of the foreign beasts introduced by the Spaniards. Teton warned, “Those who eat the flesh of cows [*huacaxnacatl*] will be transformed into that. Those who eat the flesh of pork [*pitzonacatl*] will be transformed into that. Those who eat the flesh of lambs [*yhcacnacatl*] will be transformed into that” (García Garagarza 2013, 39). This was a highly charged social commentary on the fact that as native peoples were dying of smallpox and other European diseases European domesticated animals were rampantly populating the countryside of New Spain, giving the illusion that native peoples were transforming into beasts.

Colonial municipal and judicial archives also house thousands of criminal cases dealing with livestock theft (*robo de ganado*, *abigeato*) and cattle rustling (*hurto de vacas*), highlighting the role of domesticated animals in the Spanish colonies, animal husbandry practices, and the status of animals as private property. Animals also feature prominently in cases dealing with witchcraft, indigenous ritual practices (“superstition,” according to Spanish priests like Ruiz de Alarcón), human-animal shapeshifting, and diabolical possession (Ruiz de Alarcón 1984 [1629]). As León García Garagarza has demonstrated, Juan Teton was one such *nahualli* (shapeshifter) who had the ability to transform, at will, into an animal or, in lesser instances, into meteorological phenomenon like a cloud or a lightning rod (García Garagarza 2013, 44-53). Such human-animal ties and transformations were not solely the domain of native peoples and Africans in colonial Mexico. In 1666, for instance, the Mexican Inquisition tried a Spanish woman, doña María de Valenzuela, for witchcraft and for purportedly transforming into a pigeon, flying from Sombrerete to Zacatecas, and for dancing with a goat and kissing its backside (AGN 482, ff. 132-153). Ample archival evidence also points to the fact that animal (and human) parts were used commonly by all segments of colonial society as amulets and charms. The colonial process of *mestizaje* in Latin America, then, has as much to do with competing and intermixing beliefs about animals as with linguistic hybridization and syncretic devotional practices. Conceptions of animals as property and as possible vehicles for humans are two areas in which Iberian, Mesoamerican, and African beliefs both clashed and converged at points.

Representations of animal death—and, in perhaps unexpected ways, dead animals themselves—are more central to archives and archival practices than one might at first glance expect. Animal death is of course especially ritualized in cultures that eat animal flesh and establish boundaries regulating the division between clean and impure animals as well as the ways in which animal flesh can circulate in the social sphere. As one might expect, documents representing animal death—death enacted for both symbolic and utilitarian ends—are abundant in archives. If we return briefly to the bestiality cases that I collected for my dissertation research, we find that in colonial Latin America the animals implicated in bestiality cases—typically donkeys, mares, dogs, mules, cows, goats, and sheep—were regularly slaughtered, sometimes in elaborate public displays that followed the punishment of the human culprit.⁷ The injunction to kill these animals, at least in colonial Latin America, did not signify

that the animals were guilty, but instead that they were impure. Leviticus 20: 15-16 states that “And if a man lie with a beast, he shall surely be put to death; and ye shall slay the beast. And if a woman approach unto any beast, and lie down thereto, thou shalt kill the woman and the beast: they shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them” (*The Old Testament* 1884, 134). These defiled animals were slaughtered because they posed a threat and perhaps spoke to a fear that the meat of the polluted animal might be unknowingly consumed. In colonial Mexico, authorities regularly mandated that polluted animals be publicly burned in front of the men or *by the men* convicted of the crime. In 1775, for example, José Antonio, a thirteen-year-old indigenous boy convicted of bestiality, was forced by colonial authorities to burn the calf in question “with his own hands” at a stake erected on the outskirts of a city in New Mexico (SANM MF 454). Witnesses and animal owners also occasionally took matters into their own hands, killing the animal that had been defiled. In 1656, the man who caught Lorenzo Vidales with a goat took it upon himself to kill the animal (AMMNL Criminal 8). In another example, taken from the 1784 bestiality case of Simón de Torres, the sole witness, Juan José de Luna, strangled the dog in question (*ahorcó la perra*) with his own hands (AGEH Judicial Penal 265.2.1).

Bestiality cases are, however, only the most extreme case of the staging of the animal as represented in the records. One three-folio document housed in Archivo Histórico del Estado de San Luis Potosí, in northern Mexico, makes reference to the massive (and mundane) occurrence of animal slaughter, and shows how animals figure—often in a simultaneous central and tangential way—within the archives. This document relates to a request a certain hacienda owner and livestock breeder in San Luis Potosí, Antonio Moreno de Quesada, filed to obtain permission from the viceroy to kill hundreds of domesticated animals that, while still alive, were no longer of any use to him. In 1700, Moreno de Quesada made his petition with the following words: “[because] he had such a large quantity of goats and sheep that did not give him any [financial] advantage, and in order to take advantage of the tallow and fat that from them will I will produce, I plead to be granted permission to kill seven hundred heads of goats and sheep” (*tenia mucha cant[ida]d de cabras y ovejas viejas q[ue] no le dan provecho alguno, y para poder aprovechar el cevo y manteca q[ue] de ellas produjere, me suplico le concediese liz[enci]a p[ar]a matar setecientas cabezas de cabras y ovejas*) (AHESLP legajo 1700). Moreno de Quesada was granted this license for a fee of 35 pesos payable to the royal treasury, and we can only assume that he carried out the slaughter upon receiving notice from colonial authorities. Archival references such as this present complex issues, forcing us to think through the methodological and epistemological implications of locating animal traces in the archive. While animals *are* present in archival documents, it is typically only through their deaths—their transformation from living beings to commodities to be bought, sold, and consumed—that they come to enter the historical record in the first place. Animal presence in archives, then, is predicated on animal absence.

In archives, animal death is represented at other registers too. Historical archives

contain, for example, the actual physical traces of animal bodies, as evidenced by the leather and animal glue used to bind so many archival manuscripts together. As Erica Fudge eloquently (and disconcertingly) states regarding her search for animals in the archive, “the only traces of the animal within the written materials which I had access to were the vellum on which the words were written and the leather in which the books were bound” (Fudge 2002a, 2). Archives contain not only animal parts but also occasional recipes for transforming animal parts into archival components. Joyce E. Salisbury relates how “Medieval manuscripts from the earliest centuries preserve recipes for making parchment, showing how valuable these animal materials were. The best parchment was made from calfskin, and this was called vellum (from the Latin *vitulus*, calf)” (Salisbury 1994, 23). These anonymous animals, we might say, have no afterlives, yet at the same time, they persist. In the case of archives with early modern documents, animal parts and commodities have, for centuries, held together the folios of archival documents, constantly touching archivists and researchers. Yet, as archival documents and their vellum parchment, animal glue, and leather bindings face the unremitting onslaught of dust, pollution, humidity, mold, and humans, they touch other creatures in the archives as well.

At this juncture, archives also represent nonhuman *life*, often in pervasive ways that constantly vex archivists and researchers. Insects, for one, are especially present in archives. David Pinniger, in *Pest Management in Museums, Archives and Historic Houses*, point out that while most insects in the world are not categorized as “pests,” a small percentage do “come into direct conflict with man” over the human archival attempt to conserve and maintain collections (Pinniger 2001, 11). In “The Care and Preservation of Archival Materials,” Mary Fahey, the Head of Preservation and Chief Conservator of the Henry Ford Museum in Dearborn, Michigan, notes “There are a variety of insects that can damage paper and leather artifacts; primarily, silverfish, firebrats, carpet beetles and the book louse” (Fahey 1995). These insects survive on the mold, spores, starchy materials, adhesives, leather, and parchment so common in archives. Insects themselves, such as booklice, may not necessarily damage the documents by feeding of the mold and spores that grow on them, but “large numbers of booklice will graze the surface of books and papers [and] squashed [insect] bodies will stain materials and may encourage moulds” (Fahey 1995). *These* are the animal bodies, stains, and markings that become increasingly apparent as we move away from “strictly linguistic textual records toward other sorts of ‘animal traces’” (Benson 2011, 6).

As any historian or archivist working with early modern documents knows, the traces of insects within the texts—which are sometimes rendered partly illegible by the holes left behind by beetles and other insects that have eaten their way through the paper—are inescapable. To counter such insect presence (and reproduction) in archives, “Integrated Pest Management” techniques are employed, and include temperature and humidity control, but also UV light traps, electric killing grids, pesticides, and other natural/synthetic chemical control methods. Given that the eradication of “pests” is a major goal of

archives and archivists, the killing of animals—primarily insects, but also various species of rodents and birds that can damage documentation and the physical structures within which they are housed—is integral to and intersects with archival practices at multiple points. Animals, in the end, are killed within the documents, for the documents, and by the documents (or, more specifically, as we have seen, they are killed by human interventions so as to preserve the documents, even though their “squashed bodies,” free from human intervention, may still stain the documents). In this sense, archival practices are intimately linked to “the extraordinary diversity of killing practices and the wide meanings attached to those practices” (The Animal Studies Group 2006, 4). The wide meanings attached to the killing of insects also have a specifically colonial Mexican hue, illustrated by the deep crimson dyes traditionally made in Mesoamerica from the pulverized bodies of cochineal insects. That “cochineal (*grana cochinilla*) became, after silver, the most important Mexican export for over three hundred years, or down to approximately 1850” evidences its importance as a global commodity whose production is amply recorded—alongside other insect presences—in colonial archives (Marichal 2006, 76).

Articulating the Animal

When I first came across the *Discurso Filosófico Sobre el Lenguaje de los Animales* in the summer of 2005, I had not yet realized the extent, or the frameworks, that structured interactions between animals and archives and, directly or indirectly, my own relationship with the two. At the time, I was simply—or so I thought—trying to document criminal cases of sodomy and bestiality in colonial Mexico. As I began to visit local archives in Mexico, Guatemala, Spain, and the United States, references to animals that did not relate to criminalized sexuality began stand out. The changes in my project, and the changes in my sense of the place of the animal in colonial Mexico, began when I came upon one archive story that was particularly interesting and puzzling. It was in 2004, while conducting research on the Mexican Inquisition at the Bancroft Library at the University of California, Berkeley. I was intrigued to find the following reference in the library’s catalog of Mexican Inquisition documents:

[Volume 10]

Dates: 1771

Place and Name: Mexico City, Thoribio Bastarrachea [*sic*]

of Leaves/pages: 128

Accusation/Subject: Officiating in the marriage of two dogs

The strangeness of this archival reference attracted my attention. I had already acquired some sense of other animal presences in archival documentation, and as I read what turned out to be a complete Inquisition trial against Thoribio Basterrechea for having officiated in the marriage of two dogs at a drunken party hosted by a woman known as La Panchita and her husband, Don Francisco, in their house on San Ramón Street in Mexico City. At that party, Basterrechea, who had studied theology in Mexico City and was a priest in the town of Guachinango, was presented with a little dog dressed as the bride and another *perrito* dressed as the groom. They were then “mutually asked about their consent to wed [apparently by Basterrechea], and consent was given by those present through the responses of those that held the dogs in their hands [a man and a woman who were named the dogs’ godparents]. This defendant [Basterrechea] then solemnized and formalized the said wedding between the two little animals (*animalejos*).”⁸ According to witnesses questioned by inquisitors, this canine wedding took place in the midst of jokes, drinking, dancing, and music. Inquisitors, however, were suspicious that the jocose nature of the marriage disguised more profound levels of heresy and sacrilege in the actions of the priest. In the end, after spending weeks in the secret prisons of the Inquisition, Basterrechea was simply admonished for his actions and was warned that he would be severely punished in the event of future sacramental misbehavior.

While I discuss this case and others like it in more detail elsewhere, I mention it here because it led me deeper into the relations between humans and animals in Latin American history (Tortorici 2013). This case not only illustrated the variation to which the representation of animals could be subject—here, household “pets” that were individually cared for and lavished with attention by their human companions—in the historical archives, but also highlighted the multiple connections that emerged in my research between geographically diverse archives, the archival representation of animals, and my own subjectivity.⁹ My interest piqued by the canine marriage case preserved in the Bancroft Library, the following summer when I traveled to Mexico to conduct further archival research, I searched for the term *perro* (dog) in the national archive, and was amazed to find the following archival reference to a 1780 Inquisition trial of José Armas, a Spanish tailor, charged with the crime of baptizing two dogs in Mexico City:

Archivo General de la Nación/ Instituciones Coloniales/ Inquisición/ Inquisición (61)/ Volumen 1535/

Título: Expediente 5

Fecha(s): 1780

Nivel de descripción: Unidad documental compuesta (Expediente)

Volumen y soporte: Fojas: 172-227

Productores: (Pendiente)

Alcance y contenido: SEÑOR INQUISIDOR FISCAL DEL SANTO OFICIO CONTRA, JOSE ARMAS, DE OFICIO SASTRE, DE CALIDAD ESPAÑOLA. POR HABER BAUTIZADO UNOS PERROS. CIUDAD DE MEXICO.

Like its canine wedding precedent, the canine baptism was a carnivalesque event. According to María Manuela Vázquez, a thirty-three-year-old *doncella* who initially denounced Armas to the Inquisition, Armas had dressed up like a priest and elaborately prepared a mock baptismal ceremony, placing lit candles on the dogs' paws, salt in their mouths, and water in a large bowl, as though it were holy water in the baptismal font, made ready with which to immerse the animals while an invited crowd of bystanders looked on. To make matters worse in the eyes of the Inquisition, one of the baptized dogs died shortly after the event, and was subsequently buried under the patio of the dog's owner, María Dolores de Cuebas. The dog was shrouded with a piece of cloth from the Carmelite habit, as if it were human, and those present placed palms, garlands, and flowers on the canine corpse, which was buried with its paws crossed (*con las manos cruzadas*) in a small coffin. While these canine weddings and baptisms were clearly performed for novelty, curiosity, and fun, inquisitors characterized such events as "such perverse and diabolical diversion" (*tan perversa y diabólica diversion*) (AGN 1535, f. 207). Armas was temporarily placed in the secret prisons of the Inquisition and his goods were confiscated for the duration of the trial. Ultimately however, as in the 1770 case of Father Basterrechea, Joseph Armas was not found guilty of heresy. Both Basterrechea and Armas were given warnings by ecclesiastical authorities that they would be severely punished in the event of repeated misconduct.

As my investigation into the profane mixing of animals and the sacraments continued, I began to consider what it meant to write the history of animals and of human-animal relations, and what such *centering animals* within historical analysis might imply for the field of Latin American history. Dorothee Brantz tells us that "incorporating animals into any historical narrative thus necessitates a radical rethinking of the project of history," and while I agree in theory, I am hesitant to concede that a mere *incorporation* of animals into historical narratives does such radical work (Brantz 2010, 3). Instead, nonhuman animals must be framed and theorized as *central* subjects within the historical narrative—something that is not easily done, either methodologically or theoretically. For even as scholars increasingly incorporate animals into historical narratives, they are not automatically centered, and often remain at the margins of analysis.¹⁰ On the other hand, animals are often simplistically attributed "agency," which can itself be anthropomorphizing and problematic.

This, then, was in the background as I began to wonder how to deal, as a historian, with a text like the *Discurso Filosófico Sobre el Lenguaje de los Animales*. I had stumbled upon it in Mexico's national archive by conducting keyword searches with the terms *animal* and *animales* in the now antiquated ARGENA II archival database. In the summer of 2005, I requested photocopies of the entire document and read through it upon my return to the United States. At more or less the same time, I was also trying to make historical sense of bestiality cases and of canine baptisms, weddings, and funerals in Bourbon Mexico. Thus, I was both prepared and astonished to find a handwritten philosophical treatise, which ranges from the satirical to the serious, directly broaching the topics of the Cartesian animal-machine, nonhuman animal communication, animal knowledge and sentience, human treatment of animals, the possibility of animal souls, and the place of animals in Catholic theology. The text, I assumed, was colonial Mexican in origin.

The *Discurso Filosófico* is written in the form of a letter to a lady, and is divided into four sections: an introduction and three chapters respectively titled (I) *Del conocimiento de los animales*; (II) *De la necesidad de un Ydioma entre los animales*; and, (III) *Del idioma de los animales*.¹¹ Throughout the discourse, the author is in direct disagreement with René Descartes, and others like him, who in the seventeenth century posited that animals were little more than machines—automata—because of their supposed lack of language and reliance on instinct as opposed to reason. In France, the ideas Descartes first put forth in *Discourse on Method* (1637) were taken up by other thinkers, including Nicolas Malebranche, who proposed that animal automata “eat without pleasure, they cry without pain, they grow without knowing it, they desire nothing, they know nothing, and if they behave in a seemingly intelligent manner, it is because God, having made them thus to preserve them, has so formed their bodies that they avoid mechanically and fearlessly everything capable of destroying them.”¹²

Such ideas about animals, of course, were fiercely contested in Europe in the seventeenth century by Pierre Gassendi (1592-1655), Bernard le Bovier de Fontenelle (1657-1757), and others. The author of the *Discurso Filosófico*, addressing his readers directly, also challenges those who believe in the Cartesian theory of the animal-machine to persuade us that the pet dogs— animals “we” love so much— are merely machines (AGN, Inquisición 1525-I, f. 44).¹³ Toying with the mere possibility that God created animals as “simple machines,” the author tells his readers that it is therefore equally plausible that “los hombres con quienes yo vivo, q^{[u]e} me hablan, me rresponden, y que discurren, y obran conmigo, sean maquinas, p^{[o]r} q^{[u]e} yo se q^{[u]e} pienso, y q^{[u]e} tengo un principio que piensa, y conoce, pero no se lo que pasa en el interior de los demás hombres, y no pudiendo negar a Dios el poder crear hombres q^{[u]e} teniendo la apariencia y funciones de tales, no fuesen outra cosa que puras maquinas” (AGN, Inquisición 1525-I, f. 44v).¹⁴ In Erica Fudge's critique of Descartes's theory of animals as machines, she writes that, in the Cartesian system, animals “lacked the thing that made a human distinct from an automaton: they lacked mind, and because mind and soul were absolutely

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inseparable in his thought, animals did not possess souls” (Fudge 2002b, 98). The author of the *Discurso Filosófico* subsequently puts forth a series of arguments claiming to demonstrate that animals do in fact possess knowledge, sentience, language, and souls.

Turning, in certain moments of the treatise, toward the question of animal welfare, our author—in a facetious tone that nonetheless foreshadows the coming rise of the various societies for the protection of animals that formed throughout Europe and the Americas in the eighteenth-century—writes the following:

Persuadidos como nosotros estamos de q[u]e los animales sienten, a q[ui]e no le ha ocurrido mil veces lastimarse de los excesivos males â que la mayor parte de ellos estan expuestos. ¡Que lastima no infunden los caballos quando vemos uno entre el latigo de un cochero cruel! ¡Quan dignos son de compasion los perros q[u]e estan destinados a la casa [caza]! ¡Que misera suerte es la de los animales q[u]e viven el los campos continuam^{te} padeciendo las inclemencias del aire, siempre sugetos â caer en manos de los cazadores, ô ser pasto de otro animal mas feroz, obligados siempre con mucha fatiga â vuscar un leve e incipido alim[ien]^{to}, padeciendo continuam[en]^{te} una cruel hambre, y sugetos â las enfermedades, y â la muerte! Que los hombres esten sugetos â las miserias q[u]e los consumen, la relig[io]ⁿ nos enseña q[u]e es p[o]r q[u]e nacen pecadores. ¿Pero q[u]e delictos han cometido los animales p[ar]^a nacer sugetos â tales miserias? (AGN, Inquisición 1525-I, f. 52)

What at first glance seemed to be part eighteenth- or early nineteenth-century tract for animal sentience, animal communication, and animal welfare—with the specters of horses being whipped by their drivers, dogs being trained for the hunt, and “wild” animals being hunted by humans—also takes on an overtly heretical twist when the author concludes this statement by questioning why animals, which, unlike men, are not born sinners, are constantly subjected to such miserias. The author’s answer is rooted in the assertion that animals, like men, have rational souls, and that such a proposition is *not* at all contradictory to the tenets of Catholicism (*los animales tienen alma racional como nosotros, y que esta sentencia lejos de ser contraria â los principios de la relig[io]ⁿ le es mui conforme*) (AGN, Inquisición 1525-I, f. 48). The author playfully resolves this contradiction by contending that all animals on earth are actually demons (*demonios*) or “reprobate spirits” (*espíritus reprobados*) sent to Earth by God in order to suffer as they await the Final Judgment. These are, however, comic demons, which contrast greatly with the demons discussed in earlier European demonological treatises. With this thesis, the author resolves a number of seemingly contradictory and otherwise inexplicable phenomena: animals’ supposed lack of rational souls, their capacities to feel and to communicate, and their perpetual suffering and subjection by humans. The *Discurso Filosófico Sobre el Lenguaje de los Animales* is an undoubtedly carnivalesque text. In this sense it is perhaps not unlike the canine weddings and baptisms performed at drunken parties in Bourbon Mexico. Do we hear, however, an undercurrent of respect for animals, not unlike that which

motivated María Dolores de Cuebas to give her dog a funeral?

Fascinating and unique as the Mexican Inquisition's confiscated copy of the *Discurso Filosofico Sobre el Lenguage de los Animales* was, its provenance remained uncertain. The only scholarship dealing with this archival document that I was able to locate was published in 1994 by a Mexican scholar, Fernando Delmar, who assumed not only that it was a text written in New Spain (*texto novohispano*), but that its contents were indicative of the differences between the Enlightenment in Europe and in the Enlightenment in New Spain (Delmar 1994, 425).¹⁵ In terms of theories about animal language, Delmar cited the differences between our heretofore anonymous author, who penned the *Discurso Filosofico Sobre el Lenguage de los Animales*, and European Enlightenment scholars including Giambattista Vico (1668-1744), David Hume (1711-1776), Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778), Denis Diderot (1713-1784), and Georges-Louis Leclerc, the comte de Buffon (1707-1788). Of course, in the most literal sense, Delmar was right—this was most likely a document produced in New Spain, given that it was a handwritten Spanish document and located in confiscated files of the Mexican Inquisition. But Delmar does not give his reason for claiming that the text itself was originally from New Spain, leaving open the question of whether it originated elsewhere. Was it an original, a copy of an original, or an unpublished translation?

Here, I turned to a colleague and fellow historian of colonial Mexico, Martin Nesvig, who was then writing his social and intellectual history of censorship and the early Mexican Inquisition, *Ideology and Inquisition: The World of the Censors in Early Mexico* (Nesvig 2009). In an email query about the quixotic archival text I had found, I asked Nesvig if he might have any leads. His reply, which follows, opened up new possibilities that helped me make sense of the document, but still left many questions unanswered. Nesvig wrote:

The document. This is a curious sounding thing. Based on your assessment of the paleography and its placement very late in the Inquisition *ramo* [volume 1525 out of 1554], it sounds to me like it is one of the many things that the Bourbon-controlled Inquisition confiscated. I assume it was confiscated because manuscripts that one finds in the Inquisition *ramo* are almost uniformly things that the Inquisition confiscated as a result of a denunciation. These manuscripts then would have been reviewed by the Inquisition's censors to determine if the manuscript contained any heresy or other form of religious dissent. The result is that such manuscript ended up in the Inquisitional archive.

Besides the Index [of Prohibited Books], which was the central arm of the censorship apparatus, each local Inquisition had the authority to confiscate manuscripts or books circulating in their areas. This meant that many manuscripts that were confiscated and banned never made it to print, like the Nahuatl translation of Ecclesiastes of the 1570s, or some of [Franciscan missionary, Maturino] Gilberti's works. By the 18th century such cases multiplied...The one you describe is probably another one [and] I guess it is also part of a broader attack on what the Spaniards saw as a French *philosophe* incursion. French

books and philosophical discourses began to be confiscated and banned increasingly in the 18th century.¹⁶

Nesvig's comment raised new questions: Was this text possibly French in origin? If so, might there be a way to find out if it had been translated in Europe and subsequently brought to the Americas, or it is was a Mexican translation of a French text? Lastly, were the suffering animals the author referred to European or American? Curious indeed were these heretical—and now potentially transatlantic—archival references to animals, embedded as they were in colonial Mexico's inquisitorial bureaucracy.

As it turned out, Nesvig's insights pointed me in the right direction and foreshadowed a reference that I would later fortuitously turn up while reading E.P. Evans's 1906 *Criminal Prosecution and Capital Punishment of Animals*. In his discussion of malicious creatures and diabolical plagues of weevils, caterpillars, locusts, and moles, Evans mentioned that this subject was treated "in a lively and entertaining manner by a Jesuit priest, Père Bougeant, in a book titled *Amusement Philosophique sur le Langage des Bêtes*, which was written in the form of a letter addressed to a lady and published in Paris in 1739" (Evans 1906, 66). As Evans briefly outlined the contents of Bougeant's work, which briefly landed him in prison, it dawned on me that this was the reference I had been searching for!

Indeed, just as Nesvig had predicted, the *Discurso Filosofico Sobre el Lenguage de los Animales* turned out to be an unpublished translation of an eighteenth-century French text, one penned by Guillaume-Hyacinthe Bougeant, a priest who entered the Society of Jesus in 1706 and authored a number of literary and historical works, comedies, and critical polemics. Bougeant's *Amusement Philosophique* was printed in Paris, Frankfurt, Amsterdam, and Geneva, and the original French publication was followed by English, German, and Italian translations. What has escaped the view of scholars of this period was that a Spanish translation of this work was also produced (either in Spain or in Mexico), but that a Spanish edition of Bougeant's work was never published because the Holy Office of the Mexican Inquisition confiscated the only known translation, thus preventing the dissemination of these heretical propositions throughout the viceroyalty of New Spain. While we may never know who translated this document, the Mexican Inquisition's confiscated Spanish translation of Bougeant's French treatise on animal language affords a glimpse of the transatlantic exchange of heretical ideas about animals, demonstrating the conflicted place of nonhuman animals—diabolical beings, pests, pets, working animals, commodities, scientific experiments, trophies, exotic displays, etc.—in the eighteenth-century Atlantic world. This was a world in which beliefs about the animal were shifting: notions of animal spirits and diabolical animals were losing their credibility among educated circles, elite and non-elite households increasingly extended sentimentality to their pets, and animal welfare progressively became a concern among those seeking to spare animals the suffering and abuses of draft labor, circuses, and scientific experimentation.

Archiving the Animal

I have traced, throughout this essay, my long-term interactions with a series of archival documents dealing with animals to challenge the notion that “animals are ‘inarticulate’; they do not leave documents” (Fudge 2002c, 5). Even if we consciously choose to limit ourselves to mainstream historical archives—national, municipal, notarial, judicial, and the like—we find that animals do exist in such archives across material, textual, geographic, and temporal boundaries. The animals cited in the initially enigmatic *Discurso Filosófico Sobre el Lenguaje de los Animales*, alongside other animal archival traces that I encountered, serve as provocative examples. To be clear, a number of scholars employ interdisciplinary approaches to elucidate the history of animals through the intersections of traditional historical research and anthropology, archaeology, literature, film, and law. Perhaps to truly find animals and representations of animals in the past, we need not only to search for physical and textual traces of animals in archives, but also open up our very notion of what an archive is. According to Etienne Benson, “writing about animals depends on tracks, trails, or traces—those material-semiotic remnants of whatever it is the pursuer hopes to catch, those often unintentional indexes of a now-absent presence” (Benson 2011, 3). Even if we limit ourselves, as I do here, to a discussion of animals in mainstream historical archives, we find that animals and animal traces—those *now-absent presences*—appear, both literally and figuratively, in all corners of the archive.

In their call for papers for this issue of *e-misférica*, the editors asked contributors to reflect on the inherent ambivalence in viewing “the ‘discourse of species’ as a matrix of violence” and in using species to “map ‘zones of affinity’ between bodies and make visible spaces of relation.”¹⁷ Like the imperative to think through species difference, archives themselves can be—to invoke two of the terms employed in the call for papers—both *sinister* and *generative*. The multiple ways that animals inhabit archives represent this liminality in that they allow for, depending on one’s particular frame of reference and end goals, both the breakdown *and* the reification of species boundaries. The archive simultaneously renders nonhuman animals as intimate, disposable, proximate, *and* ontologically distanced. Archives thus not only represent and reflect species difference, but refract it as well. My own genealogy of the *Discurso Filosófico Sobre el Lenguaje de los Animales* as a text, and of how it ended up in the archives of the Inquisition in Mexico’s national archive, surrounded by other archival references to animals and other archival animals, offers one particular “archive story” through the lens of species and species difference. In my attempts to make historical sense of this text, I was impelled to interact with a variety of archival animals and with textual and visual archival representations of animals, which enabled me draw connections between myself (as a historian who is interested in animals intellectually, ethically, and politically) and the sometimes surprising animal “tracks, traces, bodies, and actions” in archives (Pearson and Weismantel 2010, 28).

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Perhaps in contrast to the “absent-presence” of nonhuman animals in archives, we might see how the very category of the “human” in a colonial context is given meaning by archival practices themselves. For many of the Spanish colonists, though by no means all, writing and *the very notarial and archival practices of collecting and storing that writing* became absolutely central to definitions of humanity vis-à-vis the supposed inhumanity of the New World natives. Assertions that the natives of the Caribbean, Mesoamerica, and the Andes had no writing systems, and therefore no claim to their territory, constantly functioned as a means to legitimize the conquest. Despite rich elite traditions of literacy in both Mesoamerica and the Andes, the European conquistadors and even some early missionaries like fray Diego de Landa, Spanish bishop of the archdiocese of Yucatán, denigrated these traditions, deemed native writings “superstitious,” and destroyed innumerable pre-Hispanic codices.¹⁸ Other priests including Bartolomé de las Casas and Bernardino de Sahagún challenged these acts, but nonetheless colonized native literacies in their own ways through the introduction of the Roman alphabet and the transliteration of native languages including Maya, Nahuatl, Mixtec, Zapotec, Purépecha in Mesoamerica and Quechua and Aymara in the Andes. Colonial categories of identity and alterities in the Spanish Americas depended on textual and archival representations of “other” groups—natives, African slaves, converted Jews (*conversos*), converted Muslims (*moriscos*), and certain animals.

Coincidentally, this link between animals and non-Europeans is made explicitly clear in the *Discurso Filosófico Sobre el Lenguaje de los Animales*, when the writer asserts that neither animals nor their language “logran n[ues]trās ventajas, pero tan poco tienen n[ues]trōs defectos: hablan poco, pero al caso y con conocim[ien]t^o de causa. Dicen siempre verdad y nunca engañan aunq[u]e sea en amor. No es esta una conocida ventaja q[u]e logran sobre nosotros? Ellos en lo q[u]e mira a esto, están casi el mismo punto q[u]e nuestros Negros, y salvajes de la América” (AGN 1525-I, f. 67).¹⁹ This is one of the few places in the *Discurso Filosófico* where the subjectivity of the *translator* is visible through the Americanization of the text. The 1739 English translation of the original French compares beasts to “the Peasants in our countries, and the Negroes and Savages of America,” but our translator effaces the reference to European peasants and subtly alters the text to read simply “nuestros Negros, y salvajes de la América” (Garrett 2000, 45). Herein lies the colonial crux of the *Discurso Filosófico Sobre el Lenguaje de los Animales*: the author (Bougeant) asserts that animals do communicate through language, but he denies animals—alongside European peasants, Africans, and American natives—the ability to complexly rationalize and the need for metaphysical language, for these are the domains of the literate and educated European. The translator then internalizes this example by comparing beasts to “nuestros Negros, y salvajes de la América.” Just as the Spanish traditionally subjugated Mesoamerican literacies in the American colonies, the very language and communicative capabilities of Africans, indigenous Americans, and animals are framed by both author and translator as being on par with one another.

In order to begin to hear the types of stories that animals in the archives might be telling us, we must begin by de-colonizing the animal and by scrutinizing all archival representations of animals, even those that, as in the *Discurso Filosófico Sobre el Lenguaje de los Animales*, appear to be sympathetic toward animals. Animals exist in the archive as representations, real presences, absent-presences, and phantasmagorical beings through which colonial conceptions of humanity were given meaning, often in relation to other colonized groups. Animals are central not only to archives—they figure centrally in the documents, though rarely in ways that situate them as the primary focus—but to archival practices as well. And, of course, sometimes animals *are* the documents themselves.²⁰

In the bureaucratic colonial state as well as in European states, the economy depended as much on animal labor as on human labor. Animals provided the transportation, draught labor, meat, dyes, leather, and entertainment—all of which revolve around animal death as much as they do around animal life and labor—upon which human society and the colonial state thrived. It is no exaggeration to state that without the presence of European domesticated animals in the Spanish and Portuguese colonies, colonial enterprises would have been more likely to collapse. And, a particular posthumanist perspective on the representations of animals in archives allows us to de-naturalize historical assumptions of animals as already being a form of property. Archives then allow us to see how particular regimes of animal representation impose themselves over others. As Jason Hribal reminds us, “animals do *not* ‘naturally’ become private property, no more than humans ‘naturally’ come to sell their labor” (Hribal 2003, 436). Thus, when we research the animal in colonial Latin American archives, we are looking for the processes by which animals *become* property, commodities, exhibits, meat, leather, book bindings, glue, and archival documents. In more ways than one, animals labor in the archives as well. Animals are physically, figuratively, and metaphorically part of the “dust” that makes up archives (Steedman 2002).

Kathryn Burns, like others before her who critically analyze archives as tangible and symbolic spaces, admonishes scholars that in order to expand out possibilities for historical understanding, we must “make our archives and sources part of our research, looking *at* them as well as through them” (Burns 2010, 125). Looking at animals in archives allows us to approximate some of the methodological, ontological, and historical questions about human-animal boundaries, relationships, disjunctures, and connections. While animals are present both physically and textually in archives, their presence is always mediated by human practices of animal killing, commodification, and archiving. Erica Fudge has asserted that “there is no human without an animal present, but the presence of the animal can itself disrupt the status of the human” (Fudge 2002a, 90). The very real, imagined, and symbolic animals that court-appointed scribes and notaries once represented in the now tattered pages and leather-bound archival documents challenge us to reassess Fudge’s imperative statement. By applying Fudge’s

statement literally, I can confidently assert the following: there is no *archive* without an animal present, but the presence of the animal can itself disrupt the status of the *archive*.

In particular, it is the haunting presence of animals in archives that disrupts the status of the archive as a stable space (that is presumably based on the category of the “human” insofar as archives are born of human practices of writing, documenting, collecting, and conserving). Despite the fact that demons had all but died out in educated circles in eighteenth-century Europe, the connection between the animal and the demon runs deep, as evidenced by Bougeant’s satirical proposal that animals on Earth are actually demons *that haunt us as we haunt them*. If we take, as does Carla Freccero, hauntology to refer to “the practice of attending to the spectral” and as a “way of thinking and responding ethically within history,” then thinking through the real, textual, and symbolic animals in archives enables us to respond to animals more ethically. Dorothee Brantz writes “luckily an element of surprise and unpredictability persists whenever we look at animals *and especially when they look back at us*” (Brantz 2010, 6). Through archives, animals do look back, though they do so in ways that are often unpredictable and not entirely graspable to us. And, depending on the intentions and investments of the recipient of a particular archival text about animals, this “looking back” can be received in a variety of ways. Animals, both alive and long since dead, can and do communicate through the archive—it is simply historians’ intellectual and ethical responsibility to listen to what they have to say.

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Notes

This essay has benefitted enormously from incisive questions, criticisms, and suggestions by Roger Gathman, Marten Brienen, and Frederico Santos Soares de Freitas. I am also grateful to Martha Few for her comments and to Martin Nesvig for orienting me in the right direction years ago upon receiving my initial query about the possible provenance of the *Discurso Filosófico Sobre el Lenguaje de los Animales*. Finally, I want to thank Yuko Kita who graciously provided me with photographs of the *Discurso*

Filosofico Sobre el Lenguage de los Animales, which she took at the Archivo General de la Nación in 2012.

¹ In all quotations throughout this essay, I rely on eighteenth-century Spanish orthography and direct archival transcriptions in order to preserve the document's original linguistic flavor. This is evident, for example, in my decision not to modernize the word "lenguage" as "lenguaje" and not to accent the word "filosofico" as "filosófico" in the title *Discurso Filosofico Sobre el Lenguage de los Animales*. The conscious decision not to modernize spelling and punctuation of archival texts bring us a bit closer to the texts themselves. The same goes for my decision to directly reproduce eighteenth-century English transcriptions of words that use the letter "s," the miniscule Latin letter "s."

² A 1739 English translation of this segment of the philosophical discourse is taken from Aaron Garrett, ed., *Animal Language, Animal Passions and Animal Morals* (Thoemmes Press, 2000), 5: "I see a Dog ha?tening to me when I call him, care?s me when I stroke him, tremble and run away when I rate him, obey me when I command him, and give all the outward Signs of many different Sentiments; of Joy and Sadne?s, of Grief and Pain, of Fear and De?ire, of Pa??ions, of Love and Hatred. I immediately conclude from thence, that a Dog has in him a Principle of Knowledge and Sentiment, be it what it will." All English translations of the *Discurso Filosofico Sobre el Lenguage de los Animales* come from this volume.

³ Garrett, *Animal Language, Animal Passions and Animal Morals*, 6: "if Bea?ts had a ?piritual Soul, that Soul ?hould then be immortal and free, it ?hould be capable of meriting or of doing ami?s, or Recomen?e or of Punishment: They ?hould have a Paradi?e and a Hell appointed for them; Bea?ts ?hould be a Kind of Men, or Men a Kind of Bea?ts; all which Con?equences are unwarrantable by the Principles of Religion."

⁴ This present paper is part of a larger project, *Archival Animals*, which focuses on the links between animals, archives, and the bureaucratic impulse to record and preserve documentation in colonial regimes (and post-colonial societies) in Latin America. For a theoretical discussion of "centering animals" in the past, see Martha Few and Zeb Tortorici, eds., *Centering Animals in Latin American History* (Duke University Press, 2013).

⁵ I am currently working on a Spanish-language critical introduction and transcription of the previously unpublished *Discurso Filosofico Sobre el Lenguage de los Animales* for publication in Mexico.

⁶ For a sustained analysis of "archive stories," see Antoinette Burton, *Archive Stories: Facts, Fictions, and the Writing of History* (Duke University Press, 2006).

⁷ On bestiality in colonial Mexico, see Lee Penyak, "Criminal sexuality in central Mexico, 1750-1850" (Ph.D. diss., University of Connecticut, 1993), Milada Bazant,

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“Bestialismo, el delito nefando, 1800-1856,” *Documentos de Investigación* (Mexico, 2000), and Zeb Tortorici, “Contra Natura: Sin, Crime, and ‘Unnatural’ Sexuality in Colonial Mexico, 1530-1821” (Ph.D. diss., UCLA, 2010).

⁸ Bancroft Library, MSS 96/95m, 10: “se le havia presentado un perrito vestido de hombre por uno de este sexo, y una perrita vestida de muger por una de esto otro, y preguntados mutuam^{te} sobre sus consentim^{tos} entendido de ellos por las respuestas delos que los tenian en las manos, havia solemnizado, y formalizado este reo el referido matrimonio entre los dos animalejos.”

⁹ My growing interest in archival representations of animals was no doubt related to the fact that I began to think more critically about human-animal relations and interactions in both the present and the past. This intellectual interest was, for me, increasingly related to the fact that I came to espouse vegan ethics during the early years of my graduate school career. Admittedly, in the archives I was at first simply looking for bizarre archival references to animals, but was compelled to think more seriously about the implications of “centering animals” within historical narratives.

¹⁰ I am thankful to Frederico Santos Soares de Freitas for pushing me to think more about the many ambiguities inherent in the project of centering animals (or other social actors) within the historical narrative.

¹¹ In the 1739 English translation, these are respectively titled “Of the Understanding of Beasts,” “Of the Nece??ity of a Language between Beasts,” and “Of the Language of Beasts.” See Garrett, *Animal Language, Animal Passions and Animal Morals*, pp. 3, 27, and 41.

¹² Nicolas Malebranche, *De la Recherche de la Verité* (Paris, 1678), vi, 2, vii, quoted in Rod Preece, *Sins of the Flesh: A History of Ethical Vegetarian Thought* (University of British Columbia Press, 2008), 159.

¹³ “Descartes os dirá que los Animales son maquinas q^o todas sus acciones se pueden explicar por las leyes de la maquinaria y que antes de él fueron del mismo sentir algunos filosofos del tiempo de Sⁿ Agustin; pero no obstante estas ideias Cartesianas, yo desafio â todos los sectátarios de este sistema â que os persuadan que la Perrila que tanto amais es una maquina.”

¹⁴ Garrett, *Animal Language, Animal Passions and Animal Morals*, p 4-5: “Po??ibly the Men with whom I live, who ?peak to me, who give me Answers, who argue and act together with me, may be nothing but mere Machines. For I know that I am actually thinking and have within me a thinking and knowing Principle. But I am not equally informed of what pa??es within other Men, and it cannot be denied but that God has the Power of making ?uch Creatures as ?ould have Appearance only and Motions of Men, though there were at bottom nothing but Machines.”

¹⁵ Delmar writes, “Lo más seguro es que ni nuestro autor ni su lectora hayan estado al

tanto de las discusiones de Hume, Rousseau o Buffon pero, mientras que en estos autores hay una diferencia muy clara entre las palabras y lo que pensamos de las palabras, en el *Discurso filosófico del [sic] lenguaje de los animales* se mantiene todavía un equilibrio entre lo social y lo natural. Tal vez esta diferencia sea, al mismo tiempo, lo que podría distinguir a la Ilustración europea y la novohispana.” Other scholars have also recently posited that this the *Discurso Filosofico Sobre el Lenguage de los Animales* originated in New Spain. See, for example, Jürgen Stowasser and Claudia Leitner, “Ilustración novohispano y el debate hombre-animal,” paper presented at the 54th International Congress of Americanists, Vienna, Austria, July 15-20, 2012.

¹⁶ Martin Nesvig, personal email (9/7/2005).

¹⁷ <http://hemisphericinstitute.org/hemi/en/participate>. Last accessed on 10/14/2012.

¹⁸ On native literacies, see Elizabeth Boone and Walter D. Mignolo, eds., *Writing Without Words: Alternative Literacies in Mesoamerica and the Andes* (Duke University Press, 1994) and Joanne Rappaport and Tom Cummins, *Beyond the Letters City: Indigenous Literacies in the Andes* (Duke University Press, 2012).

¹⁹ Garrett, *Animal Language, Animal Passions and Animal Morals*, p 45: “They have not our Privileges; but in recompense they have not our Failings. They speak little, but always to the purpose, and that knowingly. They always speak Truth, and never deceive, not even in point of Love. And is not this an Advantage they have over us? With regard to this, they are nearly in the same Case with the Peasants in our countries, and the Negroes and Savages of America.”

²⁰ I thank Marten Brien for this observation, especially with regard to disciplines such as archeology and anthropology.

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