Nonhuman Empires

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This themed section explores a variety of ways in which the historical trajectories of nonhumans and empires intersected, and informed one another, in the early modern and modern worlds. It takes as its particular subject of inquiry the animals in imperial contexts—from horses in Mughal art; dogs in the changing urban landscapes of Ottoman Cairo; sheep as raw materials in British New Zealand; and antelopes as objects of conservation in decolonizing Uganda—as a platform for more extensive thematic and methodological discussion. The topics explored in the issue, because they proceed from an understanding of the co-constitution of human and nonhuman interactions, stand to challenge anthropocentric figurations of agency.

Nonhumans are not invisible, of course: in literary narratives they have been variously associated with significant episodes in the careers of enduring and expansive political regimes. Gabriel García Márquez's classic novel *The Autumn of the Patriarch* begins with the scene of the arrival of "successive waves" of vultures at the presidential palace, who, along with other parasitic animals, profane the deceased ruler's body by converting it into an object of carnal feast. Trespassing cows create further chaos, marking an irrevocable blow to the legitimacy of a deeply entrenched political order.[1] The Mahabharata, whose narrative locus is the city of Hastinapura, or the "City of Elephants," revealingly describes a dog as a constant companion of the Pandavas in their final journey, once the exhaustive narratives about war, politics, and kingdom had been concluded.[2] In more prosaic historiographical accounts, like William Clarence-Smith's work with regard to infantry horses in the Ottoman Empire, the scarcity of nonhuman animals is a technical factor behind the military decline of established empires.[3] Nonhumans were not just a part of the drama of decline; they were also integral to the sustenance of imperial formations. Nonhumans carried material and metaphorical significance for humans on both sides of the imperial divide. For instance, in a rare and yet significant invocation of the nonhuman in his work, Ranajit Guha, the founding editor of *Subaltern Studies*, reads George Orwell's description of "shooting an elephant" while on duty as a police officer in the interiors of Burma "during the dying days of Empire" as a broader expression of persisting European anxieties about their potential bestialization in the course of imperial duty.[4]

1. Márquez, *The Autumn of the Patriarch*, 3–5.

2. See, for example, Deb Roy, *Sarama and Her Children*, 68.

3. Clarence-Smith, "Animal Power."

4. Guha, "Not at Home in Empire," 488.

These varied indications of nonhuman presence provide the opportunity to address questions about nonhuman agency that privilege neither an anthropocentric nor a zoo-centric conception of history.[5] Rather, they offer ways to narrate the co-constitution of imperial structures, human action, and nonhuman animals over the past few centuries by drawing on powerful recent work in science studies, an interdisciplinary field that takes the agency and existence of nonhuman objects and creatures as a central point of inquiry. The essays in this special section thus illuminate the productive engagement between science studies and the historiography of imperialism, with special focus on the purchase of posthumanist impulses of actor-network theory and the work of the Subaltern Studies collective in addressing the critical link between imperial power, Eurocentrism, and the subject-agent.

While the contributions to this themed section assert the reciprocal dynamics between empires and nonhumans, they reject illusions about an analytically "flat" world characterized necessarily by happy intermingling and egalitarian dialogues. Rather, they map the ways in which these intersecting and co-constituted histories were generated by, and themselves produced, enduring regimes of violence, extraction, and inequality.

The Essays

Each of the essays included here suggests that the "maintenance and repair" of nonhumans was an incessant preoccupation of disparate imperial powers.[6] By so doing, the essays follow recent work that attempts to rethink the nonhuman without engaging in the kind of scientism evident in certain environmental histories of empire.[7] Our contributors argue that nonhumans deepened the biopolitical foundations of empires, which were often characterized by what Alan Mikhail calls "anthrozoological states." This was reflected in an obsession with intraspecies classification of nonhumans,

which was in turn linked to what Nicole Shukin has described as "zoopolitical" efforts to intervene in the life and death of nonhuman members and subjects.[8] This involved not just the protection of nonhuman lives through legislation, as in the case of dogs in Ottoman Cairo. Rather, empires were invested in innovating new forms of lives by experimenting with forms of reproduction. These ranged from efforts to immortalize living horses through artistic portrayals in Mughal India, to machine-induced crossbreeding of sheep known as "freezers" in colonial New Zealand.

If the cultivation of animal life was a preoccupation of imperial regimes, so too was their death.[9] In Mehmet 'Ali's Cairo, dogs that refused to internalize the status of domesticated subjects were collectively liable to poisoning or could be imprisoned in a ship and drowned; sheep awaiting to become commodities in late nineteenth-century colonial New Zealand were crossbred, raised, reared, fattened, butchered, and dressed precisely to suit the technologies of mechanical refrigeration; in post–World War II Uganda the production of an antelope "population" as a potential subject of conservation was predicated on extensive cultures of biological culling; and horses that were decorated objects of miniature painting in Mughal India often formed the frontline on the battlefield.

In his essay, Jagjeet Lally addresses the significance of living horses as well as portraits of men on horses to the Mughal political system. These paintings, Lally argues, were politically charged artifacts in themselves, which were designed to convey the supremacy of the "nimbate" Mughal sovereign. The reproduction of horses through these paintings as aestheticized organisms continued to dominate the artistic cultures among political elites across northern India during the later Mughals, and it was appropriated by the Mughal successor states and the English East India Company. These paintings of men on horseback performed various symbolic and material functions: reinforc-

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5. Lewis, "Swarm Intelligence," 224.

6. For repair and maintenance see Latour, "Whose Cosmos?," 459.

7. This emerging body of work, which simultaneously critiques scientific determinism and anthropocentrism and anticipates some of the

concerns of this section, includes Mukharji, "The 'Cholera Cloud'"; Raffles, "Towards A Critical Natural History"; Anderson, *The Collectors of Lost Souls*; and Shamir, *Current Flow*.

8. For "zoopolitics" see Shukin, *Animal Capital*, 9–11. The expression "anthrozoological states"

appears in Alan Mikhail's contribution to this themed section, "A Dog-Eat-Dog Empire."

9. It might be plausible to conceptualize these nonhuman animals as among the necropolitical subjects of imperial regimes. See Mbembe, "Necropolitics," 26–29.

ing hierarchies among Mughal royalty, nobility, and regional powers; asserting political legitimacy by a regional potentate; when commissioned by an outsider to the ruling classes, marking insubordination and resistance to authority; serving as ritual gifts to strike alliances between regional rulers. Lally argues that over several centuries these paintings came to constitute a quest for cultural consolidation, competition, and exchange among contending political regimes within the subcontinent and beyond.

In his contribution to this collection, Mikhail situates dogs in the course of two centuries, ending in the 1800s, as "integral actors in the urban fabric of Ottoman Cairo," a "city full of dogs." Dogs were subjects of exalted religious, allegorical, and legal discourses, performed various spectacular roles in wars, hunts, and medicine, protected their owners, and consumed urban waste. The role of dogs was related to the wider character of the contemporary Ottoman Empire, which, as Mikhail has argued elsewhere, was built on an "animal energy regime."[10] The metamorphosis of the dog in nineteenth-century Ottoman Cairo from being a valued member to being a redundant burden was connected to the modernizing reforms initiated by the Mehmet 'Ali government. The practices of urban reconstruction, modernization, sanitization, and cleansing in Mehmet 'Ali's Cairo were to a great extent, Mikhail argues, founded upon the reinvention of the canine body as a site of disease, waste, crowd, noise, and eradication.

Rebecca Woods shifts focus to the imperial meat trade to examine the reemergence of sheep in British New Zealand in the late nineteenth century as an embodiment of the intimate relationships between metropolitan consumption and colonial raw material. Sheep—as livestock—were appropriated as part of a network of lively capital that both connected and maintained the antipodal distance between New Zealand's pastoral economy and metropolitan dinner tables in England. This was enabled by, as Woods shows, the recasting of the sheep as a "malleable" animal, one suited to bridging the technologies of mechanical reproduction and mechanical refrigeration. The meat, which was exported mainly to England, was thus a carnal manifestation of an imperial commodity fetish, which made both the labor and object of butchery invisible to metropolitan consumers. The sheep that grazed the fields in New Zealand allowed an industrial appetite and a compassionate *humanitarian* public in the metropole, indifferent to the details of extractive violence outsourced elsewhere, to thrive simultaneously. The sheep in distant New Zealand were not just related to the sustenance of imperial taste, compassion, and consumption in England but, as Woods argues, also informed British national gastronomic hypochondria over concerns of fraud, nutrition, and dead imports.

Etienne Benson retells the history of decolonization in Western Uganda in the 1950s and 1960s from the perspective of antelopes. Decolonization did not mean the end of imperial rule for the antelopes, but rather the potential and eventual end of British rule exposed them to various world historical processes. Indeed, antelopes in Uganda were at the center of a series of negotiations between British officials and American biologists; wildlife managers and African pastoralists; biologists, ecologists, anthropologists, and primatologists; and the industries of development, tourism, meat, and conservation. These interchanges were pivotal in shaping the histories of antelopes as well as decolonization in Uganda. Antelopes bear witness to the transition of Uganda into a constituent of an US-dominated world in the mid-twentieth century. During the ascendency of the United Nations at the height of the Cold War, they figured as an example of pristine African nature, which Fulbright-funded American conservation biologists determined to protect from inexperienced African governments. Antelopes in Uganda were entangled in the colonization of pastoral and agricultural land under the excuse of restoring land for wildlife preservation. Such models, argues Benson, when replicated elsewhere in South Asia or Central America had serious implications for massively displaced refugee populations and ethnic and religious minorities in the postcolonial world.

These articles thus indicate the centrality of nonhuman animals to imperial conflicts and conceptualizations about territory. While Lally

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10. Mikhail, "Unleashing the Beast," 325.

recalls the centrality of horses in Mughal visions of acquiring, expanding, and consolidating territory, Mikhail hints at a hidden history of interspecies conflicts between humans and dogs over a shared urban space in nineteenth-century Ottoman Cairo. Studies on conserving antelopes in decolonizing Uganda, as Benson argues, acted as the link between biological and sociological theorizations about territoriality. At the same time, these nonhumans (and anecdotes associated with them) transgressed the territorial frontiers of expansive empires. Dogs of Cairo were talked about and compared in Syria, India, and North China. Portraits of Mughal horses circulated beyond imperial and provincial libraries into Southeast Asia and Central Asia, and some even made their way to Europe. Specific breeds of sheep from New Zealand were exported outside the immediate limits of the British Empire into South America, Russia, and Japan. Nonhuman histories reconfirm that these empires were obsessed with defining and transcending territorial limits.

"Becoming with" Nonhumans

The essays collected in "Nonhuman Empires" thus suggest a number of theoretical and methodological models for addressing the mutual entailments of the human-nonhuman interface. The argument for co-constitution appears most insistently in the works of Donna Haraway, who has focused on what she calls the "constitutive encounterings" of interspecies, or how they "become with" one another.[11] She has explored different ways in which the careers of humans and various nonhumans are interwoven and how they come into being as distinct species in relation to each other. This interrogation of "human exceptionalism,"[12] Haraway suggests, requires writing "looping, braided stories"[13] involving the human and nonhuman. In exploring these questions, Bruno Latour's work presents

a sustained polemic against conventional social theory. Latour remains agnostic about the ways in which metanarratives as well as their critiques are conceptualized in current academic practice; these, according to him, tend to reinforce the anthropocentric foundations of modernity.[14] Latour lamented in 2005 that "the more radical thinkers want to attract attention to humans in the margins and at the periphery, the less they speak of objects."[15] Latour's refusal to participate in academic critiques in their current forms, and his insistence on "description" rather than "explanation," positions actor-network theory (most frequently associated with Latour) and postcolonial historiographical projects (such as subaltern studies) on separate trajectories.[16]

Latour claims that actor-network theory does not survive on the "empty claim that objects do things 'instead' of human actors."[17] Instead, it complicates the subject-object dichotomy by denying any human or nonhuman the exclusive monopoly of appearing as the "prime mover of actions" by themselves. Rather, Latour describes agency as the property of collectives, imbroglios, assemblages, entanglements, and associations of subjects and objects, humans and nonhumans.[18] In decentering and redistributing the autonomous agent, Latour's works have exposed intersectional as well as inseparable assemblages of humans and nonhumans and of subjects and objects. Other scholarly perspectives that transgress the dichotomy between humans and nonhumans, and with which actor-network theory has been in conversation, include the sociology of science,[19] perspectivist anthropology,[20] assemblage theory,[21] and post-Marxist feminism.[22] Like Latour, Haraway's description of an actor as a "cumbersome," "material-semiotic" entity results from her refusal to reduce the notion of "being" itself to that of an "essentialized" and "fetishized perfect subject" or object.[23] Science stud-

11. On "becoming with" see Haraway, *When Species Meet*, 3, 4, 23–27. For "constitutive encounterings" see 161–65.

12. Ibid., 46.

13. Ibid., 163.

14. Mallavarapu and Prasad, "Facts, Fetishes, and the Parliament of Things."

15. Latour, *Reassembling the Social*, 73.

16. Ibid., 136–37.

17. Ibid., 72.

18. See, for instance, Latour, "A Collective of Humans and Nonhumans," in *Pandora's Hope*, 174–93.

19. See Pickering, "The Mangle of Practice," 559, 567, 576.

20. See de Castro, "Exchanging Perspectives," 471.

21. See Deleuze and Guattari, "Rhizome."

22. See Haraway, *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women*, 149–76.

23. Haraway, "Situated Knowledges," 179, 185.

ies scholars thus share in the imperative to rethink "existence," whether human or nonhuman, in terms of an "historical succession of quasi-objects, quasi-subjects."[24]

Thus, while rejecting anthropocentrism, science studies scholars like Latour and Haraway deny the existence of a pure and uncontaminated world of nonhuman objects and creatures.[25] Such a challenge undertaken by them to problematize simultaneously the categories of the "human" and the "material" has inspired a new criticality in the histories of materials and materialities.[26] Like other science studies scholars, Latour and Haraway have argued that the imbrication of nonhumans in various actions can be shown to be both simultaneously constructed and real,[27] and in the process they have revealed awareness of the processes through which nonhumans emerge in and are sustained by historically specific situations.[28] And yet, they have admonished social constructivists for reifying the social, the human, or the historical context itself as preordained and omnipotent.[29] The science studies perspective therefore inspires historians to question the perceived autonomy of the domains of matter, the human, and social-political processes, and to explore their interanimation.[30] Prevalent conversations among science studies, animal studies, and other fields in the humanities and social sciences in recent years have

already begun to reveal how nonhumans, on the one hand, and various categories of mainstream cultural and political history (like capital, democracy, enlightenment, and romanticism), on the other, have overlapped and shaped one another.[31] Each essay in this section builds on these prevailing insights to analyze the intertwined historical trajectories of empires, humans, and nonhuman animals.

Nonhuman Subaltern

We have seen that nonhuman animals had an indelible effect on imperial history, and that their subalternity was manifest in at least three distinct ways: they were victims of imperial violence; they were products of imperial regimes of subjectification; and they were usually marginalized in imperial historiography.[32] The evocation of the subaltern calls up the critique of imperial meta-narratives of progress and improvement as well as elite history writing that is associated with the Subaltern Studies collective.[33] It poses, for the essays included here, the question of whether histories of nonhumans in imperial Europe were different from histories of nonhumans in the colonies. Or, to rephrase Shula Marks's question: What was "colonial" about colonial nonhumans?[34]

We should recall that in consecutive essays published in the mid-1980s, Gayatri Chakravorty

24. Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern*, 136–38.

25. Although aspects of Marx's own writings (particularly on machines, labor, commodities, and capital) inspire interrogation of the conceptual boundaries between human and nonhuman, subsequent Marxist elaborations of historical materialism have been more concerned with developing a polemic against fatalist, idealist, and transcendental notions of history than with an overt critique of anthropocentrism.

26. See Bennett and Joyce, *Material Powers*; Braun and Whatmore, *Political Matter*; Joyce, "What Is the Social in Social History?"; van Binsbergen, "Commodification"; and Chatterjee et al., *New Cultural Histories of India*.

27. See Latour, *Reassembling the Social*, 88–93, 44–73; Latour, "The Promises of Constructivism"; Hacking, *Social Construction of What?*, 1–34; Haraway, "Situated Knowledges," 175–76, 183–85; Sismondo, "Some Social Constructions," 516, 519–22; and Kirsch and Mitchell,

"The Nature of Things," 697–702. Also see Nicole Shukin on "rendering" in *Animal Capital*, 20–27.

28. For the dynamics among histories of science, social constructivism, and science studies, see Golinsky, *Making Natural Knowledge*, 1–45, and Daston, "Science Studies and the History of Science."

29. For a distinction between constructivism and social constructivism, see Latour, *Reassembling the Social*, 91. Ian Hacking elaborates on six different kinds of constructivism in *Social Construction of What?*, 19–21. Distinction between social constructivism and constructivism has also been indicated in Sismondo, "Some Social Constructions," 515–53. See also Golinsky, *Making Natural Knowledge*, 13–46.

30. See Trentmann, "Materiality in the Future of History," 297–300; Pickering, "The Mangle of Practice," 559, 567, 576; and Kirsch and Mitchell, "The Nature of Things," 688.

31. See Shukin, *Animal Capital*; Sunder Rajan, *Biocapital*; Mitchell, *Carbon Democracy*; Schaffer, "Enlightened Automata"; and Tresch, *The Romantic Machine*. For a collection of essays that brings together political theory and science studies and explores the "entwined" trajectories of nonhumans and politics, see Braun and Whatmore, *Political Matter*.

32. See Ferrari and Dahnhardt, *Charming Beauties and Frightful Beasts*. The blurb of this recently edited volume invokes the word "subaltern" to claim that animals in postcolonial contexts such as South Asia are subjected to twofold epistemic violence, marginalized within the scholarly fields of both animal studies, with emphases predominantly on nonhumans in Europe and North America, and South Asian studies, which continues to retain an essentially anthropocentric orientation.

33. Prakash, "Subaltern Studies as Postcolonial Criticism," 1485.

34. See Marks, "What Is Colonial about Colonial Medicine?"

Spivak critiqued the figure of the autonomous subaltern subject that had featured in the existing volumes of subaltern studies. Rather than defining the subject as a continuous, homogenous, sovereign, determining, and willful agent, Spivak reversed the predictable chronology of action by redefining the subaltern subject itself as an effect.[35] Refusing to specify the subject as a coherent, solitary, and singular figure, she claimed that the subject was an effect produced by diverse relationships among disparate constituents of "an immense discontinuous network."[36] Therefore, the tendency to situate the subject at the origin of an action, argued Spivak, resulted from "the substitution of an effect for a cause."[37] Spivak's critique inspired subaltern studies scholars to "write deconstructive histories of subjecthood,"[38] and the group contributed to the wider project of decentering the sovereign subject by situating it as an effect of discourse and power.[39] This antihumanist impulse led to a critique of the prejudices of Eurocentrism and gender, which were built into the Enlightenment figure of Man.[40] Yet, subaltern studies scholars have long resisted the temptation to extend this critique into a full-fledged interrogation of anthropocentrism.

It might be worthwhile to think about the missed conversation between subaltern studies and actor-network theory, since both challenge the notion of a monolithic subject-agent, albeit differently.[41] They owe this overlapping inclination to their shared indebtedness to the antihumanist critique of the autonomous sovereign subject.[42] This, in part, has led both these projects to expose the limits of different disciplinary traditions.[43]

For instance, Latour adds considerable nuance to conceptions of agency and the acting subject. He destabilizes received understandings of agency by questioning the rigid binaries of absolute action and complete inaction and instead acknowledges a range of "shades between full causality and sheer inexistence."[44] Like the property of being an agent, Latour provocatively suggests elsewhere, existence itself is not an "all or nothing property."[45] Rather than sensationalizing existence through the alternatives of complete presence or absence, Latour explores possibilities of "existing somewhat, having a little reality."[46] To a certain extent reminiscent of Spivak in her comments on the production of a "subject-effect," Latour refuses to identify "entity" as well as "phenomena" in terms of a specific preexisting subject or object. He defines an entity as "an exploration . . . an experience in what holds with whom, in who holds with whom, in what holds with what, in who holds with what."[47]

Simultaneous attention to the Latourian ascription of agency to heterogeneous networks of human and nonhuman mediators and to Spivak's deconstruction of the subject as an effect produced by diverse "knottings and configurations" might extend the histories of horses, dogs, sheep, and antelopes included here, in this section, in relatively unfamiliar directions. The essays in this special section do not celebrate these animals as straightforward and self-contained nonhuman actors. Rather, they deconstruct the constellation of material and social interface that produced them as agents and subaltern subjects at specific moments in history.

Nonhuman Empires

At present there are at least three broad models for understanding imperial structures, which coexist at different levels of historiographical analysis. First, empires are most frequently understood as enduring, expansive, overarching, and almost omnipotent structures, connected to the figure of a sovereign, represented most conspicuously by an

35. Spivak, "Subaltern Studies: Deconstructing Historiography," 12.

36. Ibid., 13.

37. Ibid.

38. Chakrabarty, "Postcolonial Studies and the Challenge of Climate Change," 4.

39. See Prakash, "Subaltern Studies as Postcolonial Criticism," 1480–81, 1488; Chakrabarty, "Subaltern Studies and Postcolonial Historiography," 24–25; and Chatterjee, "Reflections," 83.

40. See Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?," 272, 274, 278, 279. See Morris, "Introduction," 4–5.

41. See Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?," 283–86, and O'Hanlon, "Recovering the Subject," 191, 196, 199, 208–9.

42. Spivak, "Subaltern Studies: Deconstructing Historiography," 10. Also see Pearse, "Author," 113.

43. For Latour's take on sociology see *Reassembling the Social*, 1–13. The subaltern critique of historical reasoning can take different forms. See, for example, Chakrabarty, "Minority Histories, Subaltern Pasts," and Spivak, "Subaltern Studies: Deconstructing Historiography," 16.

44. Latour, *Reassembling the Social*, 72.

45. Latour, "On the Partial Existence of Existing and Nonexisting Objects," 256.

46. Ibid., 253.

47. Ibid., 258.

emperor and the army. Conventional histories of imperial interconnections, new imperial histories, and political thought nuance this model and yet often tend to operate within it.[48] Second, there is increasing scepticism about the need to uphold the centrality of empires in world history. It has been suggested that exclusive focus on empires conceals alternative notions of temporality and epoch (based, for instance, on deep histories of geology),[49] overemphasizes European agency in the making of the modern world while overlooking indigenous histories,[50] and imposes a repetitive formulaic pattern on historical pasts while also inhibiting an understanding of the specificities of the postcolonial period.[51] Third, sensitive to these admonishments, various methodological commentaries continue to retain "empire" as a category of analysis, while contesting the image of empires as overarching causal entities.[52]

Latour's call for "localizing the global" inspires us to relocate horses, dogs, sheep, and antelopes as "local" nodes of the immanent imperial apparatus, apart from being its victims and products.[53] Latour's call for "redistributing the local" enables the recognition of networks of human and nonhumans (that in turn shaped and sustained these animals) as intrinsic components of the imperial world.[54] Our essays illuminate these insights regarding the social and material interlocking of life in a number of ways. What they reveal is a multiplicity of human and nonhuman "mediators" that brings the historian, to invoke Steven Connor, "right into the middle of" or "into the thick of" empire. "Mediators are not static betweennesses; rather, they are go-betweens, in movement. Or rather, in the absence of a void in which to move, they *are themselves* movement."[55]

The recognition of empires as technopoliti-cal, "materialdiscursive," and "naturalcultural" domains is one way to begin questioning the anthropocentrism in imperial historiography, while resisting the temptations of environmental or scientific determinism, or a turn exclusively to the nonhuman as such.[56] Therefore, the conversation between science studies and postcolonial historiography of empires reveals different kinds of relationships between nonhumans and empires. It raises questions about the historical agency of nonhumans in imperial pasts. Going beyond both anthropocentric as well as scientifically deterministic notions of straightforward agency, the following essays explore the ways in which the historical trajectories of nonhumans and empires shaped one another. Nonhumans were implicated in informing imperial biopolitics, sovereignty, territoriality, alliances, urban landscapes, consumption, compassion, and conservation. They were not merely victims of imperial violence, or products of imperial regimes of subjectification, but also agents who were marginalized by imperial historiography. Building on the lessons of science studies and subaltern studies allows us to rethink both empires and nonhumans as co-constituted sociomaterial networks. The very fact of engaging in this task also allows us to interrogate not only environmental determinism, but also anthropocentrism and essentialist notions of species and agency that are prevalent in disciplinary history.

Scholars associated with the posthumanist turn, such as Latour, Haraway, Michel Serres, and Cary Wolfe, among others, have challenged the exceptional status of the human subject.[57] Arguments regarding human-nonhuman hybrids and attention to interspecies in contemporary technoscience has allowed posthumanist scholars to contest the stability of human-nonhuman distinctions.[58]

48. For an insightful analysis of different approaches see, for example, Burbank and Cooper, *Empires in World History*.

49. See Chakrabarty, "The Climate of History."

50. See Raj, "Beyond Postcolonialism . . . and Postpositivism."

51. See Kowal et al., "Indigenous Body Parts," 470, and Phalkey, "Introduction to 'Focus on Science, History, and Modern India.'"

52. See, for example, Anderson, "Introduction: Postcolonial Technoscience," 652, and Chambers and Gillespie, "Locality in the History of Science."

53. For "localizing the global," see Latour, *Reassembling the Social*, 179–90.

54. For "redistributing the local," see ibid., 190–92.

55. See Connor, "Michel Serres's Milieux."

56. On the technopolitical see Mitchell, *Rule of Experts*, 42–43. On the "materialdiscursive" see Raffles, "Towards a Critical Natural History," 377. On the "naturalcultural" see Haraway, *When Species Meet*, 25, 47, 62.

57. See Simon, "Toward a Critique of Posthuman Futures"; Anderson, "White Natures"; and O'Hara, "Neither Gods nor Monsters." For a critique of the current uses of the word "posthuman" see Wolfe, *What Is Posthumanism?*.

58. See Livingston and Puar, "Interspecies."

In so doing, posthumanism needs to remain grounded in a broader analytical, geographical, and temporal frame to be sensitive to the political processes through which the binary of the human and nonhuman was reconsolidated and policed.

Sujit Sivasundamaram's afterword, "Imperial Transgressions," turns to these issues with specific focus on the location of material objects and animals in imperial scientific imagination of race. He situates the histories of war, racial knowledge, and identity politics in the colonial and postcolonial worlds as significant episodes in which the distinctions between human subjects and nonhuman objects were invoked as well as selectively blurred. He argues that the simultaneous operation of the processes of anthropomorphism and dehumanization was embedded in wider histories of empires, capitalism, and biopower.[59] A number of hybrid, boundary objects that cut across stable frontiers of categorization were present in early modern and modern empires: Brahmin horses, mechanically reproduced sheep, "Gandhi-like-wolf-children," a "Half-man, half-beast," humane Gorillas, "Tamil Tigers," and an "adopted orphan baby" orangutan. These posthuman forms were imbricated within violent histories of empires, colonialism, ethnicity, race, and nation. At the same time, empires occasioned not just the transgression of fixed species identities; they also contributed to their consolidation as collective zoopolitical subjects. Therefore, histories of colonialism and empire can deepen the foundations of posthumanist thinking by revealing the enduring political, ideological, and material processes within which species identities as well as human-nonhuman distinctions were delineated, stabilized, policed, and then blurred. Postcolonial and posthumanist scholarship need to be viewed as complementary projects, with the possibility of greater sustained conversations.   ‖‖‖

59. On anthropomorphism see Daston and Mitman, *Thinking with Animals*, and Rees, "Anthropomorphism, Anthropocentrism, and Anecdote."

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