

## **INTERSPECIES AGENCIES: CONTROVERSIES, ONTOLOGIES AND NEW FORMS OF COHABITATION**

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### **Abstract:**

The theme of interspecies relationships stands out in some STS approaches such as Bruno Latour's Actor-Network Theory, Vinciane Despret's Political Epistemology, Tim Ingold's entanglement proposal and Donna Haraway's thematization of companion species, just to give a few examples. In these and other approaches, it is possible to observe that the interspecies bond manifests itself in several dimensions: 1) animal work and human-animal cooperation in different social settings, such as security services, sports, support for people with disabilities, rescue, medical warning and emergencies; 2) public health and scientific controversies about the control of animal populations, or interspecies contagion through contact with microorganisms; 3) the ethical dimensions of human-animal relations, with implications for the question of subjectivity, legal rights and the political mobilization of animal organizations and animal advocacy; 4) the responsible care and owning of animals and their effects in terms of assemblage of new collectives; 5) the intensive industrialized production and slaughter of animals for food consumption, clothing, etc.; 6) the relationship with wildlife, including issues relating to nature conservation, but also relationships with "recreational" activities such as hunting; 7) the question of experimental animals (in all areas), and their relationship with the pharmaceutical and cosmetic industry; 8) the relationship with the tertiary and leisure industry, including tourism, but also zoos.

This panel seeks to open space for proposals that work on socially controversial aspects and that equally involve multiple modes of scientific knowledge about/with animals. In this panel, we seek to bring to this discussion the new perspectives and debates about "multiple ontologies" and what it is possible to designate as "beyond the human". Here, animals can be brought to the scene as social agents, as active participants in a set of sociotechnical networks that attract, involve or "enlist" heterogeneous agents, with different interests and very diverse conditions and possibilities for action: NGOs, civil associations, epidemiologists, veterinarians, medical doctors experts in zoonoses, farmers and policy makers, to name a few.

We invite proposals that address one or several of the following questions: How would each profession define the human-animal relationship? What are the technical and material devices put into action in human-other animal interactions, in each of these particular contexts? How do these techno-scientific

devices operate to produce specific, sometimes conflicting, versions of animals? And what are the possible spaces of resistance for these animals? Proposals that stem from either ongoing or completed research, empirical work or theoretical discussions are welcome. We call for proposals that may challenge the anthropocentric idea of “thinking the animal”, and rather focus on the set of possibilities available for “living with the animal”: new interspecies regimes and multispecies commons.

**Key words:**

Interspecies agencies; ontologies