

**Bucharest Barks:
Street Dogs, Urban Lifestyle Aspirations, and the Non-Civilized City**

by

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“The gods had condemned Sisyphus to ceaselessly rolling a rock to the top of a mountain, whence the stone would fall back of its own weight. They had thought with some reason that there is no more dreadful punishment than futile and hopeless labor.”

“I leave Sisyphus at the foot of the mountain! One always finds one's burden again. But Sisyphus teaches the higher fidelity that negates the gods and raises rocks. He too concludes that all is well. This universe henceforth without a master seems to him neither sterile nor futile. Each atom of that stone, each mineral flake of that night filled mountain, in itself forms a world. The struggle itself toward the heights is enough to fill a man's heart. One must imagine Sisyphus happy.”

Extracts from “Sisyphus Myth” (1942) by Albert Camus (1913–1960)



Sisyphus by Titian (1490–1567)

1548–1549. Oil on canvas, 237 x 216 cm

Prado Museum, Madrid

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Dedication

To my family, Charalambos, Athena, Yannis, and Dimitris for always being close, for always nourishing their *birbilo*, *barbatsalos*, *kounioko* and *zoumboko*

To Stefanos, for always smoothing the road for me to push the rock uphill

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Table of Contents

Dedication	ii
Acknowledgments	iii
List of Figures	x
Abstract	xiii
Introduction: Historical Context, Theoretical Concerns, Methods, Sites	1
<i>i) Discourses of Responsibility, Compassion, and the Ambivalence of European Civilization</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>ii) Socialist Demolitions and Changes in Bucharest’s Urban Fabric</i>	<i>27</i>
<i>iii) Socialist Demolitions and Street Dogs</i>	<i>34</i>
<i>iv) Literatures</i>	<i>38</i>
<i>v) Fieldwork: Methods and Sites</i>	<i>43</i>
<i>vi) Dissertation Structure</i>	<i>49</i>
<i>vii) Beju</i>	<i>53</i>
Chapter One: The Dogs that Weren’t Dogs: Urban Natures and Non-Urban Beasts	61
<i>1.1: Natural, Urban, Rural</i>	<i>66</i>
<i>1.2: Danger, Dirt, Disorder</i>	<i>79</i>
<i>1.3: Civil Action and Life-Style Aspirations</i>	<i>101</i>
Chapter Two: From Avoiding Air Pollution to Poisoning Urban Parasites: Street Dogs and State Policies, 1850s–1990s	114
<i>2.1: 1850s–1930s</i>	<i>117</i>
<i>2.2: Street-Dog Management during State Socialism 1950s-1980s</i>	<i>130</i>
Chapter Three: Compassion as Spatial Practice: Street Dogs, Private Shelters, International Adoption	154
<i>3.1 Neighborhood Life and Practices of Care</i>	<i>157</i>
<i>3.2 The Story of Lăbuș</i>	<i>170</i>
<i>3.3 Private Shelters and International Adoption</i>	<i>173</i>
<i>3.4 The Story of Negruțu</i>	<i>193</i>
<i>3.5 Animal Loving and Dogs as Mediating Social Judgments</i>	<i>196</i>
Chapter Four: Urban Marginalization: Agency, Begging, Race, and Parasitization	206
<i>4.1: The Marginal</i>	<i>211</i>
<i>4.2: Agency, Deception, Trust</i>	<i>217</i>
<i>4.3: Dogcatchers and the Roma</i>	<i>225</i>
<i>4.4: Reading Sentience, Denying Personhood: Dog Eyes and Metro Beggars</i>	<i>231</i>
<i>4.5: Invisibility and the Modern</i>	<i>235</i>
<i>4.6: Marginalization and the Symbolic</i>	<i>237</i>
Chapter Five: Following Breeds: Urban Culture, Market Economy, and Purity as Semiosis	242
<i>5.1: Purebred Dogs as Passion and Spectacle, Purity as Semiosis</i>	<i>244</i>

<i>5.2: Purebred Dogs as Signifiers of Urban Culture—1930s</i>	260
<i>5.3: Purebred Dogs during State Socialism—1970s</i>	267
<i>5.4: Pets as Family Members and Animal Rights Discourses in the New Market Economy, 1990s and 2000s</i>	274
Conclusion: Dogs as Boundary Objects, Value as Semiosis, Neoliberalism as a Paradox	289
Bibliography	299
Appendix	310
<i>A) Archival Sources found at the National Municipal Archives of Bucharest (Arhivele Naționale Municipiului București)</i>	310
<i>B) Legislation and Norms found at the Library of the Romanian Academy (Biblioteca Academiei Române)</i>	312
<i>C) Magazines found at the Library of the Romanian Academy (Biblioteca Academiei Române)</i>	317

List of Figures

Figure 1: Citizens waiting to enter the public shelter to adopt a dog after the euthanasia law was enacted.	14
Figure 2: Candles lit for Ionuț in one of the protests against street dogs. The sign reads, “Children, not (dogs).”	18
Figure 3: Anti-euthanasia protest outside the country’s constitutional court on the day when members of the court were voting on the constitutionality of euthanasia. The European flag figured as one of the main elements of protestors who were in favor of animal lives.	19
Figure 4: “Who is the animal?” sign, being held by an NGO member along with Țuca, a former street dog, who was trained as a therapy dog after being adopted.....	20
Figure 5: Public debate on euthanasia, in the fall of 2013, between city hall representatives, animal lovers, and “animal-haters.”	23
Figure 6: Beju smiling at a training session in Cișmigiu Park.....	58
Figure 7: Map of Bucharest and of the surrounding Ilfov County with the location of suburban sites of research and shelters marked.....	59
Figure 8: Map of Bucharest with sites of research and shelters marked	60
Figure 9: Rural residence of Romania exhibited at the Village Museum in Bucharest.....	65
Figure 10: The bleeding leaf logo of the Roșia Montană protests.....	73
Figure 11: Roșia Montană protesters, marching through Bucharest.....	74
Figure 12: Leaflet distributed at the Roșia Montană protests explaining “Why the Romanian state has more to lose than to gain” from the project.	75
Figure 13: A new Plafar store inside a mall in Bucharest, selling natural and biological products.	78
Figure 14: Exercise area for adults in Cișmigiu Park	79
Figure 15: Tița, a former street dog, along with herbs and storage items kept on the apartment balcony	84
Figure 16: Tița’s owner feeding a pigeon outside her eighth-floor apartment window	85
Figure 17: City hall vehicle with the inscription “We clean!”.....	88
Figure 18: “Bark Park” fenced dog play area in Cișmigiu Park.....	90
Figure 19: Toleriantae sign at one of city’s parks.....	91
Figure 20: “We don’t want any more ‘luck’ in the streets”—campaign of Sector 4 of the City Hall of Bucharest	92
Figure 21: A doggy-bag station with directions at a park in a northern area of the city	92
Figure 22: Puppies scavenging trash in the Bucharest Old Center area at nighttime	97
Figure 23: IREC banner outside the museum of Natural History in Piața Victoriei, downtown Bucharest.....	106
Figure 24: Fenced playground in the summer of 2015.....	108
Figure 25: McDonalds banner in Piața Romană, Downtown Bucharest	109
Figure 26: The dogs of Chiajna.	113
Figure 27: “Installation for the asphyxiation of street dogs” blueprint	121

Figure 28: “Installation for the asphyxiation of street dogs” blueprint	122
Figure 29: Management of dogs in 1917: killing, extractions, and burial.....	124
Figure 30: Did the dogcatchers catch your dog?—Cover.....	126
Figure 31: “Hunter and Angler Sportiv,” 1955 Cover.....	133
Figure 32: “The Seventieth Birthday of Big Stalin,” an article in “Hunter and Angler Sportiv”.....	134
Figure 33: “Let’s exterminate wandering dogs,” an article in “Hunter and Angler Sportiv” magazine.....	136
Figure 34: Table with the value of different dog skins in the “Hunter and Angler Sportiv” magazine.....	138
Figure 35: “Columbofilul” cover from 1978.....	148
Figure 36: “Culinary tips” in Columbofilul.....	150
Figure 37: Pigeon recipes in Columbofilul.....	151
Figure 38: Dog with a pork shank outside a neighborhood store.....	162
Figure 39: Typical doghouse construction in Bucharest.....	164
Figure 40: A dog that was hit by a car was taken to the vet by a senior citizen. The dog has just had an operation on his back left leg and is waiting for a post-operation x-ray.....	166
Figure 41: Secret passage to the basement under the concrete staircase.....	167
Figure 42: Close up of secret passage to the basement under the concrete staircase.....	168
Figure 43: Passage to the basement.....	169
Figure 44: Ladder to the kitchen.....	170
Figure 45: Dogs in public-shelter cages.....	174
Figure 46: Dog in a private shelter in the city of Galați. The local meat-store truck has just unloaded bones that will be then be boiled with pasta or rice to feed the two hundred dogs of the shelter.....	176
Figure 47: Preparing food for dogs in a private shelter in the city of Galați. The tubs are filled with bones and pasta that have just been cooked in cauldrons at the establishment.....	176
Figure 48: Sick dog at a private shelter, where dogs were left to die. After the end of my research, I heard that the dog had found a home in Germany after the intervention of local rescuers.....	177
Figure 49: Dogs at the semi-private shelter that have just been neutered during the neutering marathon. The dogs were marked as sterilized with ear tags and kept warm in blankets until they woke up.....	179
Figure 50: A dog rescuer with one of her neighbors carrying a former street dog from a private sheltering establishment to the car to be transported to the country.....	181
Figure 51: Pictures of one of the dogs Mrs. Cornelia gave for adoption in Germany.....	184
Figure 52: A van getting ready to depart for the United Kingdom. Some of the dogs have already been loaded.....	185
Figure 53: Anti-euthanasia protest in front of the country’s government building. Banners are citing simultaneous protests that were taking place against the Romanian euthanasia law in Belgium, Germany, Greece, France, Spain, Finland, and elsewhere.....	187
Figure 54: “Which Dog Did Your Money Kill?” banner during anti-euthanasia protest in front of Romania’s government building.....	189
Figure 55: A picture indicative of the “before” and “after” representations of an adopted dog. The dog is seen sleeping on a sofa and with a toy in Western Europe, in contrast to its depiction as a street dog in a wet and cruel shelter in Romania.....	190

Figure 56: A dog being transported in the trunk of a car after its release from the public shelter.	191
Figure 57: Doghouses located at the back of Casă Poporului, as typically seen throughout Bucharest.....	199
Figure 58: Tița, the dog that was taken inside the family apartment after her owner found her sick on the sidewalk.	200
Figure 59: “Adopt” campaign before the implementation of mass euthanasia. Banner at the south of the city, an area with reportedly larger numbers of street dogs.....	201
Figure 60: Poster: “Without villas constructed with your money.”.....	225
Figure 61: A street dog watching a purebred show sponsored by Belcando Specialty Dog Food	246
Figure 62: Agility games exhibition at IOR Park.....	247
Figure 63: Pictures of purebreds decorating the offices of the public shelter	249
Figure 64: Sketches explaining right movement in contrast to defective walking.....	252
Figure 65: Sketches explaining the right and faulty characteristics of crania	253
Figure 66: Airedale terrier, champion in its category at the dog show competition, Parcul Tei, spring 2014.....	255
Figure 67: A judge checking the testicles of a Romanian shepherd dog at a dog show competition before choosing it as a champion. Parcul Tei, spring, 2014.....	256
Figure 68: Mioritic Romanian shepherd dogs parading at a dog show competition at Parcul Tei, spring 2014.....	257
Figure 69: “Daisy, for adoption. Character: A bit timid, very feminine”	260
Figure 70: The cover of the magazine “Our Dogs,” 1938	262
Figure 71: King Carol II, honorary president of the Romanian Dog Kennel, 1938	263
Figure 72: The King and the Voievod (grand prince) Mihai visiting a canine exposition, 1938.....	264
Figure 73: “Our Friends with their Friends” article, 1938.....	265
Figure 74: Normal characteristics and defects table, 1938.....	266
Figure 75: Vulpu in the tub after taking a walk.....	268
Figure 76: Negruța, cozy in her spot in the living room.....	269
Figure 77: Former Dogs of Mr. and Mrs. Stancu. Țițelika, a former street dog, and a teckel with her puppies they had during socialism.....	269
Figure 78: Mioritic Romanian shepherd dog with a family in traditional Romanian attire, 1976	272
Figure 79: Mioritic Romanian shepherd dog in a canine exposition in Bucharest, 1978.....	273
Figure 80: “Happy Dog Guide” by Cesar Millan, the “Most loved trainer in Romania”	275
Figure 81: The magazine “My Dog,” featuring Dobermans, 1998.....	278
Figure 82: Magazine article on grooming methods, 1998.....	279
Figure 83: Chihuahua; The salt and pepper of life, 2007	280
Figure 84: Dog Fancy, 2007	282
Figure 85: A day at the ecarisaj. Pensioners are shown visiting dogs at the Shelter and bringing them food.	287

Abstract

This dissertation analyzes how perceptions and practices related to street dogs in Bucharest, Romania, before, during, and after state socialism, reveal intersections of political economy, citizenship, marginality, social class, and urban development. Bucharest's stray dog population reached 100,000 during the 1990s. During the time of my fieldwork between 2012 and 2014, their number was estimated at 45,000, following a campaign of sterilization and re-territorialization that had been implemented by City Hall and various NGOs for almost a decade. Mass euthanasia was approved in September of 2013, however, after a pack of dogs was assumed to have killed a four-year-old boy in one of the city's parks. The euthanasia law initiated a series of conundrums and protests both against and in favor of the dogs' lives. A clean and ordered urban environment was juxtaposed to the right of dogs to life in debates that highlighted competing visions of civilization, progress, and Europeanization.

This dissertation addresses the role played by street dogs in the construction of the material, moral, and sentimental worlds of diverse Bucharest citizens. It focuses specifically on discourses of compassion and responsibility, key motifs through which Bucharest residents talked about different socioeconomic groups and their urban lifestyle aspirations. It also discusses how dogs were used to produce marginality. Some in Bucharest considered begging stray dogs—not unlike begging homeless people or the Roma—to be parasites on society, living off of the resources of legitimate citizens. At the same time, however, the dissertation also examines how hobbies such as dog breeding became associated, after the interwar period, with

the upper classes and a bourgeois urban lifestyle. Finally, the dissertation explores ethnographic and archival material regarding the city's animal population that shows how public officials and various groups since the 1860s have used ideologies of sanitation and civilization to regulate the urban environment. In doing so, it also traces the logics of public administration that connect the socialist period with pre- and post-socialist times.

This project brings together post-humanist and semiotic theory, and aims to contribute to urban and post-socialist studies in anthropology. It speaks to three domains of study in anthropology: a) the shaping of life in urban centers, b) post-socialist transformations, and c) the constitution of modern societies through human–non-human interactions. The dissertation specifically asks how the human dialectic with the “city” and its animal and material elements contributes to the experiential formation of the self, and to representations of social and racial others after the collapse of state socialism. It also explores how patterns of inhabiting and regulating the urban environment are mediated through everyday practices of caring for street dogs and debating and legislating animal management and sanitation. Ultimately, this manuscript discusses how street dogs are embedded in a social, political, historical, and economic context, making them dense, though contested signs of everything from post-socialist urban degradation, to the socialist or rural mentality of urban inhabitants, to the urban progress and future of Romanian and European civilization.

Introduction: Historical Context, Theoretical Concerns, Methods, Sites

As Claude Lévi-Strauss (Lévi-Strauss 1963; see also Tambiah 1969) so famously put it, “animals are good to think with.” Drawing inspiration from this statement, this dissertation focuses on the city of Bucharest’s street dog population, in order to understand aspects of socialist, pre-socialist, and post-socialist transformations, urban history, and animal-human co-habitation in urban centers. When I first visited Bucharest, in order to conduct preliminary research in the summer of 2010, I was intrigued by the rich history of socialist demolitions and construction in the city. Thus, this project began as an exploration of rupture—namely of the trauma that the socialist era demolitions seemed to have caused for some citizens, especially architects, artists, and intellectuals. However, as I explain later, I soon realized that such demolitions besides damaging ideas of heritage, memory and glorious urban history, were also seen as the cause for the increase of the canine population in the city. Street dogs were a long lasting problem for citizens, politicians and animal rights NGOs, but also the reason for Romania to be often described as either dangerous, or inhumane in international discourses. The forced relocation of citizens from single residences—that usually had a yard—to socialist type apartments—namely the socialist blocks—during the socialist era was assumed to be the reason why many citizens let their dogs roam free in the city. Thus, this project did not focus on rupture or material absences resulted by the demolitions, but it actually studied the full of life presences that were seen to be brought by socialist policies of urbanism; namely street dogs. My ethnographic and archival research confirmed that, in the case of Bucharest, animals are indeed “good to think with,” for a number of reasons. First, the treatment of street dogs in the city

provides a lens through which to understand how population groups were socially differentiated in Romania after the collapse of the socialist regime in 1989. Second, archival material and contemporary policies about street dogs reveal how changes in the political and economic system of Romania affected both urban life and the urban environment. Third, focusing on street dogs illuminates aspects of human and animal co-habitation and the complicated relations between nature and culture in urban environments.

Throughout, this study is concerned with social change, as well as social continuity. Socialism, pre-socialism, and post-socialism are treated here not so much as distinct periods as a continuum of practices that reveal the often-connected logics underlying the organization of the socialist state. In public discourses and public policies, socialist ideologies of development, civilization, and the urban environment present similarities with both pre-socialist and post-socialist discourses. Tracing such similarities can help us to make sense of current discourses of Europeanization. Just as Europe and the notion of a “civilized city” appear as symbols of development and progress for contemporary middle class groups in Bucharest today, similar significations were tied to state ideologies and standards of everyday urban life during state socialism—especially those related to ideals of hygiene and order in the city. These are ideologies and standards that, in pre-socialist years, were also used for the management of street dogs in the city. Besides continuities in public policies, this dissertation also traces continuities in the ways in which marginal populations have been produced in the city as such, especially when entering similar spheres of signification as street dogs or other urban parasites. It discusses the marginalization of Roma populations, as it also attempts to contextualize the marginalization of beggars, or the homeless, also based on communicative and other actions that are considered parasitic.

Examining continuities also enlightens our view on whether neoliberal practices have come to substitute or replace socialist-era policies. In accordance with literature questioning the utility of the term “post-socialism” in our analyses of post-Cold War societies (Chari and Verdery 2009; Dunn and Verdery 2015; Gille 2010; Humphrey 2001), I argue that the study of street dogs reveals the overlapping political and analytical spaces of pre-socialism, socialism, and post-socialism. In addition, discussions about responsibility and citizenship, which became prevalent when the legislation that allowed the mass euthanization of dogs was voted constitutional in September of 2013, after the death of a four-year-old boy that was attributed to an attack by a pack of street dogs, problematize discourses of neoliberalism. On the one hand, neoliberal citizenship—especially among an up-and-coming middle class—seemed to be constructed through dialectic encounters with a former socialist self and mentality. Proponents of euthanasia talked about civic responsibility, when it came to reporting citizens, who fed street dogs, to the authorities. They prompted Bucharest inhabitants to be active and have dogs removed from the streets, at the same time they saw other natures, such as parks as more human friendly and wanted. They contrasted active citizenship to former forms of socialist behavior, when citizens would remain indifferent and passive, because the socialist paternalistic state would take care of all public matters. Such anti-dog groups talked about the responsibility of citizens who ignored the danger that dogs posed, but also about the responsibility of citizens who nourished and protected street dogs throughout the city’s neighborhoods. Their discourse appeared to shake ideas of individual and common life in the city. Caring for street dogs, which was commonly practiced among the former working class, was condemned in such Europeanist views of urban development as non-civilized, but also as socialist and rural. Populations that cared for street dogs, however, also advocated that civilization should be equated to love,

compassion, care, and humanity. Instead of seeing western European urban centers as civilized, they saw western European animal-loving habits as the source of real civilization. Such people were relocated during the socialist urbanization and standardization project from the country, or from single type of residences in Bucharest to socialist type apartments. For that reason, city hall and dog opponents saw them as incapable, and not knowledgeable on how to lead an urban life. Such perceptions of urban propriety, however, along the discourse of a civilized city and of a civilized urban behavior were prevalent during the time of my research, as they were during socialism. As for marginal populations, it appears that the Roma were neither allowed to live in slums during state socialism, nor exist homeless or begging citizens. The current organization, which doesn't support equal access to resources for all—as the previous welfare state did (although often in not as equal terms as it claimed to do)—seems to be producing marginality at the same time it tries to abolish it. Begging, for example, is seen as non-civilized and shameful, and thus discourses and public campaigns, which try to eliminate it, only manage to further produce such citizens as outcasts. While the extermination of street dogs might result in the disappearance of danger or dirt that they were seen to produce in the city, ignoring marginal human populations could only increase their poverty, and thus make them more visible. Thus, neo-liberal ideologies that consider all citizens equal on the basis of their value and working potential, paradoxically increase inequality.

On the other hand, dogs in the city appeared to be acceptable mainly as pets—both in middle class discourses and in city hall policies that concerned urban sanitation and security, public health, and ultimately the management of the canine population in the city. The legitimacy of having a pet dog—in contrast to street animals—was produced in accordance with other urban habits, such as healthy eating, bicycling and exercise, vegetarianism, and advocating for the

salvation of natural habitats outside urban centers. Having a pet, either a purebred or a former street dog, though, quoted a relationship between humans and animals that was legitimized through ownership bonds. Although pet dogs do not squarely fit into categorizations of property, due to having their own will, and thus due to being seen as agency bearers of some degree, such pet-oriented discourses pictured street dogs as acceptable urban inhabitants, only if they entered an ownership scheme. Indeed, having a pet dog—*animale de companie* in Romanian—appeared to be legitimized as a practice after 1989 and after the onset of discourses and practices about capitalism and individual entrepreneurship in the country. Such a trend becomes apparent through the appearance of pet shops in Bucharest neighborhoods, and of pet-themed journals after 1989. Romanians were learning about the proper ways to feed, care for, and train pets. They were also learning about different breed characteristics, personality traits, and a lifestyle in which pets were important in creating happiness and familial bonds. References to dogs as pets during the socialist period are scarce in the archival record. However, it seems that some citizens organized purebred contest and competitions in the 1970s, in which the Romanian shepherd breeds were prioritized. During socialist times it was more common for people to be living along canines, mainly referred to in legislation and norms as watchdogs, hunting dogs, or wandering dogs. Such categories, similarly to today's "community dogs" that are often being cared for by more than one resident at the neighborhood level, blurred the boundary between an owned, and a non-owned dog. Especially watchdogs lived their lives freely alongside humans, and were often confused with wandering dogs. Such dogs resided in the yards—a space that was considered domestic, but also public—and that disappeared along the demolitions of houses. Sometimes, watchdogs roamed free in the streets wearing a collar, to denote in such way their affiliation with a human. Some legislation from socialist times focused on how watchdogs should be clearly

marked as such by being kept on a leash most of the times, and by wearing a tag. Similarly, an informational leaflet from the 1930s educates citizens on how to behave in the case their dog is captured by dogcatchers if found wandering in the city. During the time of my research, street dogs and the citizens that took care of them were both to be tamed either by exterminating the dogs, or by obliging the guardians of street dogs to adopt them and take them inside apartments, thus becoming “real animal-lovers, and not lovers of street dogs,” as the mayor of Bucharest declared through his Facebook page after the voting of the euthanasia law. It thus seems that what one could claim to be parts of the “neo-liberalization,” or even of the post-socialist transition in the country, namely discourses of civilization and Europeanization, ideas of proper urban natures, the cleanliness of the city, or a tendency to support ownership defined relations between animals and humans, are neither neo-liberal nor post-socialist. In contrast, they are deeply rooted in pre-socialist ideas of urban regulation, and in socialist ideas of urban orderliness. The way such ideals became popular among middle-class citizens, however, as parts of a desired life-style along trends like veganism and healthy life-styles, uncovers how nature falls under the same logics with a civilized urban environment.

This dissertation ties together different zones of signification in contemporary Bucharest. It connects significations of the marginal to the sentimentality of the socialist working class, and to the logics of the current middle class and of the state. Thus, continuities in the discussion about street dogs are not only temporal, but also an issue of scale. Throughout, I approach social class primarily through its representations, how it is produced through social judgments that occur on the basis of corporeal, sentimental, and mental qualities. Focusing on street dogs has been ideal for this task, as so many different groups have gathered around, and expressed opinions about, this canine population through the years—from animal rescuers, to citizens who

care for the dogs at the neighborhood level, NGOs, public officials, and other professionals. I explore these discussions and the ways in which they have shaped public discourse and social interactions in relation to, both, street dogs and other humans. Behaviors towards and statements about street dogs seemed to function not only as markers of socioeconomic background, but also of inner qualities such as ethos, morality, sentiment and character.

Importantly, this is not a story of homogeneous responses. In meeting and talking to various people about street dogs in Bucharest, I began to discern norms and patterns, but I also noted exceptions, as I noted conflicts and contestations. I discuss, for example, patterns in how the upper and working classes have tended to relate to dogs, with the former keeping them as pets symbolic of an urban bourgeois lifestyle and the latter developing relations of sentimentality with street dogs living in the neighborhood. However, it was also common for working class neighbors to kept smaller breed dogs as pets. There was also a story of a street dog adopted by an upper class family. I also discuss how middle class citizens wanted the city to be free of street dogs, but here again, there are exceptions: Livia, for example, a young manager in one of the most popular bookstores in downtown Bucharest—whom I similarly understood to be middle class—rescued a pregnant female dog and made sure all the puppies and the mother found suitable homes, keeping one puppy for herself. She became interested in street dogs, after the legislation that allowed the mass euthanization of dogs was voted constitutional. As Livia told me, she just couldn't remain indifferent after seeing the mother dog's suffering, and she couldn't let her, or her puppies, be taken by dogcatchers to be euthanized.

While writing this dissertation, I treated such cases as exceptions to the more common patterns I observed in the city, or I thought of them as such because of my own patterns of socialization. In some instances, what I considered to be an exception was still associated with

the more general patterns of behavior that I describe. There was also a prevalent discourse of compassion for street dogs, for example, among people who kept small breeds inside apartments. Some of my neighbors with a purebred dog, talked about the pity they felt for street dogs. Others had both a purebred and an adopted street dog, while others kept feeding street dogs while they kept one or more purebreds at home. Keeping small breeds in socialist-type apartments was a trend that seemed connected to breed-specific discourses and materials that circulated after 1989. Moreover, such citizens didn't participate—either because they didn't have knowledge about, or because they couldn't afford to participate—in agility games, dog shows, or training sessions. I thus, didn't consider them to belong to the purebred culture I discuss in Chapter Five. Such citizens were not dog breeders either and they didn't care about breed defects, or about certifying their dog as a pedigree. Being “passionate” about dogs or a specific breed was not part of their discourse in the same way that it seemed to fuel the actions of those more firmly immersed in dog breeding culture.

During the time of my research, I found the variety of phenomena that surrounded dogs in Bucharest to be overwhelming. In my early field-notes, I describe animal-lovers as a category that intersected in varying ways with other categories like income or education. This kind of diversity was particularly clear at events such as protests in favor of animal rights, where people of various backgrounds came together, only to go their separate ways afterward, disappeared again into the city. Living in a former working class neighborhood, however, and focusing on the micro-level of neighborhood life, I started to see patterns, both in terms of how people treated street dogs, and how they understood or imagined their fellow-citizens on the basis of such treatment. Moreover, I realized that categories like “animal-lovers” and “animal-rescuers” were not homogenous, but internally composed of multiple subgroups, each with different ideas about

street dogs and their treatment. Some cared about stray dogs in the streets, while others owned, or turned their houses into private shelters and promoted animals for adoption to Western European countries. Then there were international rescuers and high-profile NGOs, as well as people who had purebred dogs themselves but still protested to protect the mixed-breeds that lived on the streets, after the voting of the euthanasia law. Ideas about what kinds of citizens cared about street dogs, and what citizens loved breeds, were prevalent among animal-loving communities. Suspicions that some citizens were becoming rich by exploiting street dogs, for example, which I discuss in Chapter Four, were based on assumptions that those caring for street dogs were usually poor. If animal-lovers perceived someone among them as of higher socio-economic status, they immediately assumed that they reached that status by selling dogs to laboratories for experiments, or to other institutions that treated dogs in inhumane ways.

Some groups were more involved than others, and their involvement included a variety of methods and practices of loving and caring. Dog rescuers who advocated international adoption, for example, often criticized citizens who took care of street dogs within neighborhoods. Meanwhile, city hall promoted full adoption or extermination, while international NGOs promoted sterilization and re-territorialization as the most long-term and civilized solution both for humans and canines. NGOs also ran therapy dog programs that trained former street dogs to help the socialization of institutionalized children and the elderly. Such efforts aimed to demonstrate that the mental capacities of street dogs were equal to those of purebreds, and that street dogs could be socially useful and were not just urban parasites.

This dissertation does not ethnographically account for all dog types that existed in Bucharest. It is, rather, an ethnographic description of the ways in which street dogs relate to the habits of urban living among the former working class, to spheres of urban marginalization, and

to middle-class aspirations of future urban development. A discussion of breeds and of trained dog habits is provided as a major point of juxtaposition. In the same way that archival material deepens our understanding of phenomena surrounding street dogs, examples from the lives of purebred dogs enlighten the ways in which street dogs have been embedded in different spheres of political and economic significations, at different times.

As the material shows, street dogs and the debates surrounding them are centered around their particular character of being seen as out of context, and also of being seen as a threat, able to pollute, cause harm, and degrade urban civilization. Such views of street dogs, however, although they differentiated them from other types of dogs such as hunting dogs or purebreds, were not enough to constitute them as a different kind of beings on a deeper ontological level. All actors in the field seemed to agree about what all these dogs shared, namely degrees of animality. As I will discuss later, such degrees of a common essence were responsible for different and often contrasting understandings and representations of dogs. Indeed, street dogs were seen to cross certain notional boundaries, changing significations based on the social positioning of actors who defined them. They thus became boundary entities, which were other times represented as persons and others as non-persons, even transcending significations of subjects and objects. This character of theirs, always being on the boundary of different worlds and significations, brings in mind the work of Star and Griesemer, who had already talked about animals as boundary objects, since they were related to different representations at different times, although still keeping their basic character of being an animal (1989).

Thus, this manuscript treats street dogs as mediating between public and private spaces, past and future, nature and culture, urban and non-urban, domestic and wild, subjects and objects, human and non-human, and finally, between different groups of citizens.

Representations of and debates about the dogs that circulate among citizens and public officials also offer an understanding of the country in its complexity. Romania has been characterized in international media and by international animal rights organizations as a contemporary hell for dogs. Such images started circulating in the 1990s, when public officials and politicians attempted to solve the issue of street dogs by euthanizing them. Criticisms of Romania's treatment of dogs echoed, in many ways, critiques made of the increased numbers of homeless orphaned children in the metro stations of Bucharest. In later years, the international community made similar judgments about the treatment of Roma in the country. Both human and animal rights became the basis for understanding Romania as an underdeveloped country. Such an image became internalized by many people who expressed aspirations about change, by expelling such populations from public representations of the country.

i) Discourses of Responsibility, Compassion, and the Ambivalence of European Civilization

Debate about street-dog euthanasia picked up in Bucharest in September of 2013, when the city was feverish with discussions about the fate of street animals after the unfortunate death of a four-year-old boy who was assumed to have been killed by a pack of street dogs. Ionuț Anghel was found badly injured in one of the capital's main parks. His six-year-old brother, who also sustained injuries, reported the event to their grandmother, who had taken the boys to the playground. While talking to local media, the children's grandmother reported that the event took place quickly, before she realized that her two grandchildren had wandered off. The brother of the victim was the only witness to the incident, but he was psychologically traumatized and unwilling to provide any descriptions. The child's injuries were attributed to more than one dog, but the authorities never managed to track down and examine the suspected pack.

The discourse of *vină* (fault/guilt), namely the responsibility for the death of Ionuț, became a mode for negotiating the issue of street-dog euthanasia in Romania during pro- and anti-mass-euthanasia protests that took place after the event. Discourses about civic responsibility became central in negotiating ideas of citizenship, especially in the discourse of middle-class dog opponents. Such ideas about responsibility were juxtaposed with the discourse of *milă* (pity), which was mainly articulated by former working-class citizens who used to care for street dogs. Compassion toward street dogs became for many a neighborhood practice that was associated with ideas of private and public spaces, familial bonds, and understandings of local and international practices of care. Ideas of responsibility and compassion, became the ways in which both dog proponents and dog opponents talked of street dogs as subjects or objects, variously attributing them with agency and either seeing them or not seeing them as persons.

Dog opponents ascribed responsibility to animal lovers and animal-rights NGOs for prolonging the problem through their resistance to euthanasia, claiming that dogs themselves couldn't be responsible since dogs are not thinking persons. According to their view, animals are driven by instincts to kill, and the authorities should have made sure that such animals didn't circulate in the streets of Bucharest in the first place. Animal lovers, on the other hand, repeated that not all dogs should die for the actions of some. They asked if killing them all would be just, and they talked about human negligence in relation to the fact that both children had been left unattended by their grandmother.

Assuming a level of canine innocence, mostly due to canine inability for symbolic thought, accusations were also directed at the political environment of the country. Under pressure of daily protests of dog proponents and dog opponents, Traian Băsescu, the president of

the country, announced a referendum (which never took place) about the fate of street dogs. Solutions for the issue of street dogs had already been featured as a central pillar of political campaigns, especially those of city hall candidates, which included such proposals as a national dog-fostering program, accurate record keeping of all dog populations, and the renewed support of private shelters, which used to care for street dogs in the city.

After a long history of attempts to pass laws for the sterilization or the euthanization of street dogs, at the end of September 2013, euthanasia was finally voted to be constitutional, causing outrage and tears among animal lovers and animal-rights NGOs. Upon implementation of the euthanasia law, efforts were made by citizens to save many of the city's street dogs by taking them into their own apartments, moving them to relatives in the country, or finding international adopters through Facebook and NGO connections. Event and discussions surrounding euthanasia provided me with an understanding of practices related to street dogs, as well with an understanding of the Romanian society and the positioning of various groups of citizens.

After the voting of the euthanasia law queues of citizens formed outside the public dog shelter in search of dogs that dogcatchers had captured throughout Bucharest. Some citizens reported that they had decided to adopt a dog simply because they couldn't just sit at home and do nothing. By the time I left Bucharest in July 2014, those canines that had not been saved by individual citizens, some 45,000 street dogs in total, had been euthanized. Visiting the city during the summer of 2015, I found surprisingly few dogs roaming the streets, and my former neighbors explained that, indeed, not many dogs remained.



Figure 1: Citizens waiting to enter the public shelter to adopt a dog after the euthanasia law was enacted¹.

During the euthanasia debate, civic responsibility became for dog opponents a vehicle by which to articulate a modern civic consciousness, and assumptions of irresponsibility were used to indicate a backward—sometimes socialist, sometimes rural—mentality. Middle-class citizens, who claimed a right to a civilized city and believed that the citizens of Bucharest should be proactive in finding solutions to their problems instead of sinking into apathy and indifference, described animal lovers as being irresponsible and backward, since they prioritized animals over humans. Animal-lover groups in turn accused dog opponents of being indifferent and devising a quick and immoral solution.

¹ All images provided by the author, unless otherwise stated

Both citizens and NGOs stressed morality through discussions about long-term sustainable solutions and “correct” behaviors toward animals. Many of my former working-class, animal-lover neighbors saw the situation through the prisms of love and hate, differentiating between those people who were *sufletişti* (people with a good soul) and those who were *nenorociţi* (the wretched). Similarly, NGOs stressed the importance of neutering and relocating street dogs, a practice that had been implemented during the previous years. In discussions I had with neighborhood animal lovers, good-souled and wretched people became characterizations that were attributed to either themselves or to people who were in favor of euthanasia, respectively. Differentiating themselves from others, animal lovers started using the term *hateri de animale* (“animal haters”) to describe the groups of citizens who called for street dogs to disappear from the city.

Discussions about a right approach to street dogs were indicative of the existence of a “moral panic” in the city, a term that Adriana Mica (2010) has already used to describe the discussions around the fate of street dogs as nature and culture hybrid entities both in Romania and in the Moldovan Republic. Such ideas of urban propriety and morality indicated the ideas held by dog opponents and dog proponents about Romanian society and the meaning of Europe. As Yavor Lilov (2009) has underlined about similar discussions about the large number of street dogs in Bulgaria, dogs were used by various groups of citizens and in political discourse as metaphors for utopias and dystopias, as beings that exist between nature and culture, home and the street, humans and non-humans, and biological functions and social norms.

In the case of Romania, such utopias and dystopias were expressed through the ambivalence that surrounded discourses of both civilization and Europeanization. Both pro- and anti-dog groups talked of different values as indicators of civilized behaviors, and they used the

symbolism of Europe to justify their claims about dog euthanasia. Dog opponents talked of how Western European urban centers are clean and civilized, and they saw euthanasia as a civilized solution since it was effectively implemented in Western European cities without any problems. Dog proponents and animal-rights NGOs, however, talked about the value ascribed to canine lives as being an indicator of civilization. At the same time, they quoted examples from Western European citizens who had adopted Romanian street dogs in order to save them from an uncivilized country. Indeed, anti-euthanasia protests were also organized in Western European cities during the time of the protests in Bucharest.

Ambivalent significations of Europe and civilization were linked to different ideals of citizenship, competing mentalities, and different values. Many of the protesting animal lovers were middle-aged or elderly citizens, who were seen as harboring a socialist mentality. Dog opponents were seen by animal lovers as younger individuals with European-lifestyle aspirations who didn't care about preserving the life of innocent dogs. Being in opposition, animal lovers and dog opponents attributed *vină* to each other. However, in many cases, they all agreed that what happened was not solely or directly the fault of the dogs themselves.

In Europe, ideas of civilization were connected to views of a former socialist mentality that had been in place since the 1990s. When I was a college student in Greece in the 2000s, for example, in the department of Balkan studies, I was taught about aspects of the post-socialist "transition." Information that I received included depictions of the former socialist neighboring countries as incapable of running businesses due to their socialist past. This fact alone was considered a valid justification for the existence of the department, since Greece needed to educate its own citizens about the particularities of the post-socialist world. In such depictions, the mentality attributed to citizens was similar to the one I came across during the days of my

fieldwork: former socialist citizens depicted as incompetent, outdated, and almost naïve in their understanding of the demands of modern life. The Greek economy, which at the time had become the strongest in the region since the 1980s following Greece's membership in the European Union, was directly compared to the impoverishment of the former socialist world. The post-socialist mentality would often factor into business-making decisions. Seen as being inept business people and easily manipulated by Greeks, if the latter were travelling with a bunch of smaller banknotes of five euros—meant to be used for bribes—Bulgarians, Romanians, and Serbians were all lumped together as former socialist subjects.

In their protests, dog opponents attributed responsibility to corrupt animal-rights NGOs and irresponsible politicians, who did nothing for too many years. They requested the resignation of the current mayor of Bucharest, Sorin Oprescu, among others. According to them, a series of Bucharest mayors had shared the NGO's reluctance to start euthanizing dogs. Indeed, the first politician who was seen as being responsible was President Traian Băsescu, who had started his political career as mayor of Bucharest during the 1990s. During that decade, Romania became the center not only of animal-rights activism in the area but also of global attention to the poor conditions in public dog shelters. One of the central events of that period was the visit of Brigitte Bardot to promote the humane treatment of street animals. Under the influence of the heightened scrutiny brought by her well-publicized visit, Traian Băsescu made promises to ban euthanasia that were celebrated by animal lovers. More than ten years afterward, however, as president of the country, Traian Băsescu publically declared in his announcement of the referendum that “humans come first, and not dogs.”



Figure 2: Candles lit for Ionuț in one of the protests against street dogs. The sign reads, “Children, not (dogs).”

Indifference and apathy appeared as behaviors that were attributed by dog opponents to politicians and by animal lovers to animal haters. While proponents of euthanasia accused NGOs and animal lovers of causing the unavoidable—somebody getting harmed—through their opposition to euthanasia, they were at the same time being accused of being indifferent themselves until something tragic happened. In discourses of animal lovers, the proponents of euthanasia appeared as being highly irresponsible. Animal lovers accused dog opponents of not having cared about the fate of street dogs as a public issue for many years. Most of all, they accused them of not being able to contribute to civilized discussions about a long-term solution and for being unable to educate themselves about population control.

The gatherings of animal lovers looked very much like the protests of “animal haters.” Graphic images of suffering dogs were substituted for pictures of injured children. Victimitizing dogs rather than children, animal lovers attributed responsibility to politicians and to “people full

of hate.” In their discourse, street dogs could not be held accountable for the death of Ionuț. Talking about the role of the grandmother’s negligence and the ways in which street dogs became the scapegoat for the economic and political problems of the Romania government, such as urban poverty or political corruption, animal lovers asked for the resignation of the local politicians. Alongside such arguments, they also asked for proof that the death of Ionuț was in fact caused by street dogs and not by fighting pet dogs that were inadequately controlled by their owner. As many of them asked me during our discussions at the protests and in my neighborhood, “But is it their fault?” (*Dar e vină lor?* OR *Dar cine e vinovat?*—But who is guilty?)—referring to the dogs and implying that the dogs’ actions should always be attributed to humans.



Figure 3: Anti-euthanasia protest outside the country’s constitutional court on the day when members of the court were voting on the constitutionality of euthanasia. The European flag figured as one of the main elements of protestors who were in favor of animal lives.

Many of these people's discussions were about compassion as a moral way of being in the world. Asking whether it is correct to kill all dogs because of the action of some, animal lovers found reasons that the dreadful mass euthanasia could be avoided. They supported the innocence of the dogs, pointing out that dogs lack the ability to reason and are instead driven by their inherent nature and their animal instincts. According to such a view, it is humans as cultured beings who must exhibit morality and compassion. Humans should search for solutions that are feasible and humane, characteristics that constituted civilization in their discourse. In some of the animal lovers' banners, humans were characterized as being the animals. One of them asked, "Who is the animal?" (*Cine este animalul?*). Animal lovers saw dogs as sentient but not capable of symbolic thought and human beings as responsible for protecting them and rejecting the accusation that dogs are innately cruel. They underlined the need for humans to treat such animals in a non-cruel way and thus not become beasts themselves, exhibiting behaviors of which they accused dogs of.



Figure 4: "Who is the animal?" sign, being held by an NGO member along with Tucu, a former street dog, who was trained as a therapy dog after being adopted.

As a group, animal lovers had been united for a long time. Most of them had known each other since the 1990s, either through the NGO or in their neighborhoods. As discussed in Chapters Four and Five, the 1990s was a time when street dogs—and others—became the victims of the collapse of the welfare state, after which they were cared for by people who had were also victims of the collapse. Seen as the ghosts of Nicolae Ceaușescu’s urbanism policies, street dogs were described as a species that needed to be protected.

In a Romanian TV show named “My Europe” (*Europea Mea*), which aired during the euthanasia debate, representatives of both anti-dog and animal-rights organizations talked about the issue of street dogs. The show presented street dogs as a threat to citizens and tourists who visit Bucharest’s downtown, especially the popular area of the Old Center. As the show’s moderator said, “The good Europeans have long ago resolved the issue of street dogs.”² Yet the statistics are disproportionate—Western Europeans must deal with hundreds or thousands of dogs, while Romanians must deal with tens of thousands of dogs. Examples from dog-management policies, euthanasia, and fees paid for non-compliance with regulations were imported from the United Kingdom, Switzerland, France, and Germany.

As the show made sure to underline, all Europe considers Romania to be a sadistic country, the black sheep of the Union. It also made sure to humanize the process of euthanasia, during which an animal “feels nothing, similarly to humans who feel nothing when having an operation.” Toward the end, the show cited Bucharest’s mayor, Sorin Oprescu, who stated that he had decided to “really support Bucharest and Bucharesteans” by excluding street-dog lovers from all dialog, as if the street-dog lovers were not citizens of Bucharest. With traditional

² “La buni Europeni, problemă este rezolvată de mult.”

Romanian music in the background, the show concluded by posing this question: “How European is Romania?”

Dual representations of Europe and civilization were also common in public debates between both pro- and anti-euthanasia proponents and city hall representatives that were organized to promote ideas of civil society in the country by presenting the views of all parties. In such debates, dog opponents depicted Romania’s path to Europeanization as particularly long, since Romanians first had to learn about the notions of democracy and civil society. According to animal lovers, however, Romanians had to learn how to respect the environment and how to value all forms of life. In animal-loving discourses, sterilization was juxtaposed with euthanasia as a civilized solution to the issue of street dogs. However, much of the discussion in such events also focused on the effectiveness of either solution; the Romanian government and city hall were depicted in both pro- and anti-dog discourses as incompetent to deal effectively with the issue of street dogs. As animal lovers said, there was a need to place the discussion on a civilized, scientific, and European level.



Figure 5: Public debate on euthanasia, in the fall of 2013, between city hall representatives, animal lovers, and “animal-haters.”

The participants talked of the levels of humanity among Bucharest citizens and public officials, particularly of pensioners who assumed the financial burden for the sterilization of shelter street dogs because city hall was seen as being incapable of doing it. Hence, citizens rather than the authorities were seen to be in charge of street dogs. Many animal lovers also complained about the distribution of public funds. They claimed that as taxpayers, they didn't want public funds to be spent for cruel actions against animals, and they talked about a “civil war” that existed in the neighborhoods of Bucharest between animal lovers and animal-haters.

Their discourse—like the discourse articulated by dog opponents—included notions of civil society and civilization. While they asked for transparency in the way in which city hall functioned, they also claimed that cases of dog abuse by dogcatchers actually broke the relationship between civil society and the society of Bucharest, since dogcatchers, did not appear

to share the values of humane treatment of animals which many citizens of Bucharest shared. In contrast to dog opponents, who talked about civilized urban centers as not having animals, animal lovers talked about London's foxes and the way in which the United Kingdom has managed to incorporate wildlife in urban living. In contrast to street dogs posing a threat to children, they talked about city hall's educating children about how to hate and kill innocent beings. As they claimed, not teaching children how to love animals might lead them later to hate humans, too. Many of them wondered whether Romania is, indeed, a European country, and talked about the stigma of the country as being uncivilized.

As dog opponents and dog proponents discussed canine behavioral patterns, however, they also debated each other's qualities. Animal lovers saw dogs as honest and as having only one face, in contrast to humans, who can take many faces and pretend to be good or moral. Dog opponents, by contrast, claimed that the notion that dogs bit only those humans whom they understood to be "bad" could not be true. As one of them said during a public debate, "If I don't feed them, it doesn't mean I have a bad soul."

Animal lovers were accused of loving animals over humans, while dog opponents were accused of not loving animals at all. Animal opponents opposed such arguments, however, since they loved animals, but they wished to see them in spaces in which they belonged, such as in yards and inside houses. Finally, while animal lovers pointed to the many other dangers that existed in the city, such as pedophiles, abductors, and drug addicts, dog opponents showed a picture of a bicyclist being chased by street dogs and claimed that they objected to the existence of street dogs in the streets and in green spaces. As they said, "We have a right to a clean environment, [and] we have a right to health!"

Ambivalent views of civilization point to urban development not just as a form of creation but also as a form of destruction, erasure, and extermination. The state saw civilization coming through the euthanization of large number of street dogs and not through discourses of animal rights and humanitarianism. Interestingly enough, however, the once-socialist regime saw modernization coming through the forcible moving of large numbers of people from their houses to tiny, socialist, modernist apartments. While the scope of the socialist regime was the creation of the socialist worker, it seemed that the scope of the contemporary state was the creation of subjects who would act outside of emotions. While logic became for the state the center of what should happen to street dogs, sentiment became indicative of human types who did not fit into the new urban order. As mass euthanasia was supported through the logic of erasing, of making invisible what was considered shameful, dogs were treated as parasites.

During the socialist period, citizenship was not defined on the basis of civil society³ but rather on the basis of being a good party member or a good factory worker (Verdery 1996). Moreover, being a good socialist citizen was also associated with domestic order. As discussed in Chapter Two, keeping a socialist apartment clean, well maintained, and free of animals were for the regime signs of good, civilized citizenship. While not necessarily linked to the notion of civic responsibility or to ideas of Europeanness and civilization, being a good socialist subject definitely employed the idea of being scrupulous, acting for the common good, and having respect for fellow citizens. Since the 1850s, the state's organizational logic behind managing street dog populations included the discourse of civilization as a basic idea behind views of socialist urban development and the habits and mentality of socialist urban citizens. In such a view, logic itself became a mentality that was juxtaposed with former rural habits and emotions.

³ For a discussion about the link of citizenship to rationale and bourgeois habits see Habermas (1989)

The ways in which people differentiated themselves from each other during the euthanasia debate did not necessarily have to do with monetary, cultural, or social capital only. It was also concerned with sentiments, morality, urban behavior, and aspiration. All of these became indicators of an either outdated or modern mental capital. In this setting, the degree to which these people saw dogs as persons affected the degree to which they saw their fellow humans as good-souled or wretched. The way in which dogs were juxtaposed with children showed that both dog opponents and dog proponents negotiated responsibility alongside innocence and ideas about the circumstances that determined one's right to life. Acknowledging someone as accountable signified the recognition of their personhood, agency, will, and thought.

The way in which street dogs became bearers of different qualities and different roles during the euthanasia debate, uncovered how the social actors that defined them, did so from different structural socioeconomic positions. On the one hand, dog proponents mainly belonged to the former socialist working class, while on the other hand, dog opponents mainly belonged to an up-and-coming middle class. Street dogs were variously defined as persons or not, based not only on the prioritization of their different characteristics, but also based on the prioritization of what each group of people envisioned as proper lifestyle, morality, ethos, and worldview. Indeed, the definition of "boundary objects" (Star and Griesemer 1989) appears to be related to the actors' different positioning. In the case of Bucharest, the variability in the street dogs' definition derives from different positions of power, which although in contrast they ultimately appear to constitute each other. Such constitution occurs in two different ways; a) through understandings, or misunderstandings, of how each group desires to be seen in the city, and b) through judgments of each groups' behaviors towards street dogs. Many times, such definitions and judgments of both dogs and others occurred through strategic choices about whom to support

and whom not. Thus dogs, besides boundary entities became also shifters in a system of relational definitions of different types of both humans and canines (Urciuoli 2005).

ii) Socialist Demolitions and Changes in Bucharest's Urban Fabric

The debate about dog euthanasia was only one of the stories which uncovered how street dogs are embedded in the social fabric of Bucharest. Another axis of both analysis and thought this dissertation has followed, is the one related to the changes in the urban fabric of Bucharest. Indeed, street dogs were proved to be linked not only to the way in which different groups of people understood urban life, but also to the way in which the city was understood and valued mainly due to its pre-socialist glorious past and also to the ways in which actual changes in the urban-scape during socialist urbanism were related to the formation of social class and to groups of citizens that appeared as legitimate, or not.

In the summer of 2010, when I started visiting Romania in order to conduct preliminary fieldwork, I took Romanian language and civilization classes with the Romanian Cultural Institute (ICR)—one of the most prestigious institutions in the country—in the Transylvanian city of Brasov. The classes included activities such as visiting museums and weekly excursions to valued natural and architectural sights. Most of the trips we took were to medieval castles and to royal palaces of later eras, like Castelul Peleş in the mountainous town of Sinaia. The Institute sometimes invited architects and historians from Bucharest to provide the necessary background information and context for what we were seeing, especially in the case of buildings considered national treasures. When visiting Peleş castle, for example, the tour included a listing of valuable objects, like carpets, furniture, handmade mirrors, crystals, weaponry, and others. It also included an explanation of how Nicolae Ceauşescu disliked the castle because it was associated

with the history of the royal family of Romania. Such tours offered a description of the country during the socialist period, as stripped of the qualities that were considered genuinely European, such as elegance—a bourgeois quality seen as genuinely urban. At the end of the summer course, when I told one of the friends I had made at ICR that I wanted to visit Casa Poporului (the House of the People, later re-named Palatul Parlamentului or Parliament Palace)—the palace that Ceaușescu had made for himself in Bucharest, he laughed and asked me why I would want to see “the monster.” He explained that although Ceaușescu had tried to follow the example of other palaces such as Peleş in Sinaia, the Mogoșoaia outside Bucharest, and Cotroceni in the city, Casa Poporului was an aesthetic failure, made in an early socialist Stalinist architectural style. Most of all, it was a failure due to its enormous size.

That summer and the next in Bucharest, I began to recognize all the contrasts and contradictions within the city. Walking around, I was struck by the crumbling and abandoned interwar buildings downtown, hidden churches, and glorious Ceaușescu-era architecture. I also noticed bullet marks from the 1989 revolution in central downtown street buildings, now home to luxurious brand name stores, such as MaxMara, Prada, Calvin Klein, and Guess, and hotels like Hilton. The kilometers of huge socialist-era residential blocks—particularly visible from main boulevards as the former socialist regime intended—offered yet another contrast. During preliminary interviews with friends and officials, I noticed that stories about the city’s urbanization project between the 1960s and 1980s, also known as the standardization project, tended to have a Janus-faced character. On the one hand, there was the history of downtown buildings that architects, intellectuals, and artists were eager to tell me about. But, on the other hand, there was the history of demolitions of many of those buildings that took place in the name

of socialist modernization and that still seemed to be haunting the city.⁴ Such demolitions seemed to have left a traumatic mark; the glorious Romanian—but also European—history, manifestations of which one could previously be seen in the city’s architecture, had been erased for good. Casa Poporului, or “the monster,” as my friend called it—was associated with these demolitions and their associated relocations, ugly architecture, and shortages in electricity, food, and heating during the 1980s. Casa Poporului’s monstrous size reminded one of the former leader’s megalomania.

The socialist regime dreamed of Bucharest as a socialist capital—a city that could compete with Western capitalist centers (Giurescu 1989). Citywide projects of both construction and demolition sought to erase differences and social inequality. According to the architect Ana Maria Zahariade, “it was clearly stated that the inherited urban form was obsolete, and the architects’ task was to give the city a new form, structurally attuned to the socialist lifestyle, and gradually to erase the traces of the old society” (Zahariade 2011:51) Bucharest was meant to glorify the socialist life and this meant there was no room for social segregation expressed in spatial structures. Widespread demolition was matched with a rapid rhythm of construction in the city.⁵ Apartment buildings were constructed in the outskirts of the city, in open fields, in

⁴ According to the Romanian historian Dinu Giurescu (1989), moving people from the country to support the rapid industrialization during socialist times was part of the transformation of urban centers. Nicolae Ceaușescu officially announced in 1985 that, by 1990, between 90 to 95% of the inhabitants of Bucharest were to be housed in apartment buildings (Zahariade 2011:49). Indeed, during socialism, the urban population in Romania rose from 3,486,995 in 1948 (22% of the total population) to 5,667,559 in 1965 (29.8% of the total), and to 11,540,494 in 1985 (50.6% percent) (Giurescu 1989:2). Giurescu also notes that almost 11,000,000 people were moved from villages into apartment buildings, and that at the time of the revolution in 1989, at least twenty-nine towns had been razed while almost thirty-seven towns were undergoing rapid demolition (Giurescu 1989:47).

⁵ Particularly, between 1951 and 1960, almost 66,000 socialist-type apartments were constructed, while between 1960 and 1970 their number was 528,500, and between 1971 and 1980 their number reached 1,320,000. It was estimated that between 1981 and 1990, the number of socialist-type apartments in Bucharest would reach 1,700,000 (Zahariade 2011:44).

rundown suburban areas, and along the ring-boulevards and main roads into cities, so that the glory of the regime would be visible to visitors, travelers, and users of public transportation.

While many areas saw demolitions, I heard recurring stories about a neighborhood called Uranus that was in the south part of Bucharest center and the only area in the city built on a slight hill. Ceaușescu had ordered demolitions in Uranus in order to make space for the construction of Casa Poporului, which was to be not only the largest biggest building in the country, but also the second largest building in the world after the American Pentagon. Its construction began in 1984, although plans for the reconstruction of the area had begun in 1977 after an earthquake damaged many of the older residences of Bucharest. Inspired by a trip to North Korea in the early 1970s, Ceaușescu planned to restructure Bucharest with architecture like that he had seen in Pyongyang. As I was explained during tours I took in Casa Poporului in the summer of 2011, the building was constructed using solely Romanian materials and forced labor. Its enormous cost, combined with Ceaușescu's decision to pay off all of Romania's national debt, led to shortages in electricity, food, and heating during the 1980s, and arguably the revolution itself. By the time the revolution broke out, the building was still not complete. The first post-socialist government decided it would be less expensive to finish the building than demolish it, but to this day, sectors of the building remain unfinished.

It is estimated that almost 40,000 people were forcibly relocated for the construction of Casa Poporului. In some cases, people were moved to apartments that were not finished and had no access to running water or sewage connection. Across the House of the People, Ceaușescu constructed a similar building to house the Romanian Academy of Sciences—and, many believed, Ceaușescu's wife Elena, who had become a member of the Romanian Academy of Sciences in the early 1970s. Though some of her research was published in Romanian chemistry

research journals, many doubted her actual credentials and criticized her influence over her husband. Casa Poporului was surrounded by buildings of the same architectural style that characterized Bucharest's civic center, where Ceaușescu had planned for members of the Communist Party to live and work. The construction of civic centers in Romanian cities was part of the regime's plan to modernize the "non-urban" character of Romanian urban centers (Zahariade 2011). After the revolution, however, there were attempts to reconstruct the civic center. In particular, an international architectural contest titled "București 2000" had called for projects that would better connect the center to the rest of the city, leaving green spaces like Izvor Park intact (Beldiman 2009; Gabrea 2009). While a well-known German architect won the competition, the project was never realized. This was one of the attempts made, however, to erase the changes wrought by socialism. Another was the restructuring of the Bucharest's National Theater building to its pre-socialist form.

Given this troubled past, the demolition of Uranus often came up as a "black page" in Bucharest's urban history during the discussions and preliminary interviews I conducted in the summers of 2010 and 2011. When visiting the National Archives of Romania in the summer of 2011, for example, I overheard numerous discussions about Uranus between citizens and the archivist in charge. The relative lack of archival material and the difficulty of tracking down people who used to live in the neighborhood came up repeatedly. People struggled to remember or find out what buildings were in a particular street, or whether a school had been right next to, or across from, a church. Others tried to reconstruct life in the area through books. The daughter of the former president of the Union of Architects in the city, for example, suggested that I read a book of stories about the life of residents of Uranus in the interwar era (Dragu Dimitriu 2006). In the summer of 2011, the pending demolition of Hală Matache, one of the oldest market buildings

in the city, for the construction of a highway agitated architects and citizens who desired to preserve historical buildings and areas. There were protests against the demolition and graffiti appeared in the city, depicting bulldozers demolishing Hală Matache, alongside obese constructors holding bunches of dollars.

Today, Casă Poporului houses Romania's Parliament and the National Museum of Art. The entrances to each are located on different sides of the building, and a wing of the building is also open for the public. Daily tours are organized for tourists and citizens to see the building from the inside. Across the National Museum of Art, the Orthodox Church of Romania is constructing Catedrală Neamului (Nation's Cathedral), which is supposed to become the biggest cathedral in Europe. While plans for the construction of a cathedral dated back to 1878, an appropriate place had never been agreed upon (Zahariade 2011:130). The project received much criticism after pictures circulated in the media featuring an enormous white church with golden domes, and after the Church tried to raise donations online for the construction of the cathedral. Much of the criticism saw the project as echoing the megalomania of the country's former socialist leaders, and argued that socialism was not the only time, when Romania was occupied with the construction of a lavish building, when at the same time levels of poverty were increasing in the country. Such critics saw the construction of the Cathedral as similarly extravagant to the construction of Casă Poporului. The two largest buildings in Europe—the House of the People and the Nation's Cathedral—would now be right next to each other. A friend of mine eloquently expressed his disapproval: "I hope that the earth won't be able to bear the weight of both buildings, and that they will collapse, crashing onto each other."

The backside of the House of the People, however, has become a desolate area of the city center. Between Casă Poporului and the Academy of Sciences, there is an open field where

packs of street dogs are seen to wander, especially at nighttime. This field, among others, has construction materials and debris apparently thrown there during the construction of the two buildings. One side of the Academy of Sciences is still at the most preliminary stage of construction; it has no windows and one can see the brick walls. This side of the building, along with the street dogs and urban debris, adds a sort of alternative hipster character in the area. This character was especially created after attempts for the development of a close-by marginalized neighborhood, Rahova, were made by local businesses, which at the same time with opening stores and renovating buildings, saw debris and rupture as unique characteristics of the area. Leaving Casă Poporului and walking south, indeed, one directly enters Rahova but also Ferentari, two neighborhoods popularly considered ghettoized and less developed due to the Roma communities that live there. Although Ferentari is apparently less alluring to other city residents, there have been attempts to turn Rahova into a center for arts and events.

Indeed, during the time of my fieldwork the traditional flower market of Rahova (*Piața de Flori*)—mainly run by the Roma community—had become one of the city’s attractions. Right next to it there was a new shopping center, where one of my friends took me to shop for fancy Christmas ornaments during my first Christmas in Bucharest. There was also a new hall nearby that served as an events center. Diagonally across the street, there was a cultural center, in which a group of young artists helped Roma children and women to develop practical skills “without any regards to nationality, social layer, or wealth” as mentioned to an informational book distributed by the group (Draghici 2010:7). It was housed in a former socialist pub, where the activists organized events for the local Roma community. One of the events in 2013 was a fashion show in which Roma women participated, wearing clothes they had made themselves. In that event, the wife of the prime minister gave a speech about the empowerment of Roma

women. Local media covered the event, and some of the up-and-coming fashion designers and hair stylists helped women to make their best appearance.

iii) Socialist Demolitions and Street Dogs

Among the abundance of discussions about the material absences socialism brought in the city, I also kept preliminary field-notes also about presences. One day, discussing the history of Uranus with a friend, he explained to me that demolitions were the reason for Bucharest being a very dusty and dirty city. As he said, so much dust was produced during the socialist demolitions that most of it had remained on the pavement and recirculated in the air. And of course, the most prevalent story that I heard during that time about the demolition of Uranus was the story of street dogs, which appeared as the direct result of Nicolae Ceaușescu's policies of urbanism. During preliminary interviews with citizens and architects, street dogs were given as proof of the demonic character of the demolitions, since it was then that their number increased in the city. According to the stories that I heard, the inhabitants of Uranus that were moved from their houses with yards to socialist-type residential apartments abandoned their dogs in the streets, since they could not take them to their new residences without yards and with barely enough space for humans. Such stories proved to be partially true. Indeed, the 1980s was a decade in which the number of street dogs appeared to be increasing in the city. The socialist regime had become less effective in the management of animal populations, trash, and other public matters. In the 1960s and 1970s the *salubritate* of the city—its sanitation, order, good appearance, and public health—were priorities for the socialist regime. However, this domain of public governance appeared to suffer during the 1980s, possibly due to insufficient funds that also led to shortages in electricity, food, and heating. As explained above, this insufficiency of funds was

also the result of Ceaușescu's decision to pay off all of Romania's national debt, and of the costly construction of *Casă Poporului*.

Besides the crisis in socialist management during the 1980s, archival and ethnographic material, reveal a more complex context in which former watchdogs ended up in the streets. First, since such dogs did not squarely fit in the category “pet,” as explained above, the word “abandonment” is not sufficient to describe the act of leaving dogs behind during the forcible relocation of the Uranus-area inhabitants. Second, it seems that leaving watchdogs behind, at a moment when private property was abolished in the country, was a natural thing to occur. While watchdogs in yards served the purpose of protecting their owner(s) and the latter's property, such issues of security became irrelevant after people were moved to more secure, but also state-owned apartments. Third, it also seems that the story of abandoning dogs in the streets neglects the ways in which dogs—especially larger breeds and mixes—were seen to belong in the yard. Instead of claiming that citizens abandoned their dogs in the streets of the city after they had been relocated, one could claim that the state didn't take care of the other, non-human inhabitants of single houses. While citizens lost their houses, dogs also lost their space—the yard. The practice of keeping dogs in outdoor spaces continued after the relocation. Dogs either followed their owners to their new residences or found other humans to take care of them. They became community dogs (*caini comunitari*) that often lived in the green spaces between socialist residential buildings, on sidewalks, and in socialist block yards. As this manuscript discusses, the variety of practices concerning street dogs in Bucharest makes it difficult to categorize them clearly as “pets” or “strays.”⁶ Much of the discussion about street dogs concerned whether to characterize them as

⁶ For a similar discussion on how the categories of “pets” and “strays” are not universal but rather culturally embedded in different systems of significations, see Alaina Lemon's recent work on Moscow's MetroDogs (2015)

stray dogs that would have to be publicly managed and euthanized, or as pets that had a clear association with an owner. Problems arose, for example, when the sentimentality expressed by the former working class towards dogs living in the streets didn't fit in any of abovementioned categories, and while street dog guardians would fight with dogcatchers, at the same time they refused to take the dogs inside apartments.

Dogs remained the subject of public discussions, media representations, electoral campaigns, and daily neighborhood conundrums for years. Sometimes, dogs were even cited as a unique characteristic of life in Bucharest. One of my first questions, however, about the “dog problem” of Bucharest was how or why the presence of almost 200,000 street dogs in the city during the 1990s had diminished to only 65,000 during the time of my fieldwork in 2012–2014, especially since it was presented as a problem, both in pro- and against dog discourses. The story offered by residents and architects regarding the socialist demolitions was too simplistic to explain the absence of an effective dog management policy after 1989. Indeed, attributing this and other problems to socialism seemed a common pattern during the time I spent in Bucharest. Evoking the socialist period as a way of understanding current problems and policies, is a phenomenon that Liviu Chelcea and Oana Druța (2016) have recently named “zombie socialism.” The writers focus on how the era of state socialism is currently used in southeastern Europe by neoliberal political and other elites, in order to condemn any criticism to capitalist policies on the basis of it quoting totalitarian and socialist ideas. However, I will add, it seems that the ghost of state socialism appears also in middle-class Europeanist discourses, which attribute public problems to the socialist period, and to the mentality it has allegedly created through rapid urbanization and the manufacturing of the socialist working class.

Besides socialist demolitions, explanations included the ways in which dogs had become

a profitable business both for animal rescuers and the city hall that had found ways to raise donations from animal-lovers in European countries, or use European Union funds respectively, in order to solve the issue. Such discourses of corruption argued that dog rescuers and public officials sought only to benefit from such funds themselves, building expensive houses, buying expensive cars, and undertaking international travel. Other discourses argued that both citizens and public officials were actively preserving street dogs by secretly promoting their breeding in private shelters, or by conducting fake sterilizations in the streets, in order to keep both canine numbers and their own profit, high. Such discourses were part of larger ideas about corruption that circulated in the city both officially and unofficially. From taxi-drivers and friends, to TV shows and public campaigns, corruption seemed to be how many people understood the contemporary political scene. In February of 2017, for example, Romanians massively protested outside the building of the government, against legislation that could possibly favor political corruption. When visiting the archives at city hall in the winter of 2014, I noticed a poster on the desk I was using for study, against corruption. The poster was part of a campaign named “fără șpagă” (without bribe), which warned citizens to stop bribing public officials. A villa-type of residence shown in the background of the poster served to index the purpose towards which bribery money was used. The comparison of the villa to a socialist-type apartment building, similarly served to index the fate of those receiving, and of those giving bribes. Discourses of corruption, along with scandals that erupted during the 1990s about Roma and other begging networks that appeared to exploit legitimate citizens by evoking pity, created an environment of distrust in the dog-loving and dog-rescuing world. As Katherine Verdery (1996) informs us, such an environment of distrust was common also during socialism, when people had no way of knowing who among their fellow citizens were members of the communist party, or of the

regime's secret police, the infamous Securitate. At the time of my research, seen as innocent and incapable to protect themselves, street dogs—but also the people who donated for them—were often considered, the victims of exploitation.

It seemed, however, that the numbers of street dogs remained high for many reasons. First, some dogs migrated from rural areas around Bucharest, by taking routes through fields or along highways. Second, according to some stories, it was citizens who resided in rural areas who came and abandoned puppies in the city, hoping the dogs would find more food or people who would be willing to take care of them there. Third, it seemed that other solutions that NGOs tried, such as the sterilization and re-territorialization of street dogs that was implemented since the early 2000s, due to the international outcry that euthanasia had received also back then by animal-rights organizations in Western Europe, were linked to long-term effectiveness only when there were sufficient funds for dogs to be continuously and massively sterilized for decades. Last, the compassion with which many residents treated street dogs worked against the extinction of the species. Though it didn't increase the number of dogs per se, actions such as feeding them, caring for them when they were sick, providing them with shelter, and taking them to the vet helped many dogs to escape illness, cold, and hunger, and survive the harsh Romanian winters

iv) Literatures

The subject of dogs mediates between different bodies of literature. This dissertation highlights the ways in which street and other categories of dogs blur current categorizations of subjects and objects. It seems that, similar to existing between significations of private and public, nature and culture, and human and non-human, street dogs lie conceptually between post-socialist and urban studies, but also between studies of post-humanism and materiality. On the one hand,

they exhibit how the history of the urban environment and urban life in Bucharest enlightens our understanding of socialism. On the other hand, they showcase how the post-socialist setting and also socialist and pre-socialist history have contributed to the creation of urban life and urban experience in Bucharest. Similarly, street dogs re-define the ways in which the “non-human” has been discussed in materiality and actor-network-theory studies in refreshing ways. Not completely fitting into the Western categories of “stray” or “pet,” street dogs are sometimes understood as objects, and other as subjects. Approaching dogs as non-human beasts that bear social agency (Latour 1993; 1999) could be based on the misleading assumption that animals are similar entities to non-human material objects. Indeed, while a series of authors (Appadurai 1986; Ingold 2000; Kopytoff 1986; Miller 2005) have underlined how we also need to look at the natural world when talking about material culture, urban dogs and the metaphors they carry have been discussed only recently (Dave 2014; Lemon 2015; Singh and Dave 2015). This dissertation, following such recent analyses, differentiates between animate and non-animate non-human social actors to promote understanding of the social roles that street dogs occupy, and how such roles are defined in relation to both humans and materials.

This dissertation also demonstrates that a focus on street dogs challenges post-humanist theoretical analyses, which address the ways in which animals deserve to be thought of as equal to humans in social studies (Agamben 2004; Bennett 2010; Brightman 1993; Cavell 2008; Derrida 2008; Derrida 2009; Haraway 2003; Kohn 2007; Raffles 2002; Serres 2007). My ethnography revealed that animals could rarely escape cultural significations of animality and animal agency in the field. Thus, while this dissertation prioritizes canines and their various entanglements with humans, in order to understand contemporary social issues in Romania, it also takes into account the ways in which such animals occupy different roles for different urban inhabitants.

Additionally, while post-humanist theory rightly asks us to consider of animals as social agents, it fails to see dogs, or other “critters” (Haraway 2008), outside western conceptualizations of pets. It seems that the most interesting questions about animal subjectivity, personhood, or agency, emanate from diverse cultural and historical contexts. In such contexts one might wonder not only whether pet dogs have agency, but also what the category of “pet” even means. Complex significations of street dogs in Bucharest lead to questions about how their social agency is attributed, understood, signified, or deprived, or why human subjects attribute diverse, often contradictory roles to animals, birds, and insects. Post-humanist theory, however, helps us to understand the ways in which the multiplicity of attitudes towards dogs in Bucharest also results in human subjectification. Understanding social others through their treatments towards or discourses about dogs, has also offered many citizens of Bucharest an understanding of themselves. Street dogs become nodes in systems of other and self-evaluations, which are based on pre-existing ideas about race, social class, and sentiment.

Donna Haraway (2008) has discussed the ways in which both human and animal subjectification occurs at moments when “contact zones” are established between humans and animals. Similarly, Jacques Derrida (2008) has described experiencing a moment of subjectification when he felt embarrassed for being naked in his bathroom, under the gaze of his cat. Indeed, such moments of animal and human communication are important in understanding the ways in which humans become aware of nature and culture divisions. This dissertation, however, also takes account of those moments, when “contact zones” between animals and humans are not established. It looks into street dog personifications, but also into examples of animals being understood as objects that move in urban space. It extends such a discussion in order to also understand the communicative mechanisms behind human marginalization, when

individuals such as beggars are negated social recognition. The idea of talking about animals as equal to humans, or as “companion species” helps us to understand that urban centers, indeed, can be spaces of not only human, but also canine inhabitants. However, it fails to describe the variation of co-habitation patterns that occur in the field.

This dissertation approaches street dogs as social actors, but also as parts of larger assemblages. Hugh Raffles (2002) and Alaina Lemon (2015) have underlined the need to theorize more complex entanglements of humans and non-humans instead of solely trying to deconstruct ideas of human sovereignty when discussing the social roles of animals. Indeed, in trying to understand the multiplicity of human and animal configurations in Bucharest, this dissertation discusses how stray dogs play an important role in constructing material, moral, and sentimental worlds for various groups of Bucharest citizens, such as the former working class, an aspiring middle class, the marginal, and urban elites. I claim that, in order to understand the role of street and other dogs in such configurations, we need to understand them in relation to the city—especially the role they play in making the urban environment understood both by citizens who sponsor the dogs, and by citizens who oppose them. We also need to understand them in relation to how such groups of citizens understand each other or represent themselves through dogs.

This discussion entails an understanding of the ways in which various citizens attribute value to historical periods, materials, other humans, and animals. Thus, semiotic theory and analyses that discuss, how qualities are being attributed and understood (Keane 2006; Munn 1986; Peirce 1902 (1955)), are crucial for understanding ideas about post-socialist urban degradation, European urban futures, and human qualities. Street dogs index backwardness or development. Additionally, their bodily characteristics—and the symbolisms of dirt and marginality they bear—play a role in the way they are understood as objects or subjects, in the

decisions made concerning their lives, and in the understandings of other humans who make judgments about them. Similarly, the issue of Romania's backwardness and of people's socialist and rural mentality—a common theme in much discourse—appears as a quality that relates to urban history, especially the ways in which socialist urbanization was not accompanied by the actual “urbanization” of citizens. In most cases, having a socialist mentality also meant having a rural mentality, only because urban centers didn't have value for citizens, who didn't voluntarily migrate seeking a better quality of life, but rather, were forced to move by the socialist regime.

Thus, this dissertation is not only informed by studies of post-socialism (Berdahl 1999; Bren 2002; Chelcea 2002; Fehérváry 2013; Lampland 1995; Lemon 2009; Sampson 1987; Verdery 1991a; 1991b; 1996; Yurchak 2005) but also by analyses that have provided semiotic understandings of materials and spaces (Fehervary 2002; Fehervary 2009; Gille 2007; Lemon 2000b; Manning 2008a; 2008b). Street dogs become signs of urban spaces, practices, and behaviors. In discussing the former working class, for example, this dissertation illuminates the ways in which urban neighborhoods and parks are experienced through practices like caring for dogs (De Certeau 1984; Low 1999), but also how such spaces are not simply inhabited, but also felt and imagined (Lefebvre 1991). Social spaces in Bucharest consist of human-human and human-canine interactions. In addition to discussing individual street dogs within neighborhoods, I also discuss how the existence of dog packs in parks, open fields, and former industrial buildings similarly index such spaces as marginal (Biehl 2005; Desjarlais 1997). The human dialectic with the “city”—both with its spaces and with its non-human inhabitants—contributes to the formation of habitualized (Bourdieu 1977) patterns of inhabitation that then appear to have a role in the formation of sentimental and moral worlds of the former working class. Besides the ways in which the urban environment of Bucharest is lived, however, this dissertation also

discusses the ways in which it has been managed and regulated (Holston 1989; Hull 2009) through legislation and norms that point to the sanitation and safeguarding of the city from pre-socialist to post-socialist times. Street dogs have an active role in the way in which human experience is shaped in the city, but also in the way in which the urban environment is monitored and constructed as urban, in contrast with rural settings, in which sanitation does not appear as priority.

v) Fieldwork: Methods and Sites

I lived in Romania between October of 2012 and July of 2014. I conducted my research in more than one setting, although some sites—such as the specific neighborhoods in which I lived—were primary sites for most of my ethnographic activity, while others—such as protests or a vet clinic I used to visit weekly—were secondary loci of ethnographic encounters. During my time in Bucharest, I lived in two different neighborhoods and I also visited two different archives in order to trace the history of street dogs in the city. The two neighborhoods I lived in were quite different. The first, the neighborhood of Titan, is located at the margins of the city and is close to one of the public dog shelters. It is a socialist neighborhood, where the former working class resided. It consists of socialist-type of residences, is well connected to the center of the city with metro, bus, and tram lines, and has an ample selection of stores and amenities—a traditional open market building for vegetables (*piața*), supermarkets, newspaper kiosks, flower shops, Internet providing stores, pastry shops, pharmacy stores, playgrounds, parks and schools. The second neighborhood in which I lived, Cișmigiu Park, is in the heart of the city. Right next to one of the oldest parks in Bucharest, the *Cișmigiu* Park, my second apartment was located in one of the interwar buildings in the city.

In Titan, I lived on the ninth floor of a renovated socialist residential building constructed during the 1970s. At first, I barely noticed local residents interacting with dogs. I would usually rush to the metro station every morning and go to the center of the city, as I was trying to make connections at city hall in order to gain access to the public shelters. Eventually, however, I began to notice citizens interacting with dogs on my way to the metro station. I saw inhabitants coming out of their apartments with buckets or bags with food to feed the dogs outside their building. When I began to talk to these residents, I realized they were familiar with the work of dog rescuers in the city. Indeed, even when I explained my research focus and purpose of living in the neighborhood, some residents continued to believe I was a member of foreign animal-rights NGO. Many inhabitants had become familiar with such formations since the 1990s, especially after celebrities like Brigitte Bardot had visited Romania in order to stop euthanasia and save the street dogs.

During the course of my research, I also took a Romanian community dog named Beju under my personal protection. Beju was an unplanned foster dog. Like many other rescued Romanian dogs, he was supposed to be transported to a private shelter and then cared for by an NGO that would match the dogs with proper adopters in the UK, Finland, France, and other more “civilized” countries. Instead, I ultimately adopted Beju, and he first moved with me to Greece, and then to the United States. Beju helped to ground and legitimate me within the neighborhood. I soon became “the Greek who adopted a dog from the *ecarisaj*”—an older term still used to describe public shelters. Once they saw me as compassionate, my neighbors recognized me not simply as a foreigner interested in learning about dogs, but as a person whose activities resembled their own. Beju also opened a new chapter in the ways in which I navigated the city. He took me to new paths, yards, alleys, and open fields. I started to spend more time hanging out in the

neighborhood, and I made friends with others walking their former street dogs. Beju was less helpful, however, when it came to establishing myself with dog breeders. Taking Beju with me to purebred dog competitions made me a compassionate person in the eyes of breeders, but it didn't help my profile as a passionate purebred owner.

I drew most of my information from the neighborhoods in which I lived. The social life of dogs occurred, first of all, at the neighborhood level. Street dogs entered and exited socialist blocks and apartments, got leashed or sheltered in block yards, were fed with rice and bones, or cheap dry dog food bought at the local pet shop. They were named, renamed, and treated for illness and wounds. In the second neighborhood, Cișmigiu Park, the sociality of dogs seemed to follow similar paths. The dog owners here, however, seemed to comply more with the guidelines of being a proper dog owner than did my former neighbors, who had much more varied relations with dogs. I think this was mainly to the different class of people that could afford to live or have an office space downtown, and thus walk their dogs in the area. In addition to dog owners, I also had the opportunity to observe and talk with park visitors who would visit Cișmigiu just to take a nice walk in the city on afternoons and weekends. Thus, I observed practices that had to do not only with dogs, but also with the use of a highly valued green space in the city. Besides Cișmigiu, I also visited other parks like Herăstrău in the northern part of the city, and IOR in Titan, which took its name from the close-by Romanian Optical Enterprise (Întreprinderea Optica Română) in the 1930s. Herăstrău was one of the most valued, spacious, and well-maintained green spaces—very popular among upper class citizens of northern neighborhoods, many of which were the so called “corporatiști,” foreign nationals who worked in corporations, banks, or embassies that were in the close vicinity of the park. IOR, on the other hand, was in the midst of socialist residential buildings and popular among the middle and the working class—some of my former working

class neighbors in Titan, for example, used to go fishing in the lake of IOR in the weekends. In these parks I observed agility game sessions, training shows, and adoption fairs. Many times, I also visited Izvor, which was located downtown. Across Casă Poporului, Izvor was the place where most of the pro-euthanasia and anti-euthanasia protests took place. Both Izvor and Cișmigiu were visited by a variety of people, like the youth that visited downtown pubs and bars, older residents of the area, and foreign visitors in the city.

Besides neighborhoods and parks, I also visited dog shelters. Gaining official access for research purposes to the public shelters run by city hall proved impossible. After failing to contact anyone at the shelter managing office, I became an occasional visitor to the shelters instead. I soon realized that getting access to the public shelters was difficult due to the international community of dog rescuers. Foreign dog rescuers—in particular, women—were associated with stirring up scandal about the conditions under which dogs lived in such establishments. During my time in Bucharest I heard stories about foreign rescuers who visited, secretly filmed, and often protested outside public shelters. I noted, too, that the shelters were a point of reference for all the people who cared about dogs throughout the city. Many times I met and talked to citizens who had come to save a specific dog that was taken from a neighborhood by dogcatchers. Indeed, this was the story of Beju—which I share in more detail at the end of this chapter. During the euthanasia debate, and when dogcatchers captured large numbers of dogs, animal-lovers and regular citizens alike formed queues outside shelters in order to save dogs.

In addition to conducting ethnography in my neighborhoods and at public dog shelters, I also observed the actions of many dog rescuers. With them, I visited private dog shelters, vet clinics, and the yards and fields where they kept dogs until adopters were found. Through their connections I talked with international adopters on Facebook, and I observed the preparations for

dogs that were leaving for the UK and other Western European countries. At private shelters I also met citizens who were visiting dogs they had rescued and put in such establishments until a better solution could be found. Such establishments were usually either abandoned houses or rented fields in the country, where Romanian dog rescuers kept dogs by raising donations, or privately owned yards, farms, and specially designed domestic outdoor spaces that owners used for dogs, in order to make money. The keeping of dogs in this latter form of private shelters required monthly payments for food and shelter, usually paid by dog rescuers and dog guardians. On one occasion, I watched a spaying marathon that lasted a full day. On another, I travelled to the coastal city of Galați with two rescuers who were interested to check the conditions of the public shelters, make connections, and choose dogs they would promote for adoption.

Social networking, especially Facebook, was one of the means through which I expanded my network. I talked to people about adoption cases, and I read through countless dog adoption advertisements. I paid attention to the descriptions of dogs' faces, bodies, and characters, and I read endless debates about street dog euthanasia vs. sterilization. One time, I even saw a picture of myself, along with a Romanian and a British rescuer, circulating as proof of the existence of dog trafficking networks. Both the British rescuer and I were seen to be the connections of the Romanian rescuer, who allegedly exported dogs to Greece and the UK respectively, to be used for lab and other experiments. Besides seeing how dogs were circulated and promoted for adoption on Facebook, I also visited adoption events that took place in various parks. Dogs were brought in cages from private shelters and displayed along with appeals for somebody to adopt them or at least make a donation, while the media covered the events.

Every week, I also visited a vet clinic that was popular among dog rescuers due to the good care and discounts they provided for street dogs. Doctors at this vet clinic were also, eventually,

Beju's doctors, when he needed a hernia operation soon after coming to live with me. At the clinic, I observed both medical procedures and social encounters that concerned street dogs. I had the opportunity to talk about methods of treatment, go inside the operation room and watch surgeries, and talk to other people there with sick or injured dogs. Sometimes I spent time with paralyzed dogs and cats that were hospitalized in the clinic until they got better. I observed technicians measuring the animals' bodies for wheelchairs, and I followed vets as they transported one paralyzed dog to another establishment for an MRI. The people I met in this clinic were from all over the city. Most reminded me of my neighbors in Titan—they either had a special connection with a street animal or had decided to bring an animal that resided in their building for sterilization or other treatment. They talked about showing compassion and the ways they communicated with such inhabitants of the city.

Public media were also a valuable source of information, especially during the euthanasia debate. From TV interviews and stories about dogcatchers' lives, to the president's speech explaining how and why humans have priority over animals, I was able to compare the ways in which various parties talked about street dogs. During the time of the euthanasia debate, I also watched TV shows specifically focused on whether Romania is a European country or not, due to the existence of large numbers of street dogs in urban centers. I also observed public debates about euthanasia, in which the participants were representatives of the city hall, animal rights NGOs, and also both proponents and opponents of dog euthanasia. I interviewed public officials, one of whom showed me the areas where the problem of street dogs was most prevalent. This person later became well known in the media—and particularly infamous in the animal loving community—for his plan to euthanize dogs. Again and again, in my conversations with all these different individuals and groups, the themes of civilization, Europeanization, mentality,

responsibility, compassion, and human qualities recurred as common motifs.

Finally, I conducted archival research in two different institutions. At the National Municipal Archives of Bucharest (*Arhivele Naționale ale Municipiului București*) and the Library of the Romanian Academy (*Biblioteca Academiei Române*), I was able to talk with archivists and other researchers about stray dogs. Although the archival record is fragmentary, the information in the files I found was illuminating. Policies, legislation, and hobby-themed journals uncovered the ways in which street and other types of dogs were perceived by the state and by citizens from the 1850s to the 1990s. I found information in documents from the municipal sanitary department, letters from citizens to city hall, contracts between dogcatchers and the city, public announcements about dogs, articles and announcements in hunting magazines, and socialist regulations for how to keep Bucharest orderly. A socialist propagandistic documentary I came across at *One World Romania*, the yearly film festival organized in the city, confirmed the information I had for the 1960s and the 1970s, a time I had only been able to research through magazines, since official documents for the period have not been given yet to the public.

vi) Dissertation Structure

I have grouped my ethnographic and archival material into five chapters. Chapter One attempts to contextualize the 2013 debate about euthanasia by discussing ideologies about nature in the city—and the exclusion of street dogs from those ideologies. I discuss protests that took place in September 2013 against the extraction of gold in Roșia Montană, a region in northern Romania, by a Canadian corporation. I also discuss discourses against urban pollution and in favor of healthy urban living that occurred at bicyclist marches during the same month. Through such comparisons, the chapter embeds those mobilizations and the euthanasia debate in relation to

more general trends of urban living like healthy eating, veganism, and the consumption of biological products. In contrast to natural orders, discourses about urban sanitation, public health, and also the mapping of dog bites in the city exhibit how street dogs have been made by many to signify danger. I discuss how street dogs have never been seen as beneficial or desirable urban “natures,” but also how ideologies about nature in the city tend only to choose those elements of the natural environment that are seen as human friendly.

Chapter Two connects such ideologies about nature in the city and the regulation of urban environment to historical processes. Drawing on archival material, I trace the histories of street dogs and of discourses of civilization in order to understand how state organization has been defined by logics most times in conflict with the sentiments expressed by citizens. I compare four roughly categorized historical periods: pre-socialism, early socialism, late socialism, and post-socialism. For the 1860s to the early 1900s, I discuss how the municipality of Bucharest outsourced the job of catching dogs and how individual dogcatchers kept logs of the numbers of dogs they killed monthly. I also discuss how, in later years, especially during the German occupation of Romania during WWI, dog skins were sold and used towards unidentified ends. Material from the early period of pre-Ceaușescu-era socialism reveals that dogs were considered “enemies of the socialist economy,” along with wolves, foxes, wild cats, and crows. During the 1960s and afterwards, however, dogs entered spheres of not only economic, but also urban development. Municipal regulations refer to street dogs as urban parasites that were poisoned, along with rats, using strychnine in urban neighborhoods. Finally, for the 1980s and 1990s, I chart how discourse about breeds, dog food brands, training tricks, and new lifestyles began to flourish, along with private entrepreneurship. During this time period discourses of compassion also became more prevalent as the number of street dogs in the city began to increase, as did the

involvement of animal-rights NGOs in the country.

Chapter Three analyzes the life of individual street dogs that lived alongside humans in urban neighborhoods of Bucharest. It frames compassion as a habitual, spatial, and public practice. I consider the various ways in which public life and caring for street dogs provided, for some citizens, a way to make sense of not only the urban environment, but also the state and, even, the country in relation to its Western European counterparts. I discuss compassion in three different yet interconnected settings, each associated with different types of practices: neighborhoods, private shelters, and the realm of international adoption. Through this comparison, the chapter provides stories of individual dogs in the field, but also shows how Romania has been framed as not animal-friendly, despite the presence of large numbers of animal-lovers and dog sponsors in Bucharest. While animal-lovers who feed stray dogs in the city see themselves as compassionate—especially in comparison with those who oppose the dogs being in the city at all—they are criticized by animal rights organizations for not adopting the dogs. Thus, both animal rights organizations and the Romanian state are attempting to educate the former working class on how to be proper animal lovers. Animal rights organizations' goal is to teach humane methods, while the Romanian state seeks to civilize the urban environment. Both discourses ignore the cultural and historical context of the practices of caring for dogs in the street and not in domestic spaces—especially of how both the urban environment, and urban life were shaped by socialist standardization.

Chapter Four focuses on processes of urban marginalization. I discuss how beggars are seen as to blame for their own fate, while street animals are seen as innocent and incapable of defending themselves from human cunning. But whereas some citizens are compassionate towards animals, they fail to show similar compassion for human beggars. I theorize the practice

of begging and use it to develop different categories of marginal populations. I compare the treatment of canines, Roma, and homeless people in the field in order to show how animal-lovers and other citizens discriminate against the marginalized. I approach marginalization as an act of parasitization, through which beggars and street dogs alike are denied resources because they are not considered to be giving anything in return. I trace such treatment to the early 1800s, when the Roma were used as slaves and referred to as “crows,” since their skin was perceived as darker than that of non-Roma Romanians. Parasitization of the Roma was and is similar to the ways in which hunters exterminated actual crows in fields in early socialism, something I describe in earlier chapters. When it comes to begging practices, it seems that the initiation of a long-term non-reciprocal relation, contributed to discourses of parasitization. The chapter also discusses how the category “homeless” developed after the collapse of state socialism in Romania, and how beggars by the 1990s were depicted in popular discourse and films as professionals who become rich by exploiting others and by evoking pity. Other examples in this chapter come from the ways in which dogcatchers—Roma or very poor citizens in their majority—are valued less than dogs by animal-lovers, while it also stresses how everyday communicative practices result in discrimination and marginalization. It focuses on eyes as a communicative means, and discusses how dogs with sweet eyes are often seen as persons, while “legitimate” citizens deny the recognition of personhood to beggars, by ignoring them.

Finally, Chapter Five follows the history of dog breeds in an attempt to contextualize further how and why street dogs are seen as “matter out of place” in the country. During my fieldwork, at the same time that there were protests against euthanasia, agility competitions and purebred contest shows were also taking place in northern and more privileged areas of the city. While most of the people that I met, even neighborhood animal lovers valued breeds, and almost always

tried to understand street dogs as a mix of different breeds, this chapter analyzes how purebred dogs have been linked to upper classes in the 1930s and have also become a characteristic of urban life and of the new market economy during the 1990s. During the inter-war period, upper classes appeared to have a distinct bourgeois urban character. This was a time when Romania was seen as the “little Paris of the East,” due to its unique architecture, fashion, and elegance, and when King Carol was the honorary president of the Canine Association of Romania. During the 1990s and the 2000s both life along purebred pets and discourses about animal protection become characteristics of post-socialism. Thus, this chapter examines breed characteristics as markers of purity and value associated with status and sometimes nationality too—especially when it comes to depictions of the four types of Romanian shepherd dog breeds. It also discusses how purebred contests and shows described the practice of breeding as not just a hobby, but a “passion,” at the same time in which attachments of similar emotional value that would develop among working class people and street dogs were seen as problematic to the point in which such people were considered mentally ill. In looking at such distinctions, this chapter also underlines the role of breed characteristics, defects, and other canine characteristics that have a part in dogs’ subjectification and objectification. Finally, this chapter also takes a short look at breeds during socialism.

vii) Beju

It was a chilly day in January 2013. I was hosting a friend from Greece who had come to Romania to do some archival research. I had known for a while that the public shelter was close to my apartment, but I was hesitant to go. Besides, I had tried a couple of times to get there, but

got lost and ended up running back home frozen. That day, although Google maps didn't give me any more detailed information, I decided to try again. My friend said she'd come for support. We bought two warm *covrigi* (pretzels) and started walking. After doubling back a couple of times, I finally understood where we needed to turn. Among the auto shops and former factories, we found our way to the shelter. Located at the end of a small, perpendicular street on the Theodor Pallady Boulevard we started hearing barks as we approached.

When we arrived, the doorman asked what we wanted. The letters on the sign above our heads had faded. It was clear we had arrived, however; besides the barks having gotten louder, we could also smell a stench coming from the premises. Besides us, two more women our age were waiting outside the gate, having come after a dog that had disappeared overnight from their neighborhood. I explained my project to the guard. He didn't understand and said that journalists were not allowed. He asked to see my identification and when I gave him my Greek ID, with which I had entered the country, he said he needed a Romanian *buletin* (ID). I explained that the document I presented was valid, since I could cross borders with it inside the European Union. Still reluctant, he said: "I can let you in, only if you are interested in adopting a dog." "Sure," I responded, and then I asked: "Can I look around and see if there's any dog I'd like to take?" "Sure!" he responded, in turn.

After the gate opened and we all got inside, the two other women who were patiently waiting for their IDs to be reviewed approached me and said: "We heard that you are here to adopt. Can you please take Beju? If he stays in the shelter he'll die. And you'll see, he's really loving, sweet, and docile." Although I had been thinking for a while that having a dog in the field would help both my personal and social life, I was surprised. I had no arrangements that day for going back to my one-bedroom apartment with an extra guest. I was already cat sitting for Misty, my landlady's

cat, and I had a flat mate. “I’m not ready yet,” I said. “Is Beju big?” I asked, thinking about transnational and transatlantic travel with a pet. “Come and see!” they said. They gave the guard a description of Beju, along with the location and the date of his capture. The only thing I knew for sure, thanks to his name, was that Beju was a beige-colored male. The guard looked at the inventory book, which listed all the dogs, their characteristics, the number on their ear tags, and the area and date of their capture. “Come,” he said. “He’s in cage 58.”

We entered one room, and then another. Both the barks and the stench grew stronger. On our left, there was a room labeled “operating room.” On our right, I could see a room with cages, and some Roma women washing the floor. On the side of the wall, some dry dog food had been thrown. After we passed by the corridor, we turned right. The guard called one of the dogcatchers to come and take Beju out. A skinny man with a moustache, probably in his fifties, appeared. He came with us as we looked at the dogs inside the cages. Overcrowded with sad-looking dogs, feces, and urine, some of the cages had an exit to a small outside yard. That day, however, all the dogs had clustered inside because it was cold outside. “The beige one,” the ladies said, pointing at a dog that was sleeping almost on top of a larger black dog. The dogcatcher entered the cage, grabbed Beju by the neck with one hand, and pulled him out of the cage. The rest of the dogs looked at us. A couple of them barked, and others went back to sleep. Beju, happy to see his human friends, started licking their hands. As I approached to pet him, he hid his head under my elbow.

The next time I saw the two women was in a downtown coffee shop, next to the McDonald’s in Unirii Square. We met and had coffee almost two weeks after our initial encounter at the shelter. I wanted to interview them about their experience with Beju and other dogs, and they wanted to convince me to adopt him. Mihaela came to the meeting with her sister, Mariana. Their

neighbor, whom I had met at the shelter, couldn't make it, although she was also involved in rescuing Beju. The two sisters explained how they had moved Beju to a private shelter outside Bucharest. They said they had to pay money to keep him there, and that the situation was better than the public shelter, but still horrible. They already had three dogs in their apartment, and two in a private yard, so they could not possibly take in one more, although they would occasionally bring Beju to their apartment (which they shared with their parents) to give him a bath. They had also made sure that Beju had been neutered, vaccinated, and that he had a microchip and an ear tag. His number was 50555.

The two ladies explained to me the lousy situation in Bucharest. They said that people are bad and don't really love dogs. "They even kick their water bowls during the summer, and let them die of thirst," Mariana said, with emotion. I asked them to tell me Beju's story. They said that he appeared in their neighborhood when he was around seven months old. They just found him one day, wandering around as a puppy, just following other dogs around. In fact, *un țigan bătrân* (an old gypsy man) in the neighborhood, who was living in an establishment that had a yard, was feeding all of the dogs. Beju was taken care of by him for some months. After the man died, however, his sons stopped feeding the dogs and started turning them away. It was then that the sisters, along with other neighbors, started to care for the dogs. They tried advertising the dogs on Facebook for adoption, but had no luck. At the end of the meeting, we agreed that I'd take Beju in either occasionally or in foster care for three weeks. I would be responsible for taking cute pictures of him in a house setting, with toys, pillows, and blankets, so that we could increase our chances of finding him a permanent home. This would give him a better place to live until they could find a permanent solution, and I could take some time and see how he would adjust to living with a cat.

After a week, Mihaela brought Beju. I went downstairs and found her at the back of a Dacia car, with Beju in her arms. Right next to her, another lady was in charge of two other dogs. “Take him and we’ll see how things go,” she said. “Ok, let’s see,” I responded. Her jeans and jacket were full of mud, and Beju looked really tired and dirty. She got him out of the car, handed me his leash, and got ready to depart again. Beju, however, just froze. He sat on the ground, and didn’t want to come with me because he didn’t know me. Mihaela started laughing, probably because I had also frozen. I didn’t pull him or take him in my arms. She got out of the car again and helped me take him upstairs. Beju was much more willing to follow her, but he was still scared. Although he had been in and out of buildings before, he wasn’t familiar with that particular setting. He didn’t want to enter the building, he was afraid to climb the stairs, and she had to push him into the elevator. After we got into the apartment, Mihaela left quickly. The cat approached, full of curiosity, and we all stayed at the entrance, looking (and probably smelling) each other for a while.

Although it wasn’t our initial plan, Beju came and stayed. He mostly slept for the first week, and didn’t seem to trust me. Misty, the cat, would slowly come in when he was asleep to smell him. He was a weird creature to her, since she hadn’t been outside this ninth-floor apartment for almost thirteen years. In a couple of instances, she scared him so much that he whimpered. He never chased her, although he’d run after every single cat he’d see in the street. Fortunately, adjusting to the apartment didn’t take long. Although Beju was slipping on the wooden floor, as he still sometimes does, he made sure to slowly walk by the wall. He never had a problem walking on a leash, since he was already used to its occasional use by his former guardians. After about a month, I would come back home to find both he and Misty in the living room, keeping each other company. He used to sit on the carpet, and she would take the couch. A

hernia operation he had to undergo (possibly because of a kick, the vet said) seemed to be a ritual of adjustment for both of us. He resisted entering the metro when I had to take him to the vet clinic, but he was eager to enter the apartment when we got back home. Still, it took me a while to teach him that walks are potty time, not scavenging trash time. Beju accompanied me to Greece, and then to the US after the end of my fieldwork. The Facebook pictures I upload of him still make his former sponsors cry, while some of their older neighbors continue to ask how he's doing. Beju, like many other dogs, is considered one of the lucky ones, to have been adopted by a "good-souled" person, and to have come to a "civilized country, where they really love and respect animals."



Figure 6: Beju smiling at a training session in Cişmigiu Park

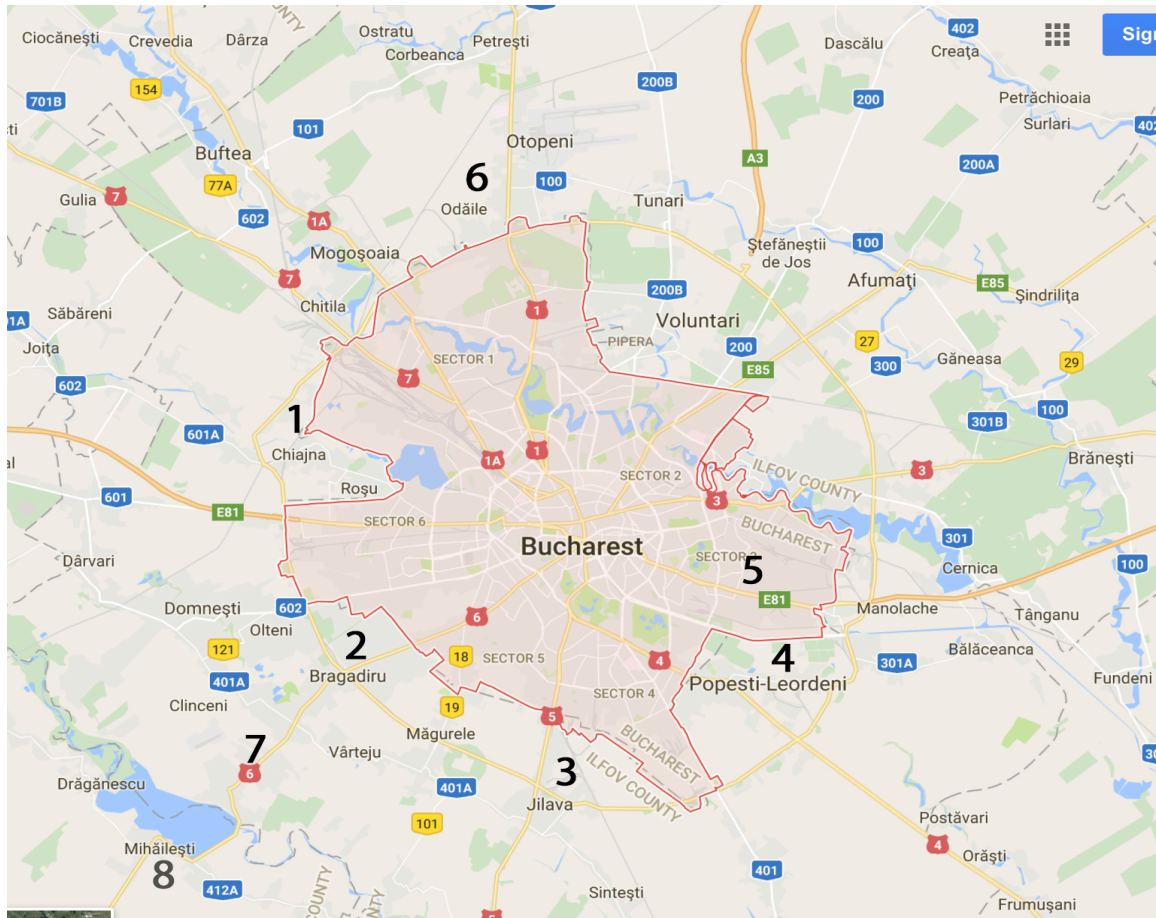


Figure 7: Map of Bucharest and of the surrounding Ilfov County with the location of suburban sites of research and shelters marked

- 1: Chiajna, the town in which citizens complained about street dogs and in which anti-dog NGO representatives took action for their removal
- 2: Bragadiru, the town where one of the public shelters was located
- 3: Jilava, the town in which one of the rescuers rented a field in order to create a private dog shelter
- 4: Popești-Leordeni, the town that was the closest to my neighborhood, Titan, and where at least two private dog shelters were located
- 5: Titan, the neighborhood where I lived for most of the time of my research. Also the location of the second—and most accessible to citizens of Bucharest—public shelter (former *ecarisaj*).
- 6: Odăile, the site of one of the public shelters. This shelter, however, only received dogs from one of the northern neighborhoods in the city, Sector One.
- 7: Cornetu, the site of one of the most infamous shelters during my field-work in Romania of semi-private status.
- 8: Mihăilești, the town in which the third public shelter was located

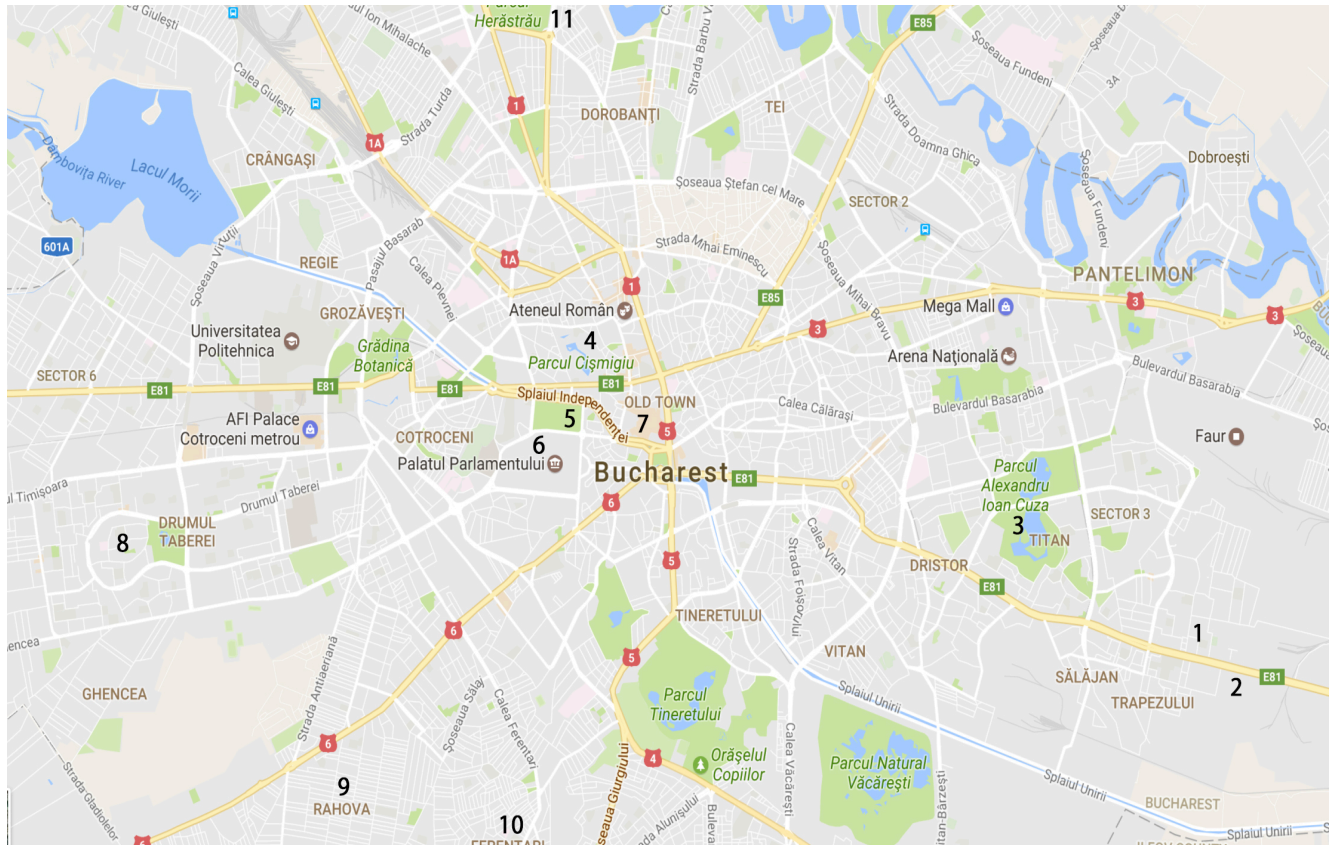


Figure 8: Map of Bucharest with sites of research and shelters marked

- 1: The location of my apartment in the margins of the neighborhood of Titan
- 2: The location of the nearby public shelter also known as *ecarisaj*
- 3: IOR Park in the west side of the city
- 4: Cișmigiu Park and the neighborhood around it, in which I lived during the last months of my research
- 5: Izvor Park vis-à-vis House of the People, where many of the protests I describe took place
- 6: The Parliament Palace also known as the House of the People
- 7: Lipsicani, the old—and very popular—center in the city
- 8: Drumul Taberei, a neighborhood known for the existence of large numbers of dogs
- 9: Rahova, one of the marginalized southern neighborhoods in the city
- 10: Ferentari, a ghettoized neighborhood in the south end of the city
- 11: Herăstrău Park in the northern end of the city

Chapter One: The Dogs that Weren't Dogs: Urban Natures and Non-Urban Beasts

During the period of my research, street dogs were seen as both a component of the post-socialist character of the city and an unnatural phenomenon in the urban environment. Opponents of street dogs saw them as wild and dangerous. Animal lovers, while acknowledging that street dogs were inappropriate for cohabitation with humans in apartments and therefore not entirely domestic, believed that their proximity and close relationship with humans made them neither strictly wild nor totally dangerous. As I discuss in Chapter Three, it was common for street dogs to spend half their time on the streets and half their time inside apartments and buildings for protection against dogcatchers and other urban dangers.

This chapter attempts to understand how street dogs are caught between antithetical perceptions in Bucharest. To that end, I will first focus on the tension that exists between rural and urban in defining Bucharest as a city. Such tension seems to have been present since at least the 1930s, when Bucharest was seen as a truly urban environment comparable to Western urban centers like Paris. Such comparisons were informed by the ideal of a civilized city—at least in public discourse—and underscored efforts to eliminate any element that could be considered rural. During socialism, although there was no explicit comparison of the city to Western urban centers, there was an insistence on urban sanitation, cleanliness, and aesthetics, which were similarly equated with concepts of a civilized, urban society. This chapter also discusses how such ideas about Bucharest being a civilized, developed, and European capital were associated with ideas of active citizenship, civil action, and life-style aspirations of an up-and-coming

middle class.

Today, the bipolarity of urban and rural is still present, and an assumed atypical urban character of Bucharest is often attributed to the effects of socialism. Nicolae Ceaușescu's urbanization project is considered to have destroyed any potential for high-quality urbanization that would have resulted naturally if there had not been interruption in the rhythms and progress of interwar urban development.⁷

While there is still much discussion about the meaning of Europe, civilization, and Europeanness, the non-urbaness of the city is attributed to elements like dogs, as well as to the former working-class behaviors that are seen to derive from the mentality of that generation. Both people and dogs are falling through the interstices between the definitions of urban and rural. Since socialism is seen to have brought more rurality to the city, a socialist mentality is often considered a rural mentality too.

In tracing the ways in which Bucharest can be seen as bearing elements of rurality at the core of its definition as a city, this chapter examines how a series of parasitic entities—both material and immaterial—have played a role in such a definition. Such parasitic entities are approached as “interruptions” (Serres 2007) to ideas of order, civilization, and progress, and as “matter out of place,” as Mary Douglas has famously characterized the symbolic nature of dirt (Douglas 2002 [1966]). Both material and immaterial parasites, from sounds to feces, are seen to belong to the same spheres of conceptualization. While differences between urban and rural settings have been central in understanding human societies for many years (Durkheim 1964

⁷ Indeed, it is considered today by some that during the inter-war era, the urban culture and high-quality architecture of Bucharest had developed to such a degree that the city could be fairly considered the small Paris of Eastern Europe (Micul Paris). The Arc of Triumph (Arcul de Triumf) in the northern part of Bucharest, which in 1936 replaced a model of 1922, which had already replaced a prototype wooden model that had been constructed in 1878 to celebrate Romania's independence from the Ottoman Empire, can be indicative of how inter-war Bucharest was architecturally modeled after Paris.

[1893]) (Engels 1845; Simmel 2005 [1950]; Tonnies 1957 [1887]), this chapter explores how the opacity of such differences can be problematic, particularly how animals and materialities that would normally be considered legitimate in rural areas become parasitic in the context of a definition of an urban environment. This chapter shows how the city becomes a space that is lived, conceived, and perceived (Lefebvre 1991), namely a space that is both experienced and socially represented by its inhabitants, as it is regulated by state officials.

Street animals like dogs and cats, as well as crows, became problems as Bucharest defined itself as a modern urban center. Similarly, dust, mud, debris, and animal noise and odor have been considered uncivilized at different times. In the 1930s, for example, it was dirt that needed to be eliminated from the city. In later years, the obsession of the socialist regime with cleanliness and aesthetics targeted materials that resulted from demolitions, along with animals and human behaviors that produced trash. Bucharest has been defined on the basis of parasitological discourses that were contrasted to ideals of sanitation, esthetics, and public health. Such discourses often also included human populations, as discussed in Chapter Four. Both in ethnographic material and in the archival record, parallelisms between crows and Roma, dogs and beggars, and homeless and trash are striking.

Such a discussion of rurality as parasitic in urban environments has implications about the forms in which nature is seen to belong in the city. Stray dogs are considered parasitic, for example, while peacocks in parks are considered to represent nature. Similarly, green spaces are desirable in urban centers while other elements of rural settings are not. While the so-called “ontological turn” in anthropology has prompted us to study the intersections of nature and culture (Brightman 1993; Haraway 2008; Kohn 2007; Raffles 2002), this chapter shows how such intersections result from a variety of relations, significations, practices, and discourses.

Eduardo Kohn, for example, employs a semiotic analysis in order to describe how dogs constitute the nonhuman selves of the Runa, an indigenous people of South America. This chapter asks about those times during which it was not clear what nature was or when natural elements appear decontextualized. Following Alaina Lemon's suggestion to view natural/cultural entanglements as just a part of larger assemblages of animals, humans, material infrastructures, and waste matter (Lemon 2015), this chapter suggests that we need to explore the intersections of the natural, the non-natural, and the parasitic in order to understand urban life and animal/human cohabitation in urban centers.

Both the urban environment and street dogs in Bucharest have been regulated through standards of sanitation, safety, order, aesthetics, and public health. The lifestyle promoted by middle-class citizens, who generally oppose street dogs, is embedded in larger lifestyle trends. Both veganism and physical activity, for example, are considered as promoting a healthy life in the city. This chapter argues that ideas of purity and impurity, associated with discourses of poisoning, dirt, or danger, promote definitions of nature as being antithetical to the urban environment at the same time in which such definitions are largely an urban project.

At the same time, the Romanian countryside (*țara Românească*) and folklore are highly valued as parts of the Romanian identity, but only when they do not constitute parts of the city. In Bucharest, the popular National Museum of the Romanian Peasant (*Muzeul Național al Țăranului Român*) exhibited garments, kitchen utensils, and clothing from different areas of the country. Similarly, the National Village Museum (*Muzeul Național al Satului-Dimitrie Gusti*), located at Herăstrău Park exhibited residences that had been relocated to the city from rural areas in the country. But when similar rural elements appeared in a non-structured environment or as parts of everyday life, they became problematic.



Figure 9: Rural residence of Romania exhibited at the Village Museum in Bucharest.

Inhabitants of Bucharest during the period of my fieldwork either fought for the preservation of natural habitats outside the city or attempted to make natural elements part of their urban lives. Street dogs were not considered to be a positive aspect of nature; sometimes, they were not considered an aspect of nature at all. When talking to one of my friends about the fact that the majority of people did not consider street dogs to be part of nature and therefore didn't advocate for their protection, my friend looked at me in surprise, saying that dogs are not wolves to be protected.

This chapter draws examples from several sources: from the Roşia Montană protests that took place during September of 2013 in Bucharest; from discourses about natural and healthy

eating and lifestyle; from campaigns about cleanliness and proper behavior in parks; and from the ways in which city hall and citizens framed the city as dangerous. It also discusses archival material from socialist and pre-socialist times to trace the history of ideas of orderliness and parasitization. Both in contemporary and historical discourse, ideas about sanitation, urban development, and a civilized city (*salubritate, dezvoltare, un oraș civilizată*) ostracized stray dogs and rurality while at the same time embracing ideas of a “good” nature. During the time of my fieldwork, such discourse was most commonly articulated by city hall representatives and middle class citizens, who aspired to live in a city of European character. Their ideas were accompanied by ideas of being active, and of fighting for one’s basic rights of living in a city, such as cleanliness and safety.

1.1: Natural, Urban, Rural

While the socialist regime advocated for the standardization of urban living in domains like transportation and housing, the shaping of urban life was not ideal for many citizens. On the one hand, people from rural areas and those who had houses with a yard, both in and outside of Bucharest, had to change their everyday habits and learn how to live in apartments. On the other hand, the bourgeois interwar culture had to suffer the degradation of urban life, and the bourgeoisie had to live among a number of *țărani*—a term that is sometimes used derogatively today to describe the villagers.

The word *țară*, which literally means *country*, has two meanings in Romanian (as it does in English): connoting a “nation” and describing non-urban environments such as villages or farms. During the time of my research, many of the citizens of Bucharest valued the country. They would either have family in provincial towns and villages or they would take short

excursions and vacations there. Some had family homes outside Bucharest that they had inherited and which they visited during the summer to make small amendments and renovations. Melissa Caldwell (2011) describes how Russian cottages (*dachas*) play a key role in understanding urban culture in Russia and how the natural environment around them is related to urban dwellers living a good life. Krisztina Féhervary (2013) also discusses how cottages in Hungary offered short getaways from socialist urban life during the socialist era. Indeed, such summer cottages and outings to the Romanian *țara* functioned in exactly the same way—as means of expressing the value of the country for what it was: a natural space outside of urban centers that urban citizens could enjoy without becoming *țarani* themselves.

Some elements of the Romanian *țara*, such as fresh produce, were valued in Bucharest; it was common for citizens to visit the *țarani* to buy vegetables and fruit when the latter would visit the city. The term was thus used to describe the purity of local produce and nature, although behaviors such as being impolite or not respecting norms and decrees was also associated with a villager mentality. One day, for example, as a friend was giving me a ride back home, he used the term *țarani* to characterize Bucharest citizens who parked their vehicles on sidewalks and boulevard medians as if they were lacking the knowledge of how to live in a city.

Ideas of Bucharest being less than urban are not new. Since Romanian cities didn't conform to central European city formations, prewar architects saw them as large villages rather than urban centers (Zahariade 2011:51). Besides architects, the council of the municipality of Bucharest would make decisions about urban development during that time, having in mind how the city should start looking like western European cities, especially Paris. In 1932, for example, the mayor of the city talked about how the council members had to “do their duty to this city,

which has remained a horrible village with the appearance of an African village.”⁸ In sessions of earlier years,⁹ members discussed the nice sidewalks of Paris and how the increasing number of cars in Bucharest would be a “point of civilization” for foreigner visitors to see. Other times, members of the council talked about leading the municipal services in “civilized ways,” about how some of the members had a “civilized soul,” respecting and caring about “civilization in the city” in every way they could (Elias 1994 [1939]). The purpose of the council was to make Bucharest a civilized capital, since “it belonged to a country as big as Romania, and its reputation should now be one of a European country.”¹⁰ Such ideas, however, didn’t take into account that Bucharest was not homogenous or that suburban communities would always be considered a less urban part of the city when compared to city center. In 1936,¹¹ for example, a number of suburban communities around Bucharest, including Fundeni, Băneasa, Militari, Pantelimon, Herăstrău, and Floreasca, were incorporated into the urban fabric. During the period of socialism, decrees about keeping birds and livestock were more flexible for areas at the periphery of the city¹² than in more central zones.

⁸ Municipality of Bucharest, Secretariat, Dossier 1/1932, General Council meeting on April 12, 1932, National Municipal Archives of Bucharest (Primăria Municipiului București, Secretariat, Dossier 1/1932, Consiliul General al Municipiului, Ședință de la 12 Aprilie 1932, Arhivele Naționale ale Municipiului București))

⁹ Municipality of Bucharest, Secretariat, Dossier 2/1927, Permanent Delegation of the municipality meeting on March 10, 1927 (Primăria Municipiului București, Secretariat, Dosar 2/1927, Delegațiunea Permanentă a Municipiului, Ședință de la 10 martie 1927). Also, Municipality of Bucharest, Secretariat, General Council Delegation Meetings, 1927 (Primăria Municipiului București, Secretariat, Ședințele Delegațiunii Consiliul General, 1927)

¹⁰ Municipality of Bucharest, Dossier 2/1927, General Council Meeting of July 16, 1927 (Primăria Municipiului București, Dosar 2/1927 Consiliul General a Municipiului, Ședință de la 16 Iulie 1927)

¹¹ Municipality of Bucharest, Secretariat, Dossier 4/1936 (Primăria Municipiului București, Secretariat, Dosar 4/1936)

¹² Official Gazette of the Socialist Republic of Romania, Year XV, no. 3 May to October 1969, People’s Council of Bucharest, Executive Committee, Decision no. 650 of 29 August 1969 (Buletinul Oficial al Republicii Socialiste România, Anul XV, nr. 3, Mai-Oct 1969, Consiliul Popular al Municipiului București, Comitetul Executiv, Decizia nr. 650 din 29 August 1969)

This bipolarity of urban and rural is illuminating when it comes to contemporary understandings of the role of dogs in the urban environment. During my time in Bucharest, I observed how ideas of nature were becoming central in a variety of discourses, and how the purity of the rural, appeared desirable in the urban environment. At parks such as Cișmigiu downtown or Herăstrău in the northern end of the city, one could see such exhibits as Japanese trees or peacocks and other birds that represented nature.

Street dogs were trapped at the center of the triangulation of rural, urban, and natural. Their niche in the urban landscape was shaped by concepts of orderliness that were based on ideas of purity as well as on considerations of urban pollution and safety. “Nature” consisted of urban green spaces and natural habitats outside urban centers, which urban residents liked to visit; this was similar to former socialist views of modernism and a civilized urban environment. Dogs were positioned at the periphery of the city. Dog shelters, for example, both private and public, were located either in marginal neighborhoods or in suburban communities.

Ideas of urban order and of well-maintained natural spaces were very common during the socialist period and were associated with the ideals of development and civilization. As Ana Maria Zahariade informs us, the regime supported the “continuous material and spiritual blossoming of the whole nation and elevation of the level of civilization for the whole society,” a programmatic phrase that appeared in Party documents (Zahariade 2011:44),¹³ especially before the crisis of the 1980s. Indeed, during the 1960s and 1970s, the archival record includes reference to “raising living standards” for the inhabitants of the city but also to raising the level of consciousness and education among citizens, domains in which deficiencies appeared to

¹³ Also see Official Gazette of the Socialist Republic of Romania, Decision no. 379 of 6 March 1989 (Buletinul Oficial al Republicii Socialiste România, Decizia nr. 379 din 6 Martie 1989) on the “socio-economic development of the capital, and the elevation of the level of civilization and urban comfort.”

exist.¹⁴ Such statements appear to be pointing to the creation of a socialist modernist city that would transform Romanian society (Holston 1989). Monthly decrees were aimed at the “maintenance of cleanliness and the beautification of the city” and the “realization of an aesthetic aspect suitable for the capital of the socialist republic of Romania.”¹⁵ Such publications pointed to the regulation of the urban environment through use of ideas of orderliness, sanitation, aesthetics, and development as tools of governance (Hull 2012).

During the 1960s, the regime appeared especially occupied with the management, beautification, and sanitation of the city (*gospodărire, înfrumusețarea, și salubritate Bucureștiului*) and also with the creation and preservation of green spaces.¹⁶ Decrees often noted the need for maintaining the rate of socialist urban development through the beautification of parks, public gardens, squares, green spaces, and swimming pools and lakes, which were places of recreation for the working people of the capital.¹⁷

The “modern presentation” of neighborhoods and “traffic arteries,” among other initiatives,¹⁸ were pursued in 1977 through the development and maintenance of parks, green spaces, and similar areas by planting 950 trees and shrubs, while the environment, especially air

¹⁴ Official Bulletin R.P.R. (People's Republic of Romania), Year X, no. 6 June 1960, Decision of the eighth session of People's Council of the capital of R.P.R. on the day of May 26, 1960 (Buletinul Oficial al R.P.R. (Republicii Populare Româna), Anul X, nr. 6, Iunie 1960, Hotărîrea celei de a VIII-a Sesiunea Sfatului Popular al Capitalei R.P.R. din ziua de 26 Mai 1960)

¹⁵ Official Gazette of the Socialist Republic of Romania, Decision no. 308 of May 23, 1969 (Buletinul Oficial al Republicii Socialiste Româna, Decizia nr. 308 din 23 Mai 1969)

¹⁶ Official Bulletin R.P.R. (People's Republic of Romania), Year XII, no. 4 April 1962 (Buletinul Oficial al R.P.R. (Republicii Populare Româna), Anul XII nr. 4 Aprilie 1962)

¹⁷ Official Bulletin R.P.R. (People's Republic of Romania), Year VIII, no. 10 August 1958 (Buletinul Oficial al R.P.R. (Republicii Populare Româna), Anul VIII, nr. 10 August 1958)

¹⁸ Improvements in the city during that year included the construction of 450,000 square meters of streets and sidewalks, 650,000 square meters of repaired streets and sidewalks, 200,000 square meters of ballasting streets, 145 spaces for sports and playgrounds for children, parking areas, and through the expansion of both the network and sewage system by 5.5 km and 3.5 km respectively.

and water,¹⁹ needed to be protected. Other decrees forbade cutting flowers at parks,²⁰ sitting on the grass, or destroying trees or tree branches in any way. In 1975, the penalty for the cutting a water lily or any other aquatic plant at park lakes was a fine of fifty lei,²¹ while fines for writing on park benches or even sleeping on them were of almost equivalent value. Walking in parks with unleashed pets was also disapproved of, as was cycling in park alleys, since it was determined that such places should be kept beautiful, clean, and quiet for the “working population” (*populația muncitoare*).²²

Such matters would be taken care of by the Institute Project Bucharest, which was dedicated to the perfection of the appearance of the city. During the 1970s, the pride of having a beautiful socialist city prompted the organization to arrange a competition to find the “most beautiful song dedicated to Bucharest,”²³ as well as national expositions of sculpture (named “The Image of the Country”) and photography (named “Portrait of our Country”).

Besides regulating activity in green and recreational spaces, decrees also regulated animal and human activities in the city. For example, citizens were forbidden from disposing of pieces of paper, food leftovers, fruit seeds and peels, or ice cream sticks on the ground. Decrees also

¹⁹ Official Gazette of the Socialist Republic of Romania, Decision no. 241 of March 12, 1979 (Buletinul Oficial al Republicii Socialiste România, Decizia nr. 241 din 12 Martie 1979)

²⁰ Official Gazette of the Socialist Republic of Romania, Decision no. 20 of September 20, 1973 (Buletinul Oficial al Republicii Socialiste România, Hotărîrea nr. 20 din 20 Sept. 1973)

²¹ Official Gazette of the Socialist Republic of Romania, Decision no. 15 of August 20, 1975 (Buletinul Oficial al Republicii Socialiste România, Hotărîrea nr. 15 din 19 August 1975)

²² Official Bulletin R.P.R. (People's Republic of Romania), Year I, no. 6, 14 August 1949 Ordinance no. 4 (Buletinul Oficial al R.P.R. (Republicii Populare România), Anul I nr. 6 14 August 1949, ordonanță nr. 4). Also, Official Bulletin R.P.R. (People's Republic of Romania), Year IV, no. 3, 1 April 1951, Decision no. 404 of March 13 1951 (Buletinul Oficial al R.P.R. (Republicii Populare România), Anul IV nr. 3 1 April 1951, Deciziunea nr. 404 din 13 Martie 1951).

²³ Official Gazette of the Socialist Republic of Romania, Decision no. 736 of May 17, 1971 (Buletinul Oficial al Republicii Socialiste România, Decizia nr. 736 din 17 Mai 1971)

forbade citizens from letting animals such as horses or domestic birds circulate in main streets or open fields or to pasture in parks.²⁴ It was also forbidden to “keep yard animals or birds in the interior of buildings, at balconies, terraces, or in other places besides yards, where they should be closed in cages, or in specially designated dividers, spaced at least six meters from the street, the apartment of the tenant or neighbors, and only in accordance with the statutory provisions concerning sanitary requirements.”²⁵ In some cases, decrees about the beautification of the city prohibited animals and birds from the main streets and the slaughtering of birds and other animals in public spaces.²⁶

As I already discussed, September 2013 was marked by the killing of four-year-old Ionuț Anghel by what was assumed to be a pack of street dogs, and by the ensuing series of protests both for and against the mass euthanasia of street dogs. However, these protests were insignificant in comparison to the protests that took place during the same month for the protection of Roșia Montană, an area in northern Romania. Thousands of citizens marched through the streets of Bucharest to protest the cyanide-based extraction of gold from Roșia Montană by a Canadian corporation as well as the government’s collaboration with the corporation in the project. Both the wealth of the Romanian land and its poisoning were central to the protesters’ discourse. Roșia Montană became an issue of national pride, and international media described the protests as the largest environmental movement in the country in decades.

²⁴ Official Gazette of the Socialist Republic of Romania, Decision no. 10 of May 21, 1971 (Buletinul Oficial al Republicii Socialiste România, Hotărîrea nr. 10 din 21 Mai 1971)

²⁵ Official Gazette of the Socialist Republic of Romania, People's Council of Bucharest City, Executive Committee, Decision no. 1025 of January 14, 1967 (Buletinul Oficial al Republicii Socialiste România, Sfatul Popular al Orașului București, Comitetul Executiv, Decizia nr. 1025 din 14 ian 1967)

²⁶ Official Bulletin R.P.R. (People's Republic of Romania), Year XIII, no. 11, November 1963, Decision no. 723 of September 6, 1963 (Buletinul Oficial al R.P.R. (Republicii Populare România), Anul XIII, nr. 11, Noiembrie 1963, Decizia nr. 723 din 6 Septembrie 1963)



Figure 10: The bleeding leaf logo of the Roșia Montană protests²⁷

While marching through the streets of Bucharest, the Roșia Montană protesters held signs with a bleeding leaf as their logo. A hole at the center of the Romanian flag—the symbol of the anti-socialist Romanian revolution of 1989—appeared again. Protesters called upon citizens to “get out of their house if they cared” and expressed their resentment toward the government that had collaborated with the corporation. They distributed leaflets to explain how Roșia Montană was in danger of losing its purity because of cyanide poisoning, and they stressed the need to preserve and keep clean Romanian land. Some of the protesters wore gas masks to symbolize their stance against poisoning.

²⁷ Image available at: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Salvati_Rosia_Montana.jpg



Figure 11: Roșia Montană protesters, marching through Bucharest

In contrast to the Roșia Montană protests, movements in support of street dogs seemed to stall. Animal-rights activists tried to team up with the Roșia Montană protesters, hoping that street dogs could also be seen as fragile elements of the natural order that needed protection. But the Roșia Montană protesters didn't seem to care, and the liminal status of street dogs, being neither natural nor urban, kept them from being relevant to environmentalist discourses.

Street dogs were construed as being antithetical to domestic life, and their presence in cities was considered undesirable. In the urban environment, street dogs were seen as spoiling natural spaces, such as parks, and impeding urban life as the middle class had envisioned it. Dogs were seen as natural elements by animal-lovers only, especially those who were also members of the Green Party, whose slogan was, "We protect animals, we protect the

environment.” Such groups were marginalized as being dirty and crazy and advocating only for animals. In contrast, Roșia Montană protesters were seen as legitimate nature lovers, since their discourse focused on urban and non-urban nature, which only humans—or pets—were entitled to enjoy.



Figure 12: Leaflet distributed at the Roșia Montană protests explaining “Why the Romanian state has more to lose than to gain” from the project.

At the same time as people were protesting on behalf of dogs and Roșia Montană, bicyclists were marching through the city, blocking traffic during the weekends and asking for a healthier and less polluted urban environment. As with the Roșia Montană protesters and animal proponents and opponents, the bicyclists also demonstrated against politicians. One of their slogans asked for “Captain Planet” to come and stop Oprescu, the mayor of Bucharest at the time. Bicyclists asked for the expansion of the bicycle-lane network in the city, claiming that bicycling would improve both the living conditions and the transportation network in Bucharest by decreasing traffic and pollution. City hall, they claimed, could thereby promote a healthier

lifestyle for its citizens, and people could learn to include exercise in their everyday routines.

The city had for a long time been seen as being antithetical to nature. One of the topics that seemed prevalent in architectural exhibitions that year was the one of bringing nature in the city. When I first moved to Romania, an installation named “Plug into Nature” exhibited a video loop that was played in a wooden hut right in front of the National Library, a large building downtown, the construction of which had started during socialist times but had ended only just before I moved to Romania. Viewers could sit on wooden benches in the hut while touching dry leaves and tree branches. The interior walls of the hut were made of Styrofoam dressed with sand to resemble bark. In the exhibition hut, the video showed images of the Danube Delta, where an architectural team was conducting a series of projects. During that year, other architectural exhibitions depicted Bucharest as a utopian city of the future. Balloons, bicycles, and green nature turned Bucharest into a proper, ordered, civilized, and modern environment. Similarly, in architectural publications, the development of the city was seen as being linked to high-quality green spaces (Crăciun 2009:85).

The Roșia Montană discourse was embedded in larger ideologies of a healthy urban lifestyle. Food was seen as being either “pure” if it represented the produce that the Romanian land was able to offer, or “impure” if it contained synthetic ingredients and preservatives. After I arrived in the country, I was surprised to discover that two of my friends, one in her twenties and one in her sixties, had become vegan. Although some of the animal rescuers that I knew were vegetarian, especially the ones involved with international NGOs and animal rescuers, their opting out of eating meat was mainly done as a stand against harming animals; their discourse had no element of healthy or natural lifestyle. I knew that meat products were highly valued by Romanians. Swine slaughtering during Christmas was a very popular ritual, and products at

supermarkets included a large variety of cold cuts, meat jellies, organs, liver pates, pig ears and skin, and the very popular *slănină*, pork fat usually eaten with bread, mustard, and horseradish or sometimes fried with eggs. Indeed, my vegan friends often complained about the limited options they had at Romanian restaurants.

My younger friend used to receive produce such as tomatoes, parsnips, carrots, and bananas from family members in Galați, a city in eastern Romania. She ate them for breakfast, lunch, and dinner, and the quantities were so large that much of the produce would quickly go bad and get thrown away. Sometimes she would talk to me about the health benefits of oat bran, pomegranates, coconut oil, kombucha tea, and flax seeds. Once, a taxi driver similarly told me how oat bran was the best gift I could give to my body. My older friend used to visit me often, and on name days or birthdays she would bring raw, vegan cakes that she had made with fruit, honey, nuts, chia seeds, and goji berries. She used to buy such organic products at *Plafar*, a chain of stores with natural and organic products that seemed quite popular. She also advised against feeding wet and dry pet food to the dog and cat I was living with and recommended that I try homeopathic medication myself when I was ill. Every time I cooked meat or mentioned that I had eaten lunch at MacDonald's, she advised me to stop eating *otravă*—poison. One day, she told me that her daughter's two Rottweiler dogs had also become vegan, saying that the dogs were fed special vegan burgers, the recipes for which could be found on the Internet. She later explained that her daughter and fiancé had recently started practicing raw veganism and that they bought large quantities of fresh vegetables every week at the local vegetable market (*piața*). When I was invited to a family member's birthday celebration at a restaurant, the menu for our table had been tailored to include only vegan options.



Figure 13: A new Plafar store inside a mall in Bucharest, selling natural and biological products.

Other friends of mine, a young couple in their early thirties, were similarly cautious about what they were eating. They were both vegetarian, and they advised me against eating meat. They also mocked me when I ate eggs for dinner, saying protein products should be consumed only for lunch, when my organism could use the nutrients better. One of them also criticized me for eating French fries, which were considered unhealthy and *otravă*—poison—as frying destroyed all the nutrients and filled potatoes with toxins. He advised me to buy vegetables at the *piața*—one of the markets throughout the city, where fresh local produce was available daily. I was told that produce in supermarkets was full of chemicals and hormones; the tomatoes bought there, for example, had no taste and would never go bad. He also warned me against E-uri, the chemicals and preservatives starting with letter E that were listed on the packages of products like biscuits, cheese, and bread.

All of these friends, besides preferring healthy food (*mâncarea sănătoasă*), also stood against smoking and drinking, and they advocated walking and bicycling. They talked about movement (*mișcare*), and one of them was fond of taking ten thousand steps per day. Besides rowing in park lakes, one of the activities offered by city hall to adults and senior citizens at parks was to exercise different muscle groups, for example biceps or triceps, according to the instructions posted on the specifically designed machines in adult playground areas.



Figure 14: Exercise area for adults in Cișmigiu Park

1.2: Danger, Dirt, Disorder

Before I arrived in Romania for the first time, the travel guide *Lonely Planet* (2010) warned me of street dogs. It cited the story of a Japanese tourist who died in Bucharest in 2005

as the result of a dog bite. However, dogs in the city were not the only reason for Bucharest's being seen as a dangerous place. Some inhabitants also considered the downtown historical district, with its crumbling buildings, to be dangerous. For example, a friend of mine was scared of materials falling on her head as she walked by these buildings; she also feared ice dams and icicles that would form along roofs in the winter. Indeed, signs on some of these buildings warned passersby to be careful of falling materials (*Atenție, căde tencuială!*). During state socialism, placing utilitarian items on the outside of balcony windows was prohibited in order to ensure the safety of passersby.²⁸

One of the fears I myself acquired was of earthquakes. Although I had grown up in Greece, an earthquake-prone area, the ninth floor of the socialist-type building in which I lived in Titan, as well as the third floor of a much older building where I resided near Cișmigiu Park, appeared prone to destruction and also harder to escape from than the single house in which I had spent my childhood in Greece. The lack of open balconies, along with stories about the insufficient durability of such socialist-era constructions, added to the lack of safety of these buildings. One of the most common stories I heard was that such buildings did not always have solid walls, since the building contractors used debris from the previously demolished buildings rather than fresh concrete in an attempt to achieve a quick urbanization rate that would be proof of socialism's superiority over the capitalist West.

Instead of being associated with the natural order, street dogs were associated with danger. The danger they posed partially came from what was seen as their wild nature. In dog-opponent discourses, street dogs were depicted as animals one could not trust; even when they

²⁸ Official Gazette of the Socialist Republic of Romania, Year XXII, January-April 1977, Decision no. 22 of January 14 1977 (Buletinul Oficial al Republicii Socialiste România, Anul XXII, Ianuarie-Aprilie 1977, Decizia nr. 22 din 14 ianuarie 1977)

appeared friendly, one could never be sure when their dangerous nature would overpower their good instincts and incite them to attack. Especially after the death of the four-year-old boy, depictions of street dogs as beasts were accentuated. In the discourse of dog-opponent protesters, street dogs were portrayed as bloodthirsty beasts that could cause serious injuries.

Some of my anti-dog informants claimed that Romania should oppose local understandings of a once-paternalistic socialist state in which citizens were accustomed to the state taking care of all public matters. As they claimed, the socialist period took away the idea of responsible citizenship. They talked about street dogs being especially problematic in marginal neighborhoods, which were actually neighborhoods in which the former working class resided. According to dog opponents, neutering, the solution proposed by animal-rights NGOs that was implemented for many years after the euthanasia law was blocked in 2004, proved to be highly ineffective. Euthanasia neither diminished the dog population nor resolved dog aggressiveness. As dog opponents said, “Removing their genitals doesn’t also remove their teeth.” Most of these citizens, though, were accused by animal lovers of being unable to propose a feasible alternative to euthanasia when they didn’t agree with neutering or relocating dogs. Being in favor of civil action and euthanasia was also seen as irresponsible and was criticized as being in favor of a quick and impractical solution. Euthanasia was assumed to diminish dog numbers only temporarily.

As I already discussed, in dog opponents’ protests, dogs were portrayed as bloodthirsty monsters that had badly injured not only Ionuț but also other citizens whose cases hadn’t been as well publicized. To undermine animal lovers’ claims that dogs were friendly and incapable of causing harm to an innocent child, protesters produced examples of dog-related injuries that had occurred at other times in other countries, displaying graphic images of injured children in an

attempt to dramatize the seriousness of the situation. Some of them talked about the dirt that dogs produced. Some said they protested out of fear, sharing with me their childhood stories about dog bites, and relating that their fear of scavenging packs was enough to prevent them from going outdoors after hours or taking a job that would require night shifts. Among the protesters were bicyclists and international citizens who resided in Bucharest for business. A friend of a friend, who was a Mexican national married to a Romanian woman and was living in Bucharest, told me that street dogs were the reason he disliked living in Bucharest. As he said, “I hate them all; they all need to die.”

Besides being dangerous, street dogs were also considered to be annoying because of their barking, especially at night, and their bad smell. Although noise in urban centers is tolerated, noise in residential areas is seen as depriving citizens of a good quality of urban life. When noise occurred in residential blocks, for example, residents would signal their annoyance by banging on the heating pipes that run through the building. The offending residents would receive the message almost immediately. Michael Serres discusses how noise can be parasitic, causing interruption (Serres 2007). Indeed, different kinds of city noises have been considered annoying at different times. In 1892, for example, noises produced by factories had to be eliminated by relocating the factories to outlying areas.²⁹

During the time of my research, roaming dogs weren't the only ones that produced dog-related noise and other annoyances—dog shelters were also noisy, and they emitted a strong, unpleasant odor. One of my neighbors in Titan told me that citizens during the socialist era could easily detect the location of the *ecarisaj*, the premises where they would keep street dogs or

²⁹ Municipality of Bucharest, Administrative, Dossier 15/1892 (Primăria Municipiului București, Administrativ, Dosar 15/1892)

process animal products, from the strong smell it emitted in the area. But yet again, unpleasant odors were not uncommon in urban environments. Portable toilets emitted a strong smell of urine in parks, and there were reports of newly constructed neighborhoods like Pipera in which the sewage system would emit odors following a rain.

Besides dogs, unwanted bird species also caused interruptions in urban life. One of my friends told me that crows are very noisy at Herăstrău Park; another complained about the alleys of Cișmigiu Park being dirty from bird feces. In some of the older buildings downtown that housed offices and small businesses, one could see on outside windows rows of nails that were used to turn away birds like pigeons, even though many citizens fed them at parks, on the bridges of the Dâmbovița River, or outside residential buildings, leaving food and water outside apartment windows.

One of my animal-loving neighbors, who had adopted a large street dog in the 1990s, showed me how she left seeds and water daily outside her window in small containers for the pigeons. She also showed me how she kept herbs and other plants like Aloe Vera on the balcony, from which she would make juice that would be good for her husband's lung cancer. Besides plants, she also kept their dog mainly in the balcony so that it wouldn't shed hair or bring dirt from the street into the living room. The dog was quiet, she said, and it was thus easy for them to keep it in the apartment.

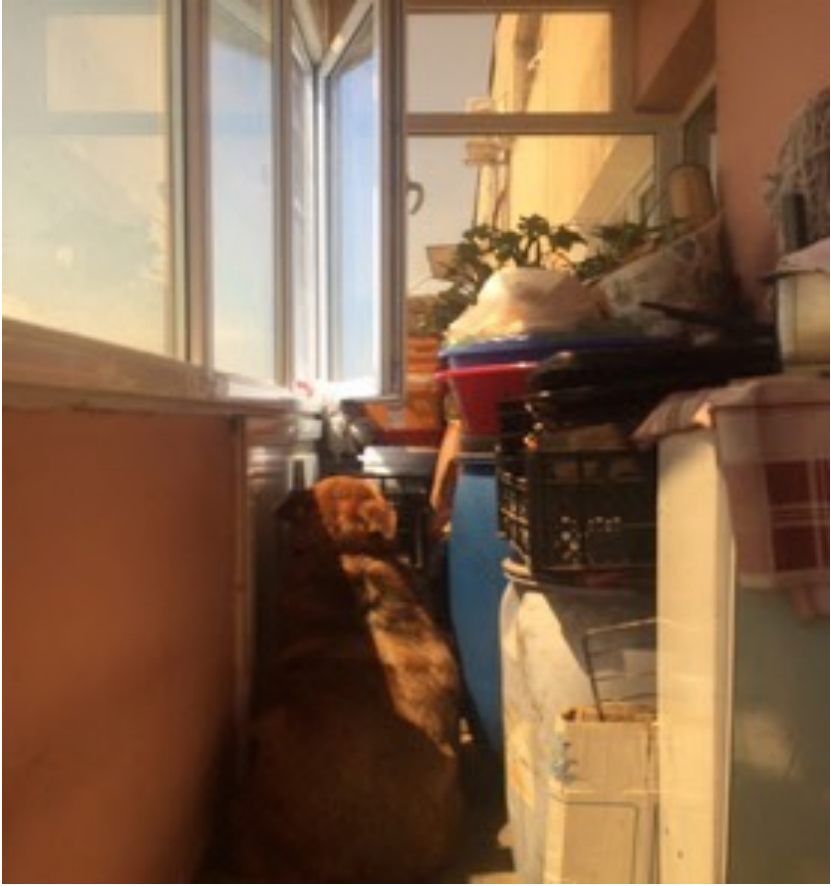


Figure 15: Tița, a former street dog, along with herbs and storage items kept on the apartment balcony



Figure 16: Țița's owner feeding a pigeon outside her eighth-floor apartment window

According to a quote cited in an article written by Oliver Velescu about the history of Titan, also known as Baltă Albă (*White Pond*), “A French joke says ‘Bucarest’ stands for ‘boue qui reste’ (the mud that remains), but this is obviously a slander: Bucharest was and is the cleanest city in the world! Either way, whether with ‘boue qui reste’ or not, it is dear to us for how much it suffered, for how many memories awakens, for how much work, intelligence, and generous booms have started here” (H. Stahl, *Baptising and re-baptising streets of the capital in old Bucharest IV, 1935*, cited in Velescu 2009).³⁰ Indeed, the civilizing of the urban environment during the 1930s that I discussed previously would largely come about by prioritizing the

³⁰ Botezarea și răsbotezarea străzilor capitalei în București vechi I-V, 1935

sanitation (*salubrizare*) of the city.³¹ In a meeting in 1932, the mayor of Bucharest underscored that the level of sanitation would determine whether or not the West saw Bucharest as a dirty or clean city, and suggested that sanitizing Bucharest should occur in “more Western conditions” than the ones that existed at the time and that people should be educated about “sanitary habits”³² and “Western sanitation” (*salubritate occidentală*).

During socialism, state ideals of hygiene and sanitation were incorporated with those of an orderly and aesthetically pleasing city. In 1967, for example, apartment residents were forbidden from drying and airing out clothes on balconies or from windows that were visible from the street. Similarly, the installation of stoves or exhaust pipes was forbidden in places that could be seen from the street. Throwing trash or household items from windows or balconies was identified as inappropriate behavior, as was the beating of carpets in spaces other than those in backyards that were allotted for such activities.

Concerning the keeping of animals, buildings were prohibited from the construction or placement of boxes or cages that would impede the normal use of the buildings or would spoil the aesthetics of the building and the front yard.³³ Citizens were prohibited from littering public spaces by throwing used bus tickets, cigarette ends, pieces of paper, or other similar products on the ground,³⁴ while trash baskets for paper couldn't be used for disposal of any heavier kinds of

³¹ Municipality of Bucharest, Secretariat, Dossier 4/1932 (Primăria Municipiului București, Secretariat, Dosar 4/1932)

³² Municipality of Bucharest, Secretariat, Dossier 3/1932 (Primăria Municipiului București, Secretariat, Dosar 3/1932)

³³ Official Gazette of the Socialist Republic of Romania, Year XV, No. 3, March-April 1967 (Buletinul Oficial al Republicii Socialiste România, Anul XV, Nr. 3, Martie-Aprilie 1967)

³⁴ Official Gazette of the Socialist Republic of Romania, Decision No 20 of September 20, 1973 (Buletinul Oficial al Republicii Socialiste România, Hotărîrea nr. 20 din 20 Sept. 1973)

trash.³⁵ The city's trams, busses, and trollies were repainted, and central streets were cleaned two or three times per day, and side streets only once.³⁶

According to Ioana Tudora, who studied ideals of beautiful and ugly houses among residents of Bucharest, ugliness was defined in relation to social or hygienic criteria. Ugly houses were the ones that were “filthy, dirty, full of gypsies, small, miserable, shabby” (Tudora 2009:62). As the author notices, such opinions were also expressed about the city. Public spaces were considered beautiful when they were cleaned and became “tolerable and beautiful,” in contrast to their previous state, which was a “total misery.” Indeed, one of the slogans on public city hall vehicles that I noticed during my stay in Bucharest was, “We clean!” The author also reports that turning a neighborhood into a civilized space meant it would have “benches and not dogs.” Such spaces were the dream of urban residents, who would compare the city with Paris (Tudora 2009:63).

Similar ideas about the appearance of apartments and buildings were prevalent. Cleanliness and spotlessness were highly valued by some of my neighbors, who complained that when I watered flowers outside our kitchen window, the water would drip to the floors beneath and spot their windows.

³⁵ Official Gazette of the Socialist Republic of Romania, Year XXII, January-April 1977, Decision no. 22 of January 14, 1977 (Buletinul Oficial al Republicii Socialiste România, Anul XXII nr. Ianuarie-Aprilie 1977, Decizia Nr. 22 din 14 Ianuarie 1977). Also, Official Gazette of the Socialist Republic of Romania, Decision no. 3 of July 2, 1970 (Buletinul Oficial al Republicii Socialiste România, Hotărîrea nr. 3 din 2 Iulie 1970).

³⁶ Official Gazette of the Socialist Republic of Romania, Year XXI, No. 1, January-March 1976, Decision no. 3 (Buletinul Oficial al Republicii Socialiste România, Buletinul Oficial Anul XXI, Nr. 1 Ianuarie – Martie 1976, Hotărîrea nr. 3)



Figure 17: City hall vehicle with the inscription “We clean!”

Adam Drazin also describes habits and ideas of cleanliness in Romanian cities. He notices how considering something clean also means it is tidy and beautiful (2009:74). He also notices how dust, among all materials, appears as the one with which citizens do not wish to be associated, since it would mean they are dirty; a common sound in residential areas comes from cleaning activities like the beating of carpets to remove dust. Drazin emphasizes that dirtiness can result from inactivity as well, pointing out that when one does no house cleaning, items like rugs or towels appear dusty. Indeed, one of my own friends told me that the crumbling historic buildings in downtown Bucharest were simply becoming dust with the passing of time. Another friend explained to me that he would get angry fighting with the dust in his single-house residence. As he said, dust would reappear shortly after he had wet the ground in his yard to make the space less dusty.

The practice of wetting a surface to eliminate dust appeared also in decrees of the socialist period, when workers needed to “splash with water the ground of buildings during

demolition, and the debris would be carried away in vehicles.”³⁷ Indeed, other authors have similarly noticed how dust signified dirtiness (Fehérváry 2013:87) or how it was associated with microbes (Buchli 1999). As Joseph Amato (2000) notices, it is the minute yet pervasive character of dust that renders it important, since it differentiates the visible from the invisible and helps define the categories of dirtiness and cleanliness that became important in the twentieth century.

Dust circulating in the air, however, was not always visible. One of the dog opponents whom I met at a public debate about dog euthanasia described how stray dog feces became dry over time, eventually becoming dust that children breathed. Indeed, dog feces were seen as one of the main problems associated with street dogs. Although city hall was trying to promote sanitation rules in order to encourage citizens to pick up after pets, street dogs, which are not associated with an owner, magnified the problem of controlling sanitation throughout urban areas.

Indeed, in parks such as Cișmigiu and Herăstrău, there were spaces especially designated for dogs in which dog-owning habits were prevalent. Posters depicted Labrador retrievers and kids playing, for example, and equipment was available with which to train or to practice agility exercises with one’s dog. Such dog parks included benches for dog owners to sit while their dogs played off-leash with other pets. They also included signs to promote the use of the space as a leash-free zone. Letting dogs off leash outside these smaller spaces in parks was not allowed, although the regulation was not followed.

³⁷ Official Bulletin R.P.R. (People’s Republic of Romania), Year VII, No. 4, April 1957, Decision No. 723, and Decision 3 of July 2, 1970 (Buletinul Oficial al R.P.R. (Republicii Populare România), Anul VII, Nr. 4, Aprilie 1957, Decizia nr. 723, si Hotărîrea nr. 3 din 2 Iulie 1970). Also, Official Gazette of the Socialist Republic of Romania, Year XXII, No 2, May-September 1977 (Buletinul Oficial al Republicii Socialiste România, Anul XXII Nr. 2 Mai – Septembrie 1977), on similar decisions concerning the damages caused by the earthquake of 1977.



Figure 18: “Bark Park” fenced dog play area in Cișmigiu Park

Outside such fenced dog areas, city hall had installed signs with instructions on how and why dog owners should be picking up after their dogs. These signs were part of the city hall campaign *Toleriantae* (tolerance), a series of guidelines aimed at building mutual respect between pet owners and non-pet owners and common respect for the public space they shared. Instructions on the signs included an explanation of how dog owners should respect other citizens in the parks and how park visitors should be tolerant of pet dogs. The initiative was promoted by ALPAB, the Authority for the Administration of Lakes, Parks, and Recreation in Bucharest (*Administrația Lacuri, Parcuri, și Agrement București*), whose slogan was “Nature, Humans, Respect!”



Figure 19: Toleriantae sign at one of city's parks

Some wealthier sectors of city hall had also installed doggy-bag stations, both in parks and at sidewalks along main boulevards. Such stations included trash bags and trash bins, and although most of them were not regularly refilled, their presence did indicate that money that was spent for the beautification of parks and boulevards took animals into consideration as well as plants. One of the city hall sectors published posters with the slogan, “We want no more luck in the streets,” referring to a Romanian saying according to which good luck would come to those who inadvertently came in contact with bird or animal feces.



Figure 20: “We don’t want any more ‘luck’ in the streets”—campaign of Sector 4 of the City Hall of Bucharest³⁸



Figure 21: A doggy-bag station with directions at a park in a northern area of the city

³⁸ Image available at: http://www.hotnews.ro/stiri-administratie_locala-21235475-sunt-strazile-din-bucuresti-pline-excremente-caine-amenzi-dat-pana-acum-primariile.htm

Dogs were seen as dangerous not only because of their wild nature but also because of the threat they posed to public health. One of the dog opponents I met in one of the city-hall organized debates told me that Bucharesteans lived under the constant threat of infection because of all the diseases that street dogs could transmit. Zoonotic disease was believed to be transmitted through dog feces as well as through tick bites. The most worrisome among these diseases was rabies, which could be transmitted through bites or scratches. In its attempt to show the danger to public health posed by the large number of street dogs, the city hall launched an interactive map for citizens to report dog bites. As a public official of ASPA, the Authority for the Supervision and Protection of Animals (*Autoritatea pentru Supravegherea și Protecția Animalelor*), told me during an interview, data about dog bites were also gathered from the Victor Babeș Institute, the authority responsible for the management of infectious disease in the city. The city hall was also gathering data from individual phone calls made by citizens who had been bit by street dogs throughout the city. Although there was no way to confirm the number of bites reported by phone, such data were still registered as proof of the danger that street dogs posed.

As I discuss in Chapter Two, Bucharest's city hall has been preoccupied with the issue of public health in the city since the 1860s, when decrees were issued about how deep to bury dog bodies to avoid posing a threat to public health. In the 1930s,³⁹ the agency in charge of capturing street dogs published an informational leaflet explaining why street dogs must be captured. Among other information, the leaflet featured a table showing the number of rabies

³⁹ "Did the dogcatchers catch your dog?" 1929, Booklet written by B. Lampert, Accountant of the dog-catching service of Bucharest ("Ți-a prins câinele hingerii?", 1929, By B. Lampert, Contabilul Serviciu de Ecarisaj al Municipiului București)

cases between 1923 and 1937 as well as the numbers of injuries to humans caused by dogs, cats, horses, and pigs. Among all species, dogs were seen as most dangerous and most prone to attack. The agency estimated that almost 370 dogs were infected with rabies yearly, while it was also stressed how such numbers appeared to diminish in countries where capturing street dogs was intensified. Comparing western European countries with Romania, the publication mentions that there were 580 dogs killed in 1901 in Paris, while England didn't even know what rabies was⁴⁰. However, as the source stresses, in the capital of Romania, "this scourge has become endemic!" Rabies was a disease that needed to be stopped, since "because of it thousands of people suffered every year." Continuing, the leaflet underlines how "enormous sacrifices" had to be made "for the common good," as in other countries "where the civilization and especially the spirit of protecting citizens, has reached unimagined heights." In socialist years, rabies was characterized as the "most dangerous sickness for humans and dogs," and hiding dogs that were sick or suspected of having been infected with the disease constituted a criminal offence.⁴¹ Owners of dogs were obliged to vaccinate them, since the disease was seen to be transmissible to humans "especially through dogs,"⁴² although in later years, cats, horses, oxen, and pigs were also included in provisions to protect against the spread of rabies.⁴³

⁴⁰ For a discussion concerning the way in which Paris was regulated during the nineteenth century through similar discourses about rabies and the dirt and danger produced by street dogs, see Pearson (2017)

⁴¹ Official Bulletin R.P.R. (People's Republic of Romania), Year VI, No. 12, October 1956, Decision No. 1980 of September 3, 1956 (Buletinul Oficial al R.P.R. (Republicii Populare România), Anul VI, Nr. 12, Octombrie 1956, Decisia nr. 1980 din 3 Septembrie 1956)

⁴² Official Bulletin R.P.R. (People's Republic of Romania), Year VIII, No. 9, July 1958 (Buletinul Oficial al R.P.R. (Republicii Populare România), Anul VIII, Nr. 9 Iulie 1958)

⁴³ Official Bulletin R.P.R. (People's Republic of Romania), Year X, No 10, October 1960, and Year XII, No. 11, November 1961, Decision Nr. 3838 of November 18, 1961 (Buletinul Oficial al R.P.R. (Republicii Populare România), Anul X, nr. 10, Octombrie 1960 and Anul XII, Nr. 11, Noiembrie 1961, Decizie Nr. 3838 din 18 Nov. 1961)

Citizens appeared defenseless against dog bites in the city. One night, as I was walking in the old, center area of the city, where most of the bars, clubs, and restaurants were located, I noticed in the vitrine of a gun shop an anti-dog pepper spray exhibited among the hunting gear on display. It was a small, black and red bottle with “anti-dog” written on it. I entered the store and asked to buy it. The clerk asked if I preferred the kind that expels a single stream or the kind that expels multiple streams. I asked for the one I had seen in the vitrine, which proved to be the latter. I asked whether it was effective for street dogs. He explained that even if I were to spray only once in the air, it would be enough to turn them away. During a discussion I had with my flatmate the next day, she mentioned that besides pepper sprays, one could also find ultrasound emitters to turn dogs away.

Some months later, I noticed that private-shelter employees would throw water at dogs that had been caught in a fight. Two years later, in Michigan, I noticed employees at Camp Bow Wow doing something similar. They would spray dog snouts with water bottles when a new dog was introduced in a common play area. It became obvious to me that no matter what one sprays a dog with, the act itself can interrupt aggressive behavior. However, the existence of pepper sprays in Bucharest that were specifically referred to anti-dog seemed to be creating a context in which one needed to be continuously protected against the threat posed by street animals. Although pepper sprays could be used against other urban threats, such as robbers or attackers, the labeling of this particular product as “anti-dog” indexed Bucharest as an environment in which the threat posed by wild nature was constant.

Besides being annoying, barking noises produced by dogs would also be indexed as danger. During the winter of 2013, NGO members found a dog with a mutilated snout to be wandering in the city. It was a young, white, female mutt, found in the Grivița area of Bucharest,

not far from downtown. The Four Paws animal rights organization took over her case, and Grivița (she was named after the area where she was found) was transported to the vet and her wounds were cleaned. She was then transported to a private shelter to await plastic surgery to reshape her snout. The vet who was treating her explained that the remodeling would make her look like she had a snout again, but she wouldn't regain her sense of smell. He also explained that Grivița would now need special care, such as being fed pureed food for life. Some weeks later, a social-media user commented on a post about Grivița that he himself had mutilated the dog with a shovel because of her nightlong barking, which didn't let him sleep and intimidated children. Animal-rights NGOs asked for the comment to be traced and for the animal cruelty to be punished, but it never was.

Stray dogs were considered especially dangerous at nighttime, when many of them were seen to scavenge. At anti-dog gatherings, it seemed that some people were also afraid of the effects that night had on canine behavior. A young woman with whom I spoke outside the House of the People, where most of the anti- and pro-euthanasia protests took place, reported that she refrained from taking a job that required night shifts because street dogs had bitten her in the past and she didn't like walking in the streets at nighttime since.

When I first arrived in Bucharest, I would hear multiple dogs barking when I listened from my flat on the ninth floor of a socialist-era apartment building. I always assumed that packs of dogs were scavenging the city, or that individual community dogs were barking at dogs from other territories that were passing by, and I imagined them barking and fighting at the side of the street or at nearby small neighborhood parks. In the movie *Four Months, Three Weeks, Two Days*, one of the main characters, a young woman who has helped her friend get an illegal abortion in Ceausescu-era Bucharest, wanders the city in her effort to dispose of evidence of the

procedure. She walks in the dark, frightened, while multiple dog barks are heard in the background as if dogs were the only inhabitants of the city.



Figure 22: Puppies scavenging trash in the Bucharest Old Center area at nighttime

Indeed, during socialist times, dog owners were allowed to leave their watchdog off-leash in their yard between 10 p.m. and 5 a.m. only if the yard didn't permit the dog to exit to the street; dog owners were obliged to put the dogs back on leash by the early morning hours⁴⁴. The habit seemed to have endured into contemporary times. While walking Beju at night in my neighborhood, we would often come across a black, furry dog that was running around and exploring the neighborhood in the dark. He would smell Beju, and Beju would bark at him. During our next morning's walk, we would find the same dog back on his leash, lying in the sun

⁴⁴ Official Gazette of the Socialist Republic of Romania, Decision No. 650 of August 29 1969 (Buletinul Oficial al Republicii Socialiste România, Decizie Nr. 650 din 29 August 1969), and Official Gazette of the Socialist Republic of Romania, Decision Nr. 608 of April 6 1982 (Buletinul Oficial al Republicii Socialiste România, Decizie Nr. 609 din 6 Aprilie 1982).

next to his doghouse. By the time the euthanasia law was enacted, the dog disappeared; I found out from neighborhood friends that the dog's caretaker had moved him with his family to the country.

The discussion about dangerous areas and time periods in the city had also come up during my interview with a public official of ASPA, the authority responsible for the management of street dogs. After I met with him at the city hall building following a public debate concerning euthanasia, we arranged to meet for a formal interview. We met some days later, and he suggested that we discuss street dogs over some Lebanese food. He told me that the current mayor had transferred him to this service after he had served for some years at the transportation authority of the city. He brought a big dossier to our meeting that contained studies, policies, and other information about street dogs. He mainly talked about statistics, and he showed me videos on his computer of what he called dog trafficking and private-shelter scandals. He explained that animal lovers and rescuers whom we both knew were profiting from the stray dog business. He elaborated by describing how rescuers and private shelters did not really care for dogs but rather used them to raise money for themselves or sold them for vivisection and other experiments in foreign countries. He had actually used a drone to film the situation in these private establishments, and he claimed that dogs were being starved and ended up eating each other. He also talked about how shelter owners bred dogs in order to create more victims.

During our discussion, he cited an MIT study that identified the feeding of street dogs as a human behavior responsible for the formation of dog packs, and he described how he himself experimented in the field. He would start by placing dog food in a particular corner of a park. After some days, several dogs would gather, and after a week their number would increase.

However, this was not my own experience from neighborhood life. As I myself could attest during the two years I spent in Bucharest, certain people fed specific dogs for years. In some cases, dog packs were seen as threatening not only to humans but also to individual dogs that were incapable of protecting themselves against the power of a dog pack. Sometimes, if other dogs approached, the residents would turn them away. Some months following my interview with the public official of ASPA, he tried to penalize the feeding of street dogs in public spaces.

After we finished dinner, the ASPA official suggested that we roam the city in his car so he could show me the problematic areas. Driving together in his SUV, he first showed me the problem in the southern neighborhoods. At the back of the House of the People building was an open field with some trees at one end that looked like a dumping site for materials from the construction of the building. The ASPA representative said that this was a space where an especially large number of street dogs gathered. I found this hard to believe, since this area was quite central in the city. The open space was adjacent to Rahova, one of the underdeveloped and ghettoized southern Roma neighborhoods; however, it was also at the back of the country's Parliament building.

We entered the wooded area of the field and turned off the engine. After a while, almost forty dogs gathered around the car, curious about this new addition to their terrain. When the ASPA agent turned on the lights and the engine, the dogs started barking at us. For a moment, I felt that I had just discovered the source of the barking that I could hear from my apartment, even though the field was miles away from the neighborhood in which I resided.

I saw many neighborhoods in Bucharest during my night tour of the city with the representative of ASPA. After the House of the People, we drove to Drumul Taberei, a neighborhood on the west side of the city where the greatest number dog-bite incidents had been

reported. The neighborhood didn't look different from my own neighborhood on the other side of the city. It was a socialist-era type neighborhood, filled with socialist-era residential buildings.

Leaving Drumul Taberei, the ASPA official showed me how alpha dogs behave in the pack. Driving slowly and close to the median of one of the central boulevards that connected the neighborhood with Bucharest downtown, he told me to pay attention to how the alpha dog started barking at us and how other dogs immediately followed suit. Our field trip finished at around three in the morning. The public official promised to meet again and to give me copies of the materials and the studies he had shown me at the restaurant. However, I never managed to find him again. After the death of the four-year-old boy and the enactment of the euthanasia law, the public official of ASPA became a central person in the media. He appeared to collaborate with anti-dog groups supporting euthanasia, while most of the animal-lovers, rescuers, and NGOs were against his policies. When I tried to call him after my summer trip to Greece, I realized he had changed his number.

After some months, at the suggestion of a British journalist who had just made a documentary about Bucharest street dogs, I interviewed the person who used to care for the pack behind the House of the People, a woman in her sixties who was the wife of a former socialist-era colonel. She showed me the doghouses she had made for the dogs and explained how the ones she took care of were actually from only one of the two packs that I had seen and heard that night. She explained that the space on which she had built the doghouses was not hers but that she still wouldn't let anyone touch her dogs. She also said that she would let her dogs free during the night. I helped her feed the dogs and change the water at the doghouses, after which she showed me around the field. She took me to the other side of the area where other residents had just treated several puppies for parasites. She talked to me about the socialist history of the site

and about how neither the field nor the buildings themselves had ever actually been finished. The revolution of 1989 had interrupted the construction of both the House of the People and the House of the Sciences, Elena Ceaușescu's equivalent palace that her husband had built vis-à-vis.

As with discourses against dogs, significations of nature as being pure or not pointed to the dichotomy between rural and urban. During my fieldwork in Bucharest, nature was both an element of the city and an element that contradicted urban life. The city was also signified as a hostile space for humans. Its hostility consisted of concrete, traffic, pollution, and sometimes street dogs. Bucharest was a laboratory in which ideologies of nature were produced, but it also seemed to be lacking many of the natural elements it defined. Organic produce and healthy lifestyles became a trend for urban inhabitants, in contrast to animal-rights movements, which were seen as outdated. Animal-rights discourses became signifiers of socialist or premodern rural lifestyles. Although qualities of rural life appeared desirable, the mental status that was seen to accompany it was marked negatively. Pets were the only legitimate category of animals in the city, since they were associated with domestic rather than wild orders. Street dogs constituted a category that belonged neither to a natural habitat nor to the urbanscape. Although they were not considered *otravă* (poison) as were French fries, meat, exhaust fumes, and cyanide, street dogs were still seen as “matter out of place” (Douglas 2002 [1966]).

1.3. Civil Action and Life-Style Aspirations

Discontent about street dogs in the city, however, was also related to middle-class lifestyle aspirations. For a TV debate, Lucian Mândruța, a well-known journalist, invited representatives of the Four Paws Animal Rights Organization as a follow-up to his interview with the chief of ASPA, who was in favor of street dog euthanasia. After a series of questions

during which the NGO representatives repeatedly stressed the importance of sterilization and relocation of dogs as a long-term solution, the journalist asked, “Yes, but I want to bicycle in the city. What about that?”

Indeed, bicycling in the city without fear was one of the pro-euthanasia arguments. Being able to bike throughout the city, especially in parks on Sundays, was one of the pleasures citizens enjoyed in Bucharest, as did citizens in other European cities. Some citizens gathered on Sundays during the fall of 2013 and marched in the city with their bicycles. They blocked traffic and asked for a traffic-free city that would be more friendly to its citizens. They also saw cycling as part of a healthy, new lifestyle, since it combined both the reduction of urban pollution and the opportunity for exercise. Canine interest in wheels, however, largely impeded the experience of such joys. As Luis Vivanco (2013) has observed when talking about biking cultures in Amsterdam, Bogota, and Burlington, bicycles have been associated with dreams of urban living as commodities that facilitate urban mobility, health, and lifestyle.

Bicycling and human-dog interactions had come up in discussions with friends during the first week of my stay in Bucharest. Over beer, friends who used to work for the Four Paws Association described how cyclists were indeed in trouble. I myself noticed dogs chasing bicycle wheels and cars, which seemed dangerous mostly for the dog. In the early discussion that I had upon my arrival in Bucharest, Adina described a popular trick when being chased by street dogs whereby one would stop and pretend to be searching for dog food inside one’s bag. According to her explanation, the dogs were already used to old ladies feeding them from their bags. Adina suggested that imitating an older woman’s voice could also be useful. Alternatively, she proposed avoiding areas with dogs, and if that weren’t possible, at least trying to avoid alpha males or female dogs with puppies—all of which presupposed that one would know canine

territorial and behavioral patterns in the city. Some months later, after I had started living with Beju, I observed how he would indeed stop and beg for food every time he would see people carrying plastic supermarket bags or searching in them for keys or wallets. Sometimes, just the noise of the bag was enough to attract his attention.

Compared to street dogs, trained dogs appeared as easier to control in the city.

Throughout my time in Bucharest, especially during my walks with Beju, I met many people who owned a purebred dog. In parks, a habit of such dog owners was to keep their dog off leash, even though this was forbidden by law. Some of them could actually control their dog from a distance by using vibrating collars that were remotely controlled. If the dog went too far away or was engaged in a fight with another dog, those owners would press a button and their dog would immediately return to them. The owner of a Schnauzer terrier whom I often met after moving next to Cișmigiu, the central park, explained that she and her dog took training classes in order to get used to the collar. As she said, the electronic collar was only for those times when her dog would be too excited or stressed to heed her voice command and follow her verbal orders.

During my stay in Bucharest, I walked Beju in Cișmigiu Gardens two or three times a day for almost six months. During the first year of my fieldwork, when I lived in the peripheral neighborhood of Titan, I used to take Beju to various neighborhood parks, such as IOR⁴⁵ Park on the east side of the city Herăstrău Park in the north. Using metro trains to transport Beju or walking there when the weather permitted, I was able to observe how human sociality was mediated by canine-human or canine-canine interactions in many settings.

⁴⁵ The park is popularly referred to as IOR by Bucharest citizens, since it was initially named after the close by Romanian Optical Enterprise (Întreprinderea Optică Română.) It is also sometimes simply referred to as Titan after the area in which it is situated, although its official name is Alexandru Ioan Cuza Park.

A common practice, especially in Cișmigiu Park, included feeding pigeons in addition to dogs. People who were fond of pigeons would come with bags full of seeds that they would throw on the ground. Pigeons, like dogs, were already familiar with the practice. Many times they would just gather around people who were carrying bags or eating *covrigi* (pretzels). Beju, however, took great enjoyment in scaring the pigeons. Although he behaved quite calmly and obediently when around humans, around pigeons and cats, and sometimes around other dogs, his behavior totally changed. I always kept him on a leash to avoid dogfights and to keep him away from other non-human inhabitants of the city that were seen as friendlier to humans. As discussed in Chapter Two, although pigeons were occasionally perceived as parasites, since the socialist period they have generally been seen as a proper urban species.

Owners of purebreds sometimes viewed leashes suspiciously. Miruna, a lawyer in her fifties with whom I often met, always walked her dog Alfa, a young and playful Vizsla, without keeping him on a leash. As she said, she'd take her dog everywhere, including her office, where he had his own space. That day, she asked about Beju: "But you never let him run free?" It was then that I realized that no matter how much I would be appreciated by pigeon feeders, toddler parents, dog owners, and park guards for always walking my dog on a leash, there would always be some citizens who would think of me as a bad dog owner for not letting my dog run free. Miruna tried to convince me to let Beju off leash. She said that letting a dog free could actually be a crucial part of training; a dog can learn that freedom is part of its daily routine and start obeying to its owner's commands when not on a leash. She also recommended that I not let Beju run free at night as I occasionally would, since it could be easier to lose him in the dark, especially if not using a special collar that emitted light and made a dog's path visible to its owner.

Other days, I observed citizens allowing their purebred dogs to run free at the park or to remain off-leash when they spent leisure time at nearby high-end coffee shops and downtown pubs. Some time after I talked to Miruna, I interviewed a proponent of IREC (Initiative for Responsible Citizenship—Inițiativa pentru Responsabilitate Civică), a group which supported civic responsibility and which also was in favor of dog euthanasia, in one of the nearby cafes. He said, “You know what I like? I like to be able to bike fearlessly in the park. I like to see trained dogs and not street dogs. Street dogs are a danger and they are uncontrollable. Their place is not on the streets.” Indeed, on IREC banners around the city, the image of a street dog was explicitly contrasted with a dog on a leash being held by the father of a family. The family consisted of the two parents and two children pictured in white, while a sign on a street dog was pictured in black. The sign said, “Their place is not in the street.” Obviously, a dog on a leash was considered an extension of the nuclear family. Pets were considered orderly and legitimate members of such familial formations. It seemed that for many people, including dog owners, activists, and even architects who would include purebred dogs in installations about the Bucharest of the future, street dogs were considered disposable. Dreams about the city of the future included fewer cars, more bicycles, more parks, fewer street dogs, and purebred or trained dogs.

Adela, for example, founded an NGO, the purpose of which was to promote home birth as an alternative to giving birth in an institutionalized medical setting. She later became one of the anti-dog group’s leaders and founded IREC. In one of our interviews, she said about street dogs, “I don’t care what they are going to do with them. I just don’t want to see them around.” This statement, along with ideas about a safe and beautiful city, pointed to the ways in which marginal urban elements needed to be less visible in, or entirely absent from, public spaces. As I discuss in

Chapter Four, such ideas were common not only for dogs but also for human populations such as beggars, the homeless, and the Roma. In its effort to eradicate dogs in the city, IREC prompted citizens to be active, to pick up the phone, to call the authorities, and to have their street cleared of street dogs. Besides IREC, a number of other smaller groups, such as Against Dogs in the City (*Împotriva Căinilor in Oraș*), Zero Street Dogs (*Zero Maidanezi*), and Pro-Twenty-First Century Civilization (*Pro-Civilizația Secolului 21*) made their appearance during protests and on social media platforms such as Facebook.



Figure 23: IREC banner outside the museum of Natural History in Piața Victoriei, downtown Bucharest

In the summer of 2015, I visited Bucharest for follow-up research. The euthanasia plan had been implemented for almost a year. That summer, besides the surprisingly low number of street dogs that I traced in the streets of Bucharest, I was also surprised to discover a newly made

bicycle lane in one of the central streets of Bucharest. Calea Victoriei, the street in which the anti-socialist revolution of 1989 took place, would now have a bicycle lane. The construction of the lane matched the modern look of the street, with its high-end stores, such as Gucci and MaxMara, and its notable buildings and institutions, such as the Athenaeum Palace, the University Library, the Museum of Art, the Hilton and Radisson Blue Hotels, and also Revolution Square.

Being the street that contained many of the local bars, cafeterias, beer halls, and alternative music halls, the bicycle lane would be used mainly by youth, who would be characterized by friends as alternative or hipster. The median that separated the two-way bicycle lane from the rest of the street was embellished and made visible with a series of colorful, well-maintained flowers inside huge ceramic pots that were watered daily. Playgrounds in Titan, the neighborhood in which I lived in during the first year of my research, had been fenced. All animals were excluded from the park—street dogs, which were now unable to enter the space, and pets, which were forbidden, as was explicitly stated on a sign outside the playground. The word “pet” was used as the only legible category of urban animals. Doghouses in yards in the socialist block apartments had also vanished, leaving only marks on the ground.



Figure 24: Fenced playground in the summer of 2015.

Through advertisements posted in metro stations, malls, and buildings, people, especially the aspiring middle class, were constantly reminded of their dream for a civilized, consumerist city. In one such advertisement, a border collie was shown lying under an IKEA table as a family gathered around a happy meal. In another banner inside a shopping mall in the south end of the city, a girl in a fancy dress holding a pink flower in her mouth is shown next to a Labrador puppy, accompanied by the slogan, “Style is learned from a young age.” Finally, McDonalds preferred to advertise its ice cream by exhibiting a series of legible urban citizen fashionable types. In one of them, a young man enjoys a vanilla cone; the slogan reads, “Cycling competitions and my passion for photography make my days more beautiful!” During my 2015 visit to the city, besides seeing more bicycles and far fewer dogs, I observed parents teaching their children how to roller blade and enjoying their free time at leisure spaces such as parks.



Figure 25: McDonalds banner in Piața Romană, Downtown Bucharest

Many dog opponents claimed that street dogs were a shame for a supposedly European city. Grigore, one of the group's central figures, explained to me that euthanasia is civilized. He prompted me to compare Romania to Western European countries like France, where euthanasia has prevented a surplus of canines. In his discourse, euthanasia was a civilized solution, and Romania was the only country in which there was a discussion about euthanasia being immoral. Dog opponents saw Western states as civilized, since they knew how to solve their problems without endangering the population. In contrast, animal lovers were sending street dogs to Western European citizens through international dog adoption programs; such citizens, knowing how to live with and respect dogs, were seen as civilized. Grigore also showed me letters he and other dog opponents had sent to the European Commission, and he particularly noted that dogs in the United Kingdom are euthanized after seven days in a shelter; in France, dogs are euthanized

after eight days. He also talked to me about the history of dog-related Romanian legislation and of how animal lovers' associations had always objected to euthanasia and were actually the ones responsible for the death of Ionuț. Working in a software development company, Grigore also appeared to be fearful of and dissatisfied with not only dogs but also cars and speeding drivers. As we were crossing the street during our walk back to the metro station, he made sure to warn me about such urban threats.

After the enactment of the euthanasia law, IREC circulated a video on the organization's YouTube page. The narrative starts with a quote about Romania being a European Union country since 2007 and a picture of President Traian Băsescu next to a Romanian and a European flag celebrating the country's admission to the EU. While showing a picture of the Athenaeum, one of the city's biggest touristic attractions, the narrative continues with a description of Bucharest as a European capital. Next to the Athenaeum, a picture of the city's mayor, Sorin Opreșcu, also appears. "However," the video continues, "there are sixty-five thousand street dogs in Bucharest." With that statement, a picture of a very aggressive dog is shown. The video lists statistics, according to which sixteen thousand people were bitten in Bucharest, three thousand of whom were children. As the video continues, the narrative urges people to act and not tolerate the presence of dangerous street dogs in the streets, since "tomorrow, your own child could be in the position of Ionuț." It asks citizens to call the relevant authority—ASPA—right away, at 021-9844, a number that was often reported as not actually working.

Besides taking action for the cleaning of one's street, the video also calls for self policing, recalling socialist practices of information gathering and the role of the secret police. It specifically prompts people to report those who abandon dogs in public spaces and those who feed animals. The video then urges listeners to be responsible citizens, since now, people have

law on their side. “Act now!” the video continues, “and use all the legal means available to you in order to report violations of the law!” Indeed, one of the dog opponents’ requests during public debates at city hall was that the euthanasia law should not only be enacted but also named “the law of Ionuț.” The video also asks for proof of any law violations via photographs, videos, and witness accounts. Finally, IREC asks citizens if they want to live in a clean and civilized city and not in a wild jungle. If the answer is yes, it all depends on the citizens’ power to protect not only their residence but also their neighborhood schools, park playgrounds, workplaces, urban routes, and shopping centers. “We are here to remain, we are here to act!” the video concludes, and a picture of a fierce dog appears again, which is then replaced by a picture of many united hands calling for solidarity.⁴⁶

This kind of civil action was exhibited to me during one of my fieldwork days. After I met Adela, the group’s leader, in one of the public debates, she invited me to see the citizens’ problems with my own eyes. After talking about a possible interview with her, I realized that Adela, whose father was Greek, had grown up in my hometown in Greece, the small coastal city of Volos. We started talking in both Greek and Romanian, and sometimes we added English.

The day she invited me to go with her was a chilly November morning. I took the metro to Piața Victoriei, where she was waiting for me in a taxi. We went to Chiajna, one of Bucharest’s outskirt towns, located on the west side of Ilfov county. There, we met a friend of hers. She showed us that street dogs were present in her street, and also the house of the family that fed them. The three dogs sitting lazily on the sidewalk didn’t seem to care. Adela’s friend,

⁴⁶ Link to the video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pvYtfXrF32c>. For similar IREC videos take a look at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sX-rliCr2Qk>, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_MhSrmEciwc, and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LoIWj1tKtZw>.

who had a child around Ionuț's age, complained that now she felt intimidated by the presence of the dogs.

After visiting for a while in her friend's spacious, newly constructed villa, Adela prompted us all to go to the police and solve the problem once and for all. Adela's friend put on her jewelry, makeup, and a white coat, and came with us to the police station. After a relatively short meeting, during which the policemen told us that although they did want to capture the dogs, they had neither the knowledge or means to do it, we decided to go to the local city hall.

As an NGO representative, Adela asked to meet with the mayor. We ended up meeting with the vice mayor, who explained the problem to us. "The law has been voted in," he said, "but its applicability regulations have not been published. You understand that we don't really know who should be capturing those dogs, how they should be captured, or what to do with them if we do capture them. ASPA, the dog-catching authority, has jurisdiction only in the city of Bucharest. We have heard nothing about Ilfov County yet, and there is not only Chajna that has this problem. I understand how citizens feel, but there is nothing we can do yet."



Figure 26: The dogs of Chiajna.

On our way back to Bucharest, Adela told me that the problem of street dogs should have been solved already based on laws about sanitation and hygiene (*legea salubrității*), which, as discussed in Chapter Two, had been a basic method through which Bucharest had been regulated as an urban center since at least the inter-war period. She also spoke to me about how street dogs are dangerous, since this is what happens in “nature,” where creatures eat each other because they know no better. She concluded by talking to me about the fixation of animal lovers to save dogs, since she also wondered why animal lovers are not also in favor of saving other species such as rats, for example, a species she claimed was as clever as dogs.

Chapter Two: From Avoiding Air Pollution to Poisoning Urban Parasites: Street Dogs and State Policies, 1850s–1990s

One of the first stories I heard after arriving in Bucharest was about the killing of street dogs by socialist-era animal shelters and dogcatchers so the state could use the skins in the manufacture of products like gloves and shoes and the fat in the manufacture of soap. Such stories were sometimes followed by explanations about the unique properties of dog skins, according to which the lack of pores made the material resistant to wind and thus to the Romanian winter. I heard such stories many times.

One day, as I was walking in my neighborhood, I met an older neighbor who was walking his small *Teckel* (a hunting Dachshund). I asked him about street dogs during socialism, and he responded with a short poem about a dog named Bobby that was turned into gloves. He laughed as he recited the poem, telling me that the only thing he could remember was that dogcatchers would cruise the city in vehicles with a big cross on them that looked like the Swiss flag. He went on to tell me about residents who would hide dogs from dogcatchers, who were mostly Roma, and that the *ecarisaj*, the service responsible for capturing street dogs, was between the Mihai Bravu and Tineretului metro stations—still quite close to the center of the city. In addition to managing the canine population, the *ecarisaj* was at different times responsible for controlling pests like rodents, for picking up dead animals from the streets, and for gathering and processing animal products from slaughterhouses (*ecarisaj* is derived from the French word *équarrissage*, one of the meanings of which is: “To skin a dead animal, to remove its skin, bones, fats and anything that can be transformed”)

At first, I thought this story about using dog skins and the story I later heard about the increase of the street dog population in the 1980s following socialist-era demolitions were urban legends about socialist-era cruelty. But during the second half of my research, as I was delving into the city hall archives, I discovered that dog skins had indeed been used for various reasons by the state since the 1850s. In addition to the skins, canine fat and sometimes even dog meat appeared in the archival record as animal products that could be used as raw materials in the shoe industry, agriculture, and pheasant and trout farms. Although such uses changed over the years, the view of street dogs as undesirable remained constant. In contrast to hunting dogs or police dogs, street dogs were objectified as being useless to the economy and the state.

This chapter is about how materials derived from dogs were connected to state ideologies about urban governance or economic and urban development since the 1850s. Echoing scholarship that analyzes how the social paths or the “biographies” of material objects can shed light on human sociality (Appadurai 1986; Kopytoff 1986; Miller 2005; 2010) or patterns of consumption, this chapter follows the historical path of the canine species in order to shed light on the ways in which dogs have been objectified (Keane 2006; Tilley 2006) by becoming the source of various commodities at various times.

Although the archival record uncovers changing ideas about and uses of dogs at different times, the parasitization of dogs remained the same. The logic behind state policies treated dogs as objects by virtue of their inability to become embedded in a system of reciprocity (Mauss 1990 [1925]). Street dogs were seen mostly as consuming resources without returning anything of value to their ecosystem except through their death. Dogs, as well those citizens who at different times were fond of them, were thus seen as not belonging to any mainstream value system (Munn 1986).

In discussing street dogs before socialism, this chapter explains how fighting the species was associated with the early development of Bucharest as an urban center. In discussing the period of state socialism, this chapter shows how street dogs were seen as enemies of socialist economic and urban development. Finally, in discussing the decades that were associated with the deterioration and eventual collapse of the socialist regime, this chapter traces how dogs, along with rodents, were explicitly parasitized in an attempt to maintain a civilized urban environment.

In the pages that follow, I discuss research gathered from four sources: city hall documents from the 1850s to the 1930s showing methods of killing dogs in the city; magazine articles from the late 1940s and the 1950s that show how dogs were considered “enemies of the socialist economy” during the Stalinist period, along with wolves, foxes, wild cats, and crows; city hall regulations from the 1960s to the 1990s in which street dogs were referred to as urban parasites and exterminated along rodents with strychnine in urban neighborhoods; and material from hobby-themed magazines from the 1960s and the 1970s that shows how and why pigeon-breeding was a legitimate hobby.

Such material shows the broader implications of practices like the legitimization of euthanasia that took place during the time of my research. While dog rescue did not become a marker of a “civilized” mentality among the middle class during the time of my ethnography, policies about street dogs in the urban environment have been similar since pre-socialist years. As Alaina Lemon notes about the Dogs of Moscow Metro, “Even as the Metro appears to infuse the dogs with new capacities, MetroDogs animate seemingly abandoned socialist projects in ways that undercut claims that ‘neoliberal’ forces have overrun post-socialist worlds” (Lemon 2015:662). In Bucharest, it appears that post-socialist ideas of urban propriety have similarly not

overrun notions of socialist urban order or pre-socialist ideas of civilization.

2.1: 1850s–1930s

Free-roaming dogs have been portrayed as a problem in Romania since the late 1800s. According to the newspaper *Evenimentul Zilei*,⁴⁷ in 1876, Mihai Eminescu, one of the most prominent poets and writers of the country, referred to the issue of street dogs of Iasi, one of the biggest cities in the northeastern part of the country. In a newspaper article, Mihai Eminescu called for the “eradication of superfluous dogs in the city” in response to the death of the deputy prefect of the region from the bite of a rabid dog. Before asking for the eradication of street dogs, Mihai Eminescu proposed that the rights that dogs had enjoyed in the city since ancient times should be reconsidered and revised on a philanthropic basis. As he put it: “Until when will the immunity of dogs in the city remain untouched? Either when dogs are isolated, when in groups of two, or in small packs, they enjoy a happy existence which is very unhappy, however, for their biped cohabitants.”

When I started visiting the city hall archives, I was first given dossiers from the Sanitation Department of city hall that dated back to the 1850s. As I started skimming the files, the word *câini* (dogs) caught my attention. I realized that what I was looking at were contracts between individual dogcatchers and city hall. As I kept exploring, I realized that I could find

⁴⁷ “Community dogs, a historical problem also invoked by Mihai Eminescu. Look what he wrote 135 years ago.” (“Câinii comunitari, o problema istorica invocata si de Mihai Eminescu. Iată ce a scris in urma cu 135 de ani,”) *Evenimentul Zilei*, article by Ionut Fantaziu, Tuesday, November 29, 2011, at <http://www.evz.ro/cainii-comunitari-o-problema-istorica-invocata-si-de-mihai-eminescu-iata-ce-a-scris-in-u-95.html>. Article first published: “What happens because of the failure to supervise dogs,” (“Ce se întâmpla din nesupravegherea câinilor”), by Mihai Eminescu, November 26, 1876 at the newspaper *Curierul de Iași*. Source firstly cited at *Dilema Veche*, in the summer of 2008 by Andrei Plesu, philosopher, essayist, and art critique, who also served as a Minister of Culture and Foreign Affairs in the past.

similar documents dated almost to the 1900s. Such documents separated dogs in the city into “lux dogs” and “yard dogs.” Yard dogs were also referred to as “ordinary” dogs that had been proven to be “harmful to society”⁴⁸ (*vătămători societății*). In 1862,⁴⁹ for example, yard dogs were killed with “poisonous pills” if found free and without a collar in the streets of the capital. Dogs were captured with a hook (referred to as *sârma*, which means ‘wire’), and their bodies were to be buried outside any residential areas to a depth of six palms to avoid the “infection of the air in large distance.” As mentioned elsewhere, however, dogs during that time were a danger to public health not only because of rabies but also because of the contamination of water by animal substances that could transmit cholera.⁵⁰ It was also mentioned that animals became a danger in the streets at night, a time when their numbers were elevated and when dogs either bit or tore the clothes of citizens.

Dogcatchers were responsible for picking up bodies of dogs or other animals that had been found dead in the streets. It is mentioned that dogcatchers should take the skin of such animals before burying them. In cases in which the animal had an owner who refused to deliver the skin together with the dog’s carcass, the dogcatcher was lawfully entitled to ask for a part of the skin. Dogs in high number in the city were seen as “bad for the public,” and there is also mention of the number of dogs killed every month. During the first half of February 1862, for example 343 dogs were killed; during the second half of February, 425 dogs were killed. The dogcatcher, who many times was referred to as a “contractor,” transported the carcasses of small animals such as “cats, dogs, and geese” with a cart. Being unable to find a contractor in 1861

⁴⁸ Municipality of Bucharest, Sanitary, Dossier 4/1864 (Primăria Municipiului București, Sanitar, Dosar 4/1864)

⁴⁹ Municipality of Bucharest, Sanitary, Dossier 22/1862 (Primăria Municipiului București, Sanitar, Dosar 22/1862)

⁵⁰ Municipality of Bucharest, General, Dossier 124/1859-1861 (Primăria Municipiului București, Sanitar, Dosar 124/1859-1861)

was a problem for city hall, which underlined the “necessity to continue the service in order to eliminate all the ills to which the citizens are exposed from the multiplication of harmful dogs. This necessity is felt even more during the winter, when animals multiply.”⁵¹

Domesticated dogs were required to wear a metallic or leather collar at all times, since the contracted dog catcher was obliged to catch and kill dogs found without a collar; hunting dogs, however, were excluded from these measures. Dogs would not be exterminated for forty-eight hours after their capture so that owners could reclaim their dogs if they wished to do so. Animal owners who had thrown a dead body into an open field (*maidan*) were subject to a fine of twelve *sfanți* (an older type of silver coin), which was imposed for causing harm to “public sanitation” (*salubritate publică*). Contractor was expected to kill and bury 400 dogs per month, and city hall would pay 500 *galbene* (an older type of golden coin) for the service. More than “400 heads per month” were subject to additional payment calculated “per head.”

Dogcatchers during that time were represented as figures similar to the dogcatchers working during the time of my research. They mediated between city hall and citizens and many times appeared to be hard to control by the state. A letter from a citizen to city hall in 1862, for example, described dogcatchers keeping dogs alive for a week, far longer than the forty-eight hours permitted by law. Another letter reports that dogcatchers abused their authority by capturing and killing a dog with a collar before the owner had time to reclaim it from the *ecarisaj*; the owner describes how she found out from Roma workers at the establishment that the dogs that had been captured the previous night were killed in the morning. One letter complained about dog carcasses lying in city streets, while another requested the eradication of

⁵¹ Municipality of Bucharest, Administrative, Dossier 54/1861 (Primăria Municipiului București, Administrativ, Dosar 54/1861)

dogs kept by a particular owner as they were off leash and barked and bit pedestrians.⁵² Another letter, cosigned by several suburban residents, noted the suffering caused by street dogs and dog carcasses.⁵³ Yet another complained about a dogcatcher's selling dog skins⁵⁴ from dogs with good fur to an Italian man and then leaving the dog carcasses unburied.

In April of 1878,⁵⁵ city hall was criticized for having cooperated with a bad contractor, Grigore Panaitescu, who didn't abide by the terms of his contract. As reported, Panaitescu had left a large number of animal carcasses in the streets, for which he had to pay a fine and accept a reduced fee for services as a condition of renewal of his contract. His behavior was noted as endangering public health in the city, since the carcasses polluted the air in open fields and next to slaughterhouses and possibly caused sickness or epidemics. Complaints about animal carcasses in the city were still being lodged a month later, in May of 1878,⁵⁶ a situation that was exacerbated by an outbreak of bovine rinderpest epizootic disease and the presence of Russian troops who were passing through during the Turko-Russian war of 1877–1878.

As the country moved toward the next century, public policies were concerned with the effectiveness of methods used in the extermination of street dogs. Modernization was concerned with introducing new technologies and practices that could potentially also increase profit. While

⁵² Municipality of Bucharest, Sanitary, Dossier 23/1862 (Primăria Municipiului București, Sanitar, Dosar 23/1862)

⁵³ "...suferă din cauza câinilor vagabonzi și altor cadavre..."

⁵⁴ Municipality of Bucharest, General, Dossier 124/1859-1861 (Primăria Municipiului București, General, Dosar 124/1859-1861) and Communal Gazette of the Municipality of Bucharest 1879, Year III, no. 6, Wednesday 15 (27) February 1898 (Monitorul Comunal al Primăriei București 1879, Anul III, nr. 6, Miercuri 15 (27) Februarie 1878)

⁵⁵ Communal Gazette of the Municipality of Bucharest 1878, Year III, no. 13, Thursday 6 (18) April 1878 (Monitorul Comunal al Primăriei București 1878, Anul III, nr. 13, Joi 6 (18) Aprilie 1878)

⁵⁶ Communal Gazette of the Municipality of Bucharest 1878, Year III, no. 21, Thursday 25 (6) May 1878 (Monitorul Comunal al Primăriei București 1878, Anul III, nr. 21, Joi 25 (6) Mai 1878)

studying a file dated 1899⁵⁷ from the city hall construction department, I discovered an architectural plan that described the design and construction of a facility in which street dogs could be killed by carbon dioxide asphyxiation. This plan, named *Instalațiune pentru Asfixiere Căinilor Vagabonzi* (Installation for the Asphyxiation of Street dogs), was accompanied by a short study that explained the details of the installation’s function.

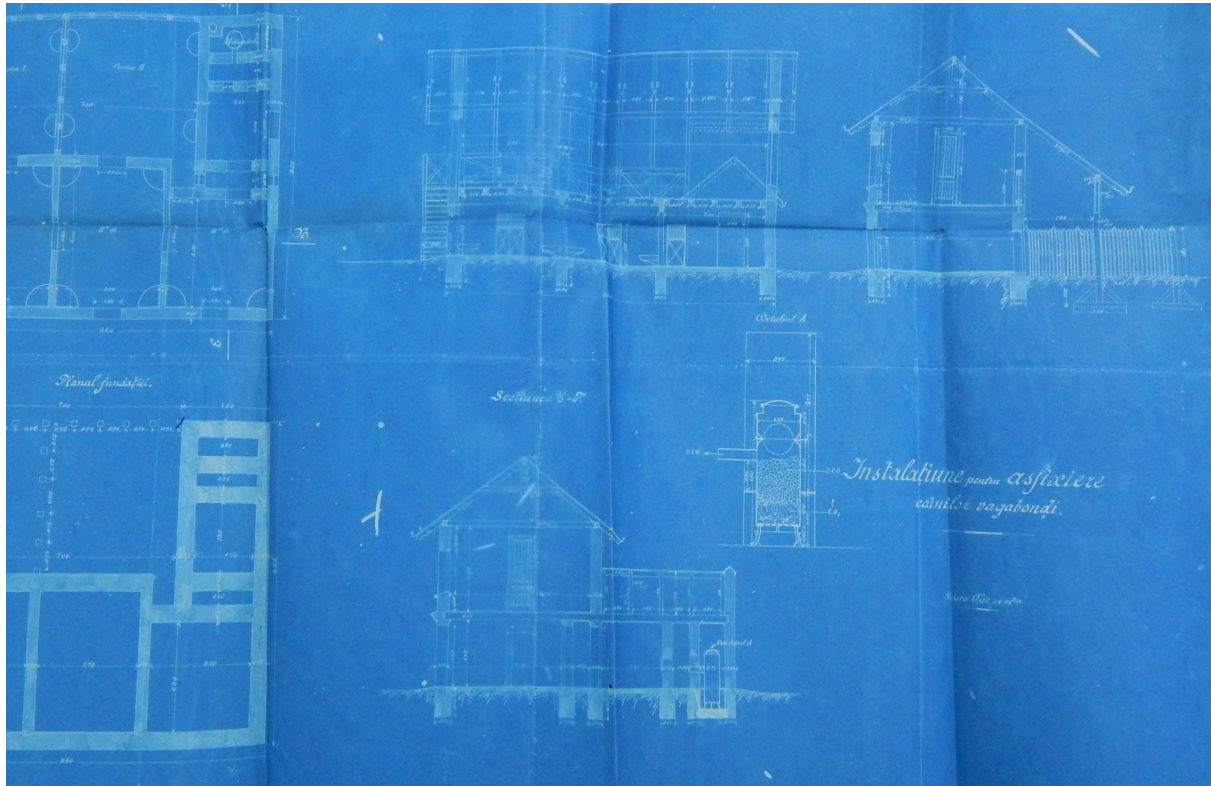


Figure 27: “Installation for the asphyxiation of street dogs” blueprint⁵⁸

⁵⁷ Municipality of Bucharest, Sanitary, Dossier 24/1899 (Primăria Municipiului București, Sanitar, Dosar 24/1899)

⁵⁸ Material provided by the National Municipal Archives of Bucharest (*Arhivele Naționale ale Municipiului București*)

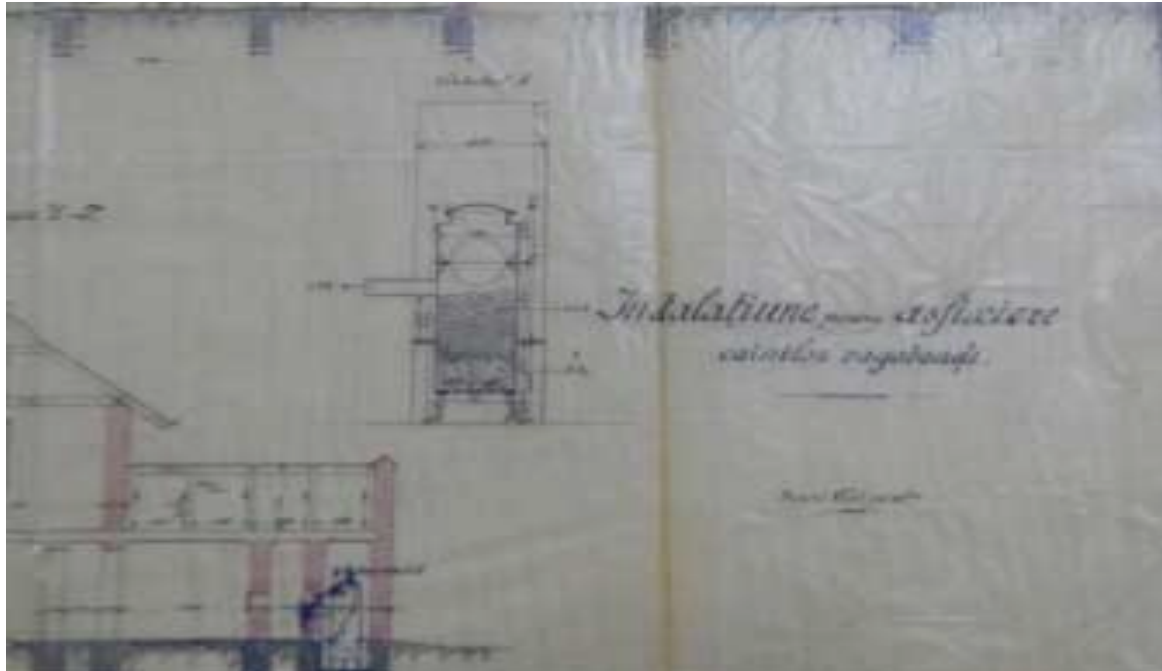


Figure 28: “Installation for the asphyxiation of street dogs” blueprint⁵⁹

The construction of the building was discussed by the Council of Hygiene and Public Sanitation (*Consiliu de Igienă și Salubritate Publică*) and the Enterprise for the Extermination of Dogs and Removal of Carcasses (*Antrepriză Extermineri Câinilor și Ridicarea Cadavrelor*). While providing details about the construction of the facility, the study noted that the installation would promote progress and hygienic conditions in the city. The building would have an “asphyxiation room” (*cameră de asfixiere*) in which dogs would be killed with poison gas, a practice that was described as “more practical and effective.” This poison gas would be either carbon monoxide (*oxid de carbon*), a substance associated with sulfur dioxide, or any other gas that provided the necessary toxicity. The gas would be produced in a separate room by burning coal, and windows would be installed to provide airflow and to exhaust the toxic gas.

⁵⁹ Material provided by the National Municipal Archives of Bucharest (*Arhivele Naționale ale Municipiului București*)

The advantages of the method would be the following: 1) increased efficiency (only four to five kilograms of coal, burned for fifteen minutes, would be sufficient for the asphyxiation of fifteen to eighteen dogs); 2) reduced suffering of the dogs themselves (the brutality of previous methods of extermination, which included fracturing of the dogs' limbs and heads as well as other wounds, could be completely avoided); 3) better hygiene (premises could be maintained in good hygienic conditions); and 4) dog skins would be preserved intact and could be used more vastly; 5) decreased net costs (by preserving the dog skins intact, thus maintaining their resale value, and saving both time and labor costs in the operation, the facility could cover its own expenses). The installation could accommodate twenty-five dogs at a time.

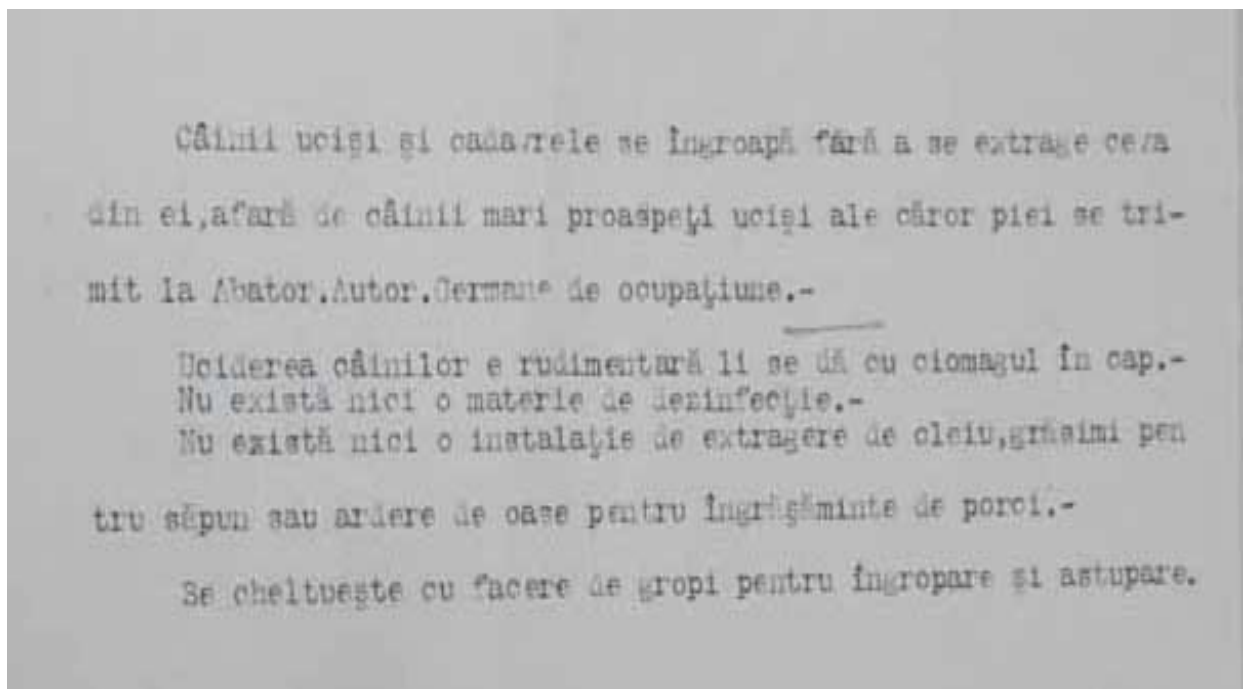
Documentation such as the abovementioned does not indicate if dog skins were used or to what purposes the skins would have been put. However, a document from 1917,⁶⁰ the time of the German occupation of Romania during the First World War, offered an indication for possible uses of other animal products. The document reports that between April 1, 1916, and May 18, 1917, 11,740 dogs were killed (by hitting them on the head with a big bat) and the larger skins delivered to the German authorities (the remains were buried). The document goes on to note that the German authorities believed that four vehicles for capturing dogs were insufficient, further stating that the carcasses of exterminated dogs, rather than being buried, were processed at a facility for the “extraction of oils and fats to be used for soap and the grinding of bones after burning them, to be used for the fattening of pigs”⁶¹ (dogs at the time were buried without processing unless they were “freshly killed large dogs, the skins of which should be sent to the

⁶⁰ Municipality of Bucharest, Sanitary, Dossier 4/1917 (Primăria Municipiului București, Sanitar, Dosar 4/1917)

⁶¹ “...extragerea cleiului, grăsimilor, pentru săpun si măcinarea după arderea oaselor pentru îngrășatul porcilor...”

slaughterhouse”⁶²). The construction of such an installation was actually recommended, as it would be possible for everything to “be extracted from them, so that nothing is lost.”⁶³ A similar facility seemed to exist already in the town of Pitesti, close to Bucharest, from which the authorities could take and use the plans.

Other information from that time included how city hall used two carts to transport captured dogs and one cart, with the inscription “salvation,” to transport sick animals that were found in the city. Large carcasses would be transported with carts that were called “ambulances,” while small carcasses would be transported by a small cart called “inspection.”



*Figure 29: Management of dogs in 1917: killing, extractions, and burial*⁶⁴

⁶² “...câini mari proaspeți ucisi de caror piei se trimit la Abator...”

⁶³ “... extragerea din ei a tot ce e posibil ca nimic nu se piardă...”

⁶⁴ Material provided by the National Municipal Archives of Bucharest (*Arhivele Naționale ale Municipiului București*)

As I continued digging into the archives, I realized that mention of street dogs and their management almost ceased after the end of World War One. The archivist explained to me that this was because the archival record from city hall departments such as the sanitation department was fragmentary up through the 1950s and unavailable thereafter. He explained that archives from the socialist period had not been delivered to the national archives and were most probably still somewhere in the city hall building; as it hadn't been categorized and indexed, this material was unavailable. In addition, because of the restoration of the former city hall building at the center of the city at the time of my research, the archivist did not know if the socialist-era archival material I wanted to study had remained at the old building downtown or had been temporarily transported to the new city hall building. While discussing alternatives, the archivist proposed trying to find relevant information for the socialist period in the Library of the Romanian Academy (*Biblioteca Academiei Române*), a main library downtown that kept archives of legislation and every publication in the country since the 1900s.

One of the first documents I studied in the Library of the Romanian Academy (*Biblioteca Academiei Române*) was a small booklet from 1929 with the title, "Did the dogcatchers catch your dog?"⁶⁵ It was published by the *ecarisaj* and written by one of the officials who worked there. The cover of the booklet featured a black and white illustration of a dogcatcher holding a hook and attempting to catch a dog wearing a collar that was running scared in the opposite direction. Also included in the scene were a second dogcatcher, a man who appeared to be a policeman or a higher-ranking public official, two children, and a woman at the doorstep of a

⁶⁵ "Did the dogcatchers catch your dog?" 1929, Leaflet written by B. Lampert, accountant of the dog-catching service of Bucharest ("Ți-a prins câinele hingerii?", 1929, By B. Lampert, Contabilul Serviciu de ecarisaj al Municipiului București)

house with a yard. In the background of the picture was a wooden wagon with bars in its windows; at the corner of the page was a note indicting what the booklet contained. According to the subtitle, the booklet covered the following topics: why dogs were being captured, what needed to be done to prevent their being captured, and what had to be done if the dogs were captured.



Figure 30: *Did the dogcatchers catch your dog?—Cover*⁶⁶

The publication pointed out that many citizens misunderstood the motives behind the capturing of dogs and that this misunderstanding often resulted in the obstruction of the work of dogcatchers. Citizens were described as hitting and insulting dogcatchers, since citizens “loved

⁶⁶ Material provided by the Library of the Romanian Academy (*Biblioteca Academiei Române*)

their dogs like children” and thus didn’t respect the law. “Common good” (*binele obștească*) is mentioned once again as being the motive behind capturing dogs, and citizens who opposed the capturing of dogs are contrasted with conscientious citizens (*cetățeni conștienți*) who “were aware of the danger that the scourge of rabies would pose.” The publication noted that dogs, no matter how tame, could never be completely trusted, since there were many reported cases of docile dogs attacking pedestrians—a view similar to those held by dog opponents at the time of my research. Although the text acknowledged the attachment (*atașament*) that formed between an owner and a faithful dog, it urged citizens to stop not to impede the dogcatchers’ work “by catching them by their neck,” and to let them do their jobs. As the author put it, “What is more comic, but also tragic, than watching a dogcatcher pulling a dog by its neck, and an owner pulling it by its tail in order to save it?” Guidelines included the ways in which such a mentality should change, and noted that dog owners should instead be cautious so that their dog would not be captured in the first place if found wandering in the streets, suggesting that gates at yards should remain securely closed and that the dogs be chained or wear a muzzle. Besides such measures to prevent escape, owners were encouraged to ensure that their animals were well fed and did not leave the household in search of food; as the text said, a dog would not “run from bread or a bat.”⁶⁷ Moreover, dog owners were advised not to allow their children to play with the family dog; children should instead be raised “without a passion for dogs” and should stop trying to liberate dogs from the *ecarisaj*. Finally, citizens who desired to free their dogs from the *ecarisaj* were directed to provide a detailed description of the dog, including such information as sex, breed, size, fur, color, ears, tail, and any other distinguishing marks. In cases in which a dog

⁶⁷ “...câinele nu fuge de colac și de ciomag!...”

had died at the premises of a household, its owner was obliged to deliver its skin as proof of its death.

In an attempt to fight corruption, the publication encouraged citizens against bribing dogcatchers to free their dogs before taking them to the *ecarisaj*. Bribery was described as “harming the whole society,” since money should be used instead to pay the taxes for owning a dog, which at the time came to thirty lei for a yard dog (*câine de curte*) and 200 lei for a luxury dog (*câine de lux*).

In the name of transparency and to dispel rumors about money laundering, the booklet provided a list of expenses and income. Skins and animal fat were included in this list as important sources of income. Dog fat especially was considered a good remedy for tuberculosis, although no more information was given about the details of such use. Responding to rumors of abuse, the booklet also explained that dogs were not skinned alive but were rather killed by asphyxiation. As explained, dogs were placed in a room with a hermetically sealed door into which carbon dioxide was introduced; the gas caused drowsiness followed by death. The remains would be processed in a machine that used a thermochemical process to render the fat and to produce a powdered animal byproduct that was used as agricultural fertilizer⁶⁸ (this animal powder was apparently a combination of the processed dog remains and similarly processed confiscated meats and organs from other animals).⁶⁹

The uses of animal byproducts that were documented in city hall files of the period included the results of auctions⁷⁰ held for the sale of animal fat, animal skins, or animal powder

⁶⁸ “...grăsime si pudră animală, acesta din urmă utilizabilă ca îngrășământ agricol...”

⁶⁹ “...rezultată din transformarea termochimică a cărnurilor si organelor confiscate cum si a cadavrelor animale in cursul anului 1930...”

⁷⁰ Municipality of Bucharest, Secretariat, Dossier 3/1932, session of 28 June 1932 that was continued on 1 and 5 July 1932 (Primăria Municipiului București, Secretariat, Dosar 3/1932, Ședință de la 28 iunie 1932 continuată la 1 si

that were harvested at the premises of the *ecarisaj*. The winner of the 1930 auction for the right to sell animal powder was the Cereal Trade Union of Brasov, a small town in Transylvania; in 1932, the winner of the auction was the Agronomy Market of Brasov.⁷¹ In 1932, the total amount of animal fat that was collected at the premises of the *ecarisaj* was 30,000 kilograms.⁷² According to a list⁷³ of prices from 1932, the skins sold at the *ecarisaj* were from horses, mules, yearlings, foals, donkeys, oxen, cows, calves, buffalo, pigs, goats, sheep, and lambs. Among the concerns expressed was that the warm summer weather could alter the qualities of skins and thus decrease their value.⁷⁴

In 1927, the *ecarisaj* acquired four additional carts and cages⁷⁵ to accommodate additional dogs, and noted a need for equipment that could carry larger animals, such as horses with broken legs. The *ecarisaj* also bought steam boilers, gas generators,⁷⁶ vehicles, and electric motors⁷⁷ at various times, as well as oats and straw for the horses that pulled the carts and fuel oil

5 Iulie 1932). Also, Municipality of Bucharest, Secretariat, Dossier 2/1932, Bucharest 8 March 1932, and 27 March 1930 (Primăria Municipiului București, Secretariat, 2/1932, București 8 Martie 1932, si 27 Martie 1930)

⁷¹ Municipality of Bucharest, Secretariat, Dossier 3/1932 (Primăria Municipiului București, Secretariat, Dosar 3/1932)

⁷² Municipality of Bucharest, Secretariat, Dossier 3/1932 (Primăria Municipiului București, Secretariat, Dosar 3/1932)

⁷³ Municipality of Bucharest, Secretariat, Dossier 2/1932, Bucharest 12 April 1932 (Primăria Municipiului București, Secretariat, Dosar 3/1932, București 12 Aprilie 1932)

⁷⁴ "...ca in deposit s'a strâns o cantitate remarcabilă de piei, cari deși sărate din cauza timpului călduros s'ar putea altera sic a pe de altă parte prețul pieilor provenite de la vițele tăiate in abator a suferit scăderi insemnate..."

⁷⁵ Municipality of Bucharest, Secretariat, Dossier 2/1927, Permanent Delegation of the Municipality, Session of 22 March 1927 (Primăria Municipiului București, Secretariat, Dosar 2/1927, Delegatiunea Permanentă a Municipiului-Ședință de la 22 Martie 1927)

⁷⁶ Municipality of Bucharest, Secretariat, Dossier 3/1932 (Primăria Municipiului București, Secretariat, Dosar 3/1932)

⁷⁷ Municipality of Bucharest, Secretariat, Dossier 2/1927 (Primăria Municipiului București, Secretariat, Dosar 2/1927)

for the heating boiler in the premises.⁷⁸ Such equipment was necessary to meet city hall's 1927 target of capturing one hundred dogs per day. As in the 1850s, however, hunting dogs in the 1920s enjoyed certain privileges. Their "destination and particular purpose was to serve hunters in their search for game," and thus, in 1932, city hall stopped considering them luxury dogs and taxed them in the same way that yard and watch dogs were taxed.

2.2: Street-Dog Management during State Socialism 1950s-1980s

During state socialism, street dogs entered two different periods of management and treatment. In the first period, which included the early post-war years of Stalinist socialism, street dogs were considered enemies of the economy and were seen as competing with humans for resources. In the second period, which included the years of Nicolae Ceaușescu's leadership, street dogs were not linked to the economy but rather to visions for the city. The 1960s and the 1970s were years in which Romania's economy flourished as a result of the urbanization and standardization project. The discourse about a civilized urban environment during the Ceaușescu years was similar to the one I encountered during the time of my research and to that of the interwar period. In all these periods, it was not that the country was considered uncivilized when compared to the West, but rather that those behaviors that impeded the development of the socialist lifestyle were seen as uncivilized.

Archivists working at the Library of the Romanian Academy (*Biblioteca Academiei Române*) told me that the eradication of street dogs was more important during the socialist

⁷⁸ Municipality of Bucharest, Secretariat, Dossier 2/1932 (Primăria Municipiului București, Secretariat, Dosar 2/1932)

period than it is today. They discouraged me from trying to find any official records about the *ecarisaj* from the socialist period since nobody knew what the regime was actually doing, and street dogs was a taboo subject. As they put it, “We didn’t even know if we were eating dogs, if the meat dispensed by the state was dog meat, or if the gloves and shoes we were wearing were made of dog skins.” They explained that the regime supported hunting dogs and sheepdogs, since these were associated with the protection of livestock and the production of food. As they said, the socialist regime supported the raising of animals at home for food since spending money or time for an animal that didn’t give anything back was considered a bourgeois Western habit.

Such views are in consistent with Katherine Verdery’s explanation of socialism as a form of socioeconomic organization. She notes that socialist regimes focused on production rather than on consumption, thus differentiating their policies from those of the capitalist West (1996). Similarly, Steven White (2001) notes that a socialist economy meant state ownership of every system of production and that personal profit was not considered a legitimate form of economic organization (also see Crampton 1994). Other authors who discuss other aspects of socialist organization underscore that such an economic system was also based on linking ideology to aesthetics, such as those represented by everyday fashion and décor (Fehérvári 2013; Gyorgy 1992). Indeed, canine lives during state socialism in Romania were linked both to the optimization of the socialist economy and to the creation of a socialist city that would prove the regime’s superiority.

During the first years of Stalinist socialism in the country under the leadership of Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, street dogs were directly linked to economic development. While in previous years dogs and animal products were considered profit centers for dogcatchers or city hall, in the late 1940s, street dogs were redefined in relation to the concerns of socialist economic and

national development. They were seen as predators that harmed the economy by killing species that were considered useful to humans, such as rabbits and ducks. Thus, hunters were encouraged to kill street dogs and deliver their skins to the state.⁷⁹ Street dogs were seen not only as impediments to production by virtue of their destruction of edible goods for humans but also as raw materials for the production of other products.

One of the magazines I studied in the the Library of the Romanian Academy (*Biblioteca Academiei Române*) was titled *Hunter and Angler Sportiv*. Its publication started around 1948, and its pages contained articles about hunting practices. The magazine targeted men, and articles included such topics as animal tracking through identification of scat. Also included was information about breeds of hunting dog, including pointers, setters, and hounds, as well as articles about the breeding of hunting dogs in the country.⁸⁰ Short announcements that often appeared at the end of the magazine prompted hunters to remember to shoot dogs that were wandering in the fields, along with wild cats, foxes, wolves, and crows. Wandering dogs were identified as *câini hoinări* (wandering dogs), *câini vagabonzi* (street dogs), or *câini braconieri* (poaching dogs.)⁸¹ Other announcements gave directions to hunters about where to deliver dog skins in each county, reminding them that in this way they actively supported the development of the socialist economy.

⁷⁹ *Hunter and Angler Sportiv*, No 5, May 1954 (*Vânătorul si Pescarul Sportiv*, nr. 5, Mai 1954)

⁸⁰ *Hunter and Angler Sportiv*, No 9, September 1954 (*Vânătorul si Pescarul Sportiv*, nr. 9, Septembrie 1954)

⁸¹ *Hunter*, No 7-8, Iulie-August 1952 (*Vânătorul*, nr. 7-8, July-August 1952)



Figure 31: “Hunter and Angler Sportiv,” 1955 Cover⁸²

⁸² Material provided by the Library of the Romanian Academy (*Biblioteca Academiei Române*)



Figure 32: “The Seventieth Birthday of Big Stalin,” an article in “Hunter and Angler Sportiv”⁸³

In 1950,⁸⁴ the journal described how “it is necessary for hunters to participate in the actions for the eradication of street dogs” by shooting at them or poisoning them. Such dogs were characterized as a wound that threatened both humans and animals, especially by damaging “useful game” (*vânatul util*) that was seen as a “common good”⁸⁵ (*bun obștesc*), an economic resource that needed to be protected and preserved. The journal asks, for example, whether it was proper for hunters to continue feeding one million dogs with rabbits.

⁸³ Material provided by the Library of the Romanian Academy (*Biblioteca Academiei Române*)

⁸⁴ Hunter’s Almanac, 1/1950 (*Almanacul vânătorului 1/1950*)

⁸⁵ Hunter and Angler Sportiv, No 7, Iulie 1954 (*Vânătorul și Pescarul Sportiv, nr. 7, Iulie 1954*)

In tracing the reasons for the dogs' wandering, the journal underlines that because it is hard for a working family to keep and feed more than one dog, any additional dogs would not have adequate food and would thus be prone to wandering and becoming dangerous by destroying game or cornfields⁸⁶ in their search for enough to eat. An article from 1953⁸⁷ explained that dog owners believed that their dogs were obedient and wouldn't leave the house of its master or the side of its livestock for anything in the world. These dogs were seen to consume the food of the population without offering anything useful in return. In addition, "the dog has a carnivorous organism, which when fed with polenta and raw corn only, feels the acute need of raw meat with blood, hair and feathers, and also of whole eggs with their shell, so that it can cover its needs of protein, vitamins, and calcium." Hunters were also encouraged to educate citizens who were fond of saving such harmful dogs and urged to talk to them about the danger of rabies and damage to agriculture and game, even if such citizens were violent towards hunters.

⁸⁶ Hunter's Almanac, 1/1950 (Almanacul vânătorului 1/1950)

⁸⁷ Hunter, No 6, Iunie 1953 (Vânătorul, nr. 6, Iunie 1953)



Figure 33: “Let’s exterminate wandering dogs,” an article in “Hunter and Angler Sportiv” magazine⁸⁸

Hunters already knew⁸⁹ they could have dog skins evaluated at the collecting facilities of the state enterprise D.A.C (*Delaborări, Antrepozite, Colectări* (“Removals, Warehouses, Collections”). Street dogs that were being shot in large numbers could serve the country’s leather and footwear industry,

“by constituting an appreciable raw material, both quantitative and qualitative. Delivering skins of street dogs to the collection centers and substations of D.A.C will help the general economy of the country, a contribution that should not be neglected, and also the economy of every hunter will be partially strengthened from the money they will get paid.”⁹⁰

⁸⁸ Material provided by the Library of the Romanian Academy (*Biblioteca Academiei Române*)

⁸⁹ Hunter, No 10, September 1949 (*Vânătorul*, nr. 10, Septembrie 1949)

⁹⁰ “...vor putea servi industriei noastre de pielărie și încălțăminte, constituind o materie primă apreciabilă, atât cantitativ, cât și calitativ. Prin predarea pieilor de câini vagabonzi la centrele și subcentrele de colectare ale D.A.C-ului, se va aduce economiei generale a țării, contribuție care nu trebuie neglijată, iar economia fiecărui vânător, în parte va fi și ea întărită, prin prețurile ce se vor plăti...”

Indeed, by 1959,⁹¹ state price lists for products such as shoes and sandals for girls and women included that they were made from “leather from the *ecarisaj*.” Such indications continued in the following years.⁹² In April of 1951, *Hunter and Angler Sportiv* published a list noting the points each hunter could gather in their battle against predators.⁹³ Wolves, for example were worth one hundred points, foxes thirty points, street dogs ten points, and wandering cats ten points. Similarly, ferrets were worth twenty points, weasels forty points, goshawks twenty points, crows five points, and magpies five points. Other issues honored hunters who gathered the most points from fighting predators. Moise Costantin from Vaslui, for example, gathered 3,333 points in six months by fighting predators.⁹⁴ Another hunter from Adjud was said to have killed a total of 1,450 of the 5,632 predators in his region: four of the fifteen wolves, fourteen of the seventy-five foxes, two badgers, sixteen of the forty polecats, fifteen of the 153 hawks, 189 of the 423 crows (167 of which were exterminated with the use of a phosphorous paste), 137 of the 252 magpies, 159 of the 1,598 wandering dogs, and thirty-three other species. The article concludes by stressing the role that determination plays in winning the battle against predators.

⁹¹ Official Bulletin R.P.R. (People's Republic of Romania), Year IX, no. 11, November 1959 (Buletinul Oficial al R.P.R. (Republicii Populare România), Anul IX nr. 11, Noiembrie 1959)

⁹² *Hunter*, No 1, January 1951 (Vânătorul, nr. 1, Ianuarie 1951)

⁹³ *Hunter*, No 4, April 1951 (Vânătorul, nr. 4, Aprilie 1951)

⁹⁴ *Hunter*, No 2, February 1953 (Vânătorul, nr. 2, Februarie 1953)

announcement concluded, “Hunters, you have now a bigger interest to deliver as many skins as you can, trying to excoriate them however in the best way possible, thus keeping the skins in the best condition. In this way you will a) contribute to the fulfillment of the state plan and b) you will make extra income, which will improve your standard of living.”⁹⁸ It was mentioned again that street dogs needed to be exterminated for the good of the country’s economy, which was threatened by dogs’ damage to agriculture through the destruction of enormous quantities of grain and by their being fed with useful game. Besides, as the journal reminded its readers, the delivery of dog skins to D.C.A served the footwear manufacturing industry.⁹⁹

In March of 1952,¹⁰⁰ in the region of Timișoara (a city in the western part of the country), a total of 309 hunters killed 39,184 crows and magpies; eleven wolves; 8,020 street dogs; 761 foxes; 84 martens, ferrets, and otters; 1,161 wandering wild cats; and 11 animals of other species. As a result of the initiative, during that month the D.C.A received 8,020 skins of street dogs and 1,161 skins from various other animals such as cats and badgers, as well as 15,513 rabbit furs, 761 fox furs, and 84 furs referred to as “precious.” Most importantly, similar announcements from the same year provide directions for the evaluation not only of dog skins but also of dog meat. According to the July-August issue published in of 1952,¹⁰¹ dog meat would first be evaluated at D.C.A. and then delivered to pheasant farms and to trout farms

⁹⁸ “...vânători aveți deci tot interesul sa predate un număr cât mai mare de piei, cautând sa le jupuiti in cele mai bune condițiuni. In felul astă a) veți contribui in îndeplinirea planului de stat, b) veți realizat un venit in plus, care va îmbunătăți nivelul de trăi...”

⁹⁹ Hunter, No 2, February 1953 (Vânătorul, nr. 2, Februarie 1953)

¹⁰⁰ Hunter, No 3, March 1952 (Vânătorul, nr. 3, Martie 1952)

¹⁰¹ Hunter, No 7-8, July-August 1952 (Vânătorul, nr. 7-8, Iulie-August 1952)

throughout the country. Hunters would receive one lei per kilogram¹⁰² of dog meat from such establishments.

At the same time as the battles against street dogs was being waged, some articles advised that it was better for the health of hunting dogs not to be kept on leash¹⁰³ and that certain hunting breeds, such as fox terriers,¹⁰⁴ could be used effectively in the fight against predators. To protect hunting dogs, articles also included information on substances that were toxic to them, such as arsenic, phosphorus, mercury, and strychnine. Strychnine was also described as one of the ways to fight against wolves,¹⁰⁵ along with shooting, setting traps,¹⁰⁶ or killing wolf cubs in their dens. Besides street dogs, sheepdogs¹⁰⁷ were also targeted in the magazine as “enemies of game,” along with wild cats and crows.¹⁰⁸ Sheepdogs in particular were not allowed to accompany their flocks without wearing a *jujeu*, a thirty-centimeter-long horizontal wooden stick that hung from their neck and prevented them from running.

The information provided by the hunting magazine is confirmed by official documentation, such as legislation and decrees of the time. Along with dogs being killed in the fields and the country as predators, urban dogs were still being killed by the *ecarisaj* as parasites.

¹⁰² “...Circularea face cunoscută ca pieile de câine pot fi valorificate prin D.C.A. iar carnea pot fi valorificate prin D.C.A. iar carnea poate fi predate fazeneriilor si pastravariilor M.G.S si A.G.V din regiunea respectiva. Pentru carnea de câine se va plăti un leu de fiecare kilogram, plată făcându-se de către organelle M.G.S. de la art. 43 iar de către fazaneriile si păstrăvăriile A.G.V de la capitolul prevăzut in buget ‘hrană vânătorului’ sau din sumele prevăzute pentru fazanerii si păstrăvării...”

¹⁰³ Hunter, No 5, May 1952 (Vânătorul, nr. 5, Mai 1952)

¹⁰⁴ Hunter, No 4, May 1952 (Vânătorul, nr. 4, Mai 1952)

¹⁰⁵ Hunter, No 9, September 1953 (Vânătorul, nr. 9, Septembrie 1953)

¹⁰⁶ Hunter and Angler Sportiv, No 4, April 1954 (Vânătorul si Pescarul Sportiv, nr. 4, Aprilie 1954)

¹⁰⁷ Hunter and Angler Sportiv, No 3, March 1954 (Vânătorul si Pescarul Sportiv, nr. 5, Martie 1954)

¹⁰⁸ Hunter and Angler Sportiv, No 5, May 1954 (Vânătorul si Pescarul Sportiv, nr. 5, Mai 1954)

In the 1950s,¹⁰⁹ however, the *ecarisaj* also started the disinfection and deparasitization of buildings (*deparazitări si deratizări imobilelor*) while also starting to capture stray cats.¹¹⁰ In 1952,¹¹¹ the enterprise was also fabricating and selling “poisonous granules” and insecticide. In 1953,¹¹² dogs were sold by the *ecarisaj* as “biological material” along with products like “individual doses for [extermination of rats]” or “toxic doses of [rat pesticides]” and “meat flour.” In 1957,¹¹³ the *ecarisaj* sold cans with poisoned horsemeat that would be used for the extermination of rats and mice in the capital.¹¹⁴

Dogs in the city during the 1950s were separated into two categories:¹¹⁵ dogs that were “necessary” and dogs that were “superfluous.” Every household could have one watchdog, while agricultural households could keep up to four watchdogs. Sheepdogs were limited to one dog per hundred sheep, with a maximum of five dogs per flock. Hunters were allowed to have as many dogs as they needed, while there was no limit on the number of dogs available to the secret

¹⁰⁹ Official Bulletin R.P.R. (People's Republic of Romania), Year II, no. 18 November 1950, Decision no. 43 of 19 October 1950 (Buletinul Oficial al R.P.R. (Republicii Populare România), Anul II nr. 18 Noiembrie 1950, Deciziunea Nr. 43, din 19 Octombrie 1950)

¹¹⁰ Official Bulletin R.P.R. (People's Republic of Romania), Year VIII, no. 9 July 1958 (Buletinul Oficial al R.P.R. (Republicii Populare România), Anul VIII nr. 9 Iulie 1958)

¹¹¹ Official Bulletin R.P.R. (People's Republic of Romania), Year III, no. 2, Decision no. 202 of February 13 1952 (Buletinul Oficial al R.P.R. (Republicii Populare România), Anul III nr. 2, Deciziunea nr. 202, din Februarie 13 1952)

¹¹² Official Bulletin R.P.R. (People's Republic of Romania), Year III, no. 9-10, September-October 1953, Decision No. 1677 of 6 August 1953 (Buletinul Oficial al R.P.R. (Republicii Populare România), Anul III nr. 9-10, Septembrie-Octombrie 1953, Deciziunea nr. 1677 din 6 August 1953)

¹¹³ Official Bulletin R.P.R. (People's Republic of Romania), Year VII, no. 11 September 1957, Decision no 2662 of 17 September 1957 (Buletinul Oficial al R.P.R. (Republicii Populare România), Anul VII nr. 11 Septembrie 1957, Deciziunea nr. 2662 din 17 Septembrie 1957)

¹¹⁴ Official Bulletin R.P.R. (People's Republic of Romania), Year VII, no. 12 November 1957 (Buletinul Oficial al R.P.R. (Republicii Populare România), Anul VII nr. 12 Noiembrie 1957)

¹¹⁵ Official Bulletin R.P.R. (People's Republic of Romania), Year VI, no. 12, October 1956, Decision no. 1980 of 3 September 1956 (Buletinul Oficial al R.P.R. (Republicii Populare România), Anul VI nr. 12 Octombrie 1956, Decizia nr. 1980 din 3 Septembrie 1956)

police or the militia. Science institutes, laboratories, and research facilities could also own an unlimited number of dogs, as could circuses, cinemas, and theaters. Having one dog above the allowed number was taxed 150 lei; a second dog was taxed an additional 300 lei. In public spaces, dogs could circulate only on a leash or while wearing a muzzle and always had to have a collar and a collar ID. Entering public eating spaces, cinemas, theaters, buses, trams, or other vehicles with dogs was strictly forbidden in all cases. The only exceptions to this rule were—once again—hunting dogs, which could enter with only a collar ID.

As discussed in Chapter One, the treatment of dogs as urban dirt fell under a series of repeated regulations concerning the cleanliness of the city and norms about urban life. During the second period of Romanian socialism, when Nicolae Ceaușescu came to power, views of street dogs as urban parasites were intensified.

In 1971, the *Ecarisaj* was renamed the *Protan*.¹¹⁶ *Protan*'s objective was to conduct “hygiene-sanitation activities consisting of the removal, transportation, and sterilization of any waste or byproducts of animal origin, operations for disinfection and pest and vermin control, and the capturing of street dogs.” Indeed, street dogs joined rats and mice as targets of extermination in regulations relating to deparasitization of buildings.¹¹⁷ While in previous decades such activities seemed to be distinct, in the 1960s and 1970s, street dogs were included as a separate paragraph in regulations about insects and rodents. It was particularly mentioned that the *ecarisaj* would apply strychnine in landfills and other spaces to facilitate street-dog

¹¹⁶ Official Gazette of the Socialist Republic of Romania, Year XVII, January-February 1971, Decision no. 1852 of 27 November 1970, concerning the changing of the name of the Enterprise “*Ecarisaj*” to “*Protan*.” (Buletinul Oficial al Republicii Socialiste România, Anul XVII, Ianuarie-Februarie 1971, Decizia nr. 1852 din 27 Noiembrie 1970, privind schimbarea denumirii întreprinderii ‘*Ecarisajul*’ în ‘*Protan*’).

¹¹⁷ Official Bulletin R.P.R. (People's Republic of Romania), Year XII, no. 3 March 1961 (Buletinul Oficial al R.P.R. (Republicii Populare România), Anul XII nr. 3 Martie 1961), and Official Gazette of the Socialist Republic of Romania, Year XIV, August 1965, nr. 8 (Buletinul Oficial al Republicii Socialiste România, Anul XIV, August 1965, no. 8).

eradication in areas that were inaccessible to *ecarisaj*¹¹⁸ vehicles. The authority was also obliged to capture cats as well as dogs; those who obstructed such actions would be fined 150 lei. The disinfection¹¹⁹ and pest control in the city occurred in houses, workshops, garages, shops, and other similar places. In the period between 1977 and 1978, such actions were noted as being necessary because of the density of buildings in the city, itself a result of the large number of newly constructed apartments.¹²⁰ In March of 1978,¹²¹ an area of fourteen million square meters needed to be cleaned, along with rivers and lakes. The state would fight infestations of insects and rodents that caused discomfort, and street dogs would be eradicated through capture or strychnine. Some years earlier,¹²² regulations addressed disinfection and pest control in the city, along with the extermination of street dogs thirty days before demolition of areas or buildings.

Regulations from 1960¹²³ listed the number of dogs each household or other establishment could have. Hospitals, schools, and preschools, unlike other socialist institutions, were not allowed to have dogs or cats. Keeping dogs in laboratories and scientific institutions for research

¹¹⁸ Official Bulletin R.P.R. (People's Republic of Romania), Year X, no. 10 October 1960, Decision No 4593 of 9 September 1960 (Buletinul Oficial al R.P.R. (Republicii Populare Româna), Anul X nr. 10 Octombrie 1960, Decizia nr. 4593 din 9 Septembrie 1960)

¹¹⁹ Official Gazette of the Socialist Republic of Romania, Year XVI, March-May 1971, People's Council of the Municipality of Bucharest, Decision No 22 of 14 May 1970 (Buletinul Oficial al Republicii Socialiste Româna, Anul XVI, Ianuarie-Februarie 1971, Consiliul Popular al Municipiului București, Decizia nr. 22 din 14 Mai 1970)

¹²⁰ Official Gazette of the Socialist Republic of Romania, Decision nr. 2114 of 29 Decembrie 1978 (Buletinul Oficial al Republicii Socialiste Româna, Decizia nr. 2114 din 29 Decembrie 1978)

¹²¹ Official Gazette of the Socialist Republic of Romania, Decision nr. 374 of 11 March 1978 (Buletinul Oficial al Republicii Socialiste Româna, Decizia nr. 374 din 11 Martie 1978). Also Official Gazette of the Socialist Republic of Romania, Decision nr. 26 of February 1979 (Buletinul Oficial al Republicii Socialiste Româna, Decizia nr. 27 din 26 februarie 1979)

¹²² Official Gazette of the Socialist Republic of Romania, Decision nr. 8 of 19 August 1975 (Buletinul Oficial al Republicii Socialiste Româna, Decizia nr. 8 din 19 August 1975).

¹²³ Official Bulletin R.P.R. (People's Republic of Romania), Year X, no. 10 October 1960, Decision No 4593 of 9 September 1960 (Buletinul Oficial al R.P.R. (Republicii Populare Româna), Anul X nr. 10 October 1960, Decizia 4593 din 9 Septembrie 1960)

and scientific methods, however, was allowed. Meanwhile, dog owners who did not wish to keep their dogs any longer were prohibited from freeing them in the streets. Instead, they were required to deliver them to the *ecarisaj* in exchange for a compensation of ten lei for every dog delivered. Dogs were allowed in public streets and common spaces between residential blocks only if they were leashed or wearing a muzzle; entry to public spaces such as traditional marketplaces (*piașas*), parks, and public gardens was forbidden to all dogs whether or not they were leashed or muzzled. Dogs were also forbidden from entering trams or other vehicles of public transportation.¹²⁴ Exceptions to this rule included police and hunting dogs, which were permitted to circulate without a muzzle—if accompanied—between 7 p.m. and 9 p.m.

Other regulations separated the city into zones based on the type of animals and livestock that were permitted¹²⁵ there. In 1969, livestock and birds were forbidden in central areas and in the surrounding residential blocks. Rules governing livestock and birds in the four ring zones around Bucharest were based on the distance of each zone from the city center and the species of animal to be kept. In zone II, for example, one was allowed to keep fifteen birds for consumption, while in zone III, one was permitted to keep thirty birds, two pigs, two cattle, two horses, and ten sheep. In zone IV, an unlimited number of such animals was permitted, though residents were asked to keep such animals at a distance from public streets, neighboring

¹²⁴ Official Gazette of the Socialist Republic of Romania, Year XV, May-October 1969, Executive Committee of the People's Council of the Municipality of Bucharest, Decision no. 397 of 20 June 1969 (Buletinul Oficial al Republicii Socialiste România, Anul XV, Mai-Octombrie 1969, Consiliul Popular al Municipiului București Comitetul Executiv, Decizia nr. 397 din 20 Iunie 1969)

¹²⁵ Official Gazette of the Socialist Republic of Romania, Executive Committee of the People's Council of the Municipality of Bucharest, Decision no. 650 of 29 August 1969 (Buletinul Oficial al Republicii Socialiste România, Consiliul Popular al Municipiului București Comitetul Executiv, Decizia nr. 650 din 29 August 1969)

apartments, and socialist state organizations or cooperatives, depending on the species and the type of the premise.

Such rules did not apply to dogs and cats. Every household could keep one dog or one cat in buildings with more than one apartment under the condition that the animal was kept only in the space assigned to the specific apartment. However, up to three such animals were allowed in individual, freestanding houses. Socialist organizations of the state, cooperatives, or other public organization were permitted up to four, under the condition that dogs were to be used for guarding the premises and cats to control rodents. Institutions such as the state circus, the zoo, the ministries of the armed forces and interior affairs, the council for the security of the state, and research and scientific institutes were among those that could keep an unlimited number of such animals. In all cases, the free circulation of cats and dogs in public spaces was strictly forbidden.

Citizens who did not comply with rules about keeping socialist apartments orderly were criticized by the state. The twenty-minute-long propaganda film *Our House Like a Flower* (Casă Noastră ca o Floare, 1963) presented cases of citizens who did not keep their apartments well maintained or who kept chickens or ducks on their balconies. These citizens were portrayed as “exceptions” to the socialist ethos, having respect for neither the regime nor society’s efforts at modernization. Included in the film were cases of citizens keeping animal species that were not even “edible.” Victoria Maniu, for example, a lady who lived in a house with a yard, kept four or five dogs. The situation was presented as being dangerous to the nearby school, where the future socialist citizens were educated. Both filmmakers and citizens portrayed Victoria Maniu as crazy. The following excerpt is the description of her case:

Finally, a peculiarity you have to see to believe. This is a school. The barking you hear comes from a house nearby with a few rooms occupied by a pack of dirty, wild dogs—all this close to the Elefterie Bridge, in the center of Bucharest. Dogs bark...children study...Here is what the principal told us: “So here is the kitchen, this is a

boarding school for girls! There is this smell coming from the house, especially when it is very hot, like now! And it is even worse right there, in the front. The president of our parents association has been fighting with this problem for some time, in order to get the dogs out of there.” The dogs’ owner, Victoria Maniu—here is what a neighbor says about her, whose frustration we can understand. “To some she says she is keeping the dogs out of mercy, to others for the experience, and to others she says she wants to write a book about animal language, and things like that, you know? And I told her, You’ve been saying this for years now that you’ve been writing this book, and the book never finishes.” We don’t mean to interfere with Mrs Maniu’s—let’s say—“creative workshop” unless her methods regarding medical studies and canine psychology are a danger to the public. “Everybody in the street calls her doctor. She’s no damn doctor! You know, the dogs are so hungry they kill and eat one another! They kill and eat cats. You cannot go in there without a gas mask!” Here we are also dealing with an inexplicable inertia of those responsible for the city’s sanitation, for the care of the close-by school, or the peace of the neighbors living close to this farm, patronized by this doctor or writer, or whatever she may call herself. All the cases you have heard here are, as I am sure you know from your own experience living, as we hope, among civilized neighbors, isolated cases. Even so, we, the community, cannot tolerate them.

Species that seemed to be tolerated in socialist apartments during the socialist period included exotic birds and fish as well as pigeons. While today pigeons are seen as either pests or as a friendly species, during socialism, pigeons were kept as an urban hobby. The magazine *Columbofilul* (“Pigeon Breeder”) included tips about pigeon breeding, advice for their care and feeding, articles about Romanian pigeon breeds,¹²⁶ and news from international pigeon contests, which Romanian pigeons would sometimes gloriously win. In the 1979 pigeon Olympics (*olimpiadă columbofilă*), for example, the Socialist Republic of Romania placed third in the competition that took place in Amsterdam, after the Socialist Republic of Czechoslovakia and the Socialist Republic of Germany. Other countries that took part in the competition were the Socialist Republic of Hungary, the Socialist Republic of Poland, the Netherlands, the United

¹²⁶ Pigeon Breeder, No 4, April 1981 (Columbofilul nr. 4, Aprilie 1981)

States, Luxemburg, Austria, Portugal, Japan, Spain, Cuba, and the Republic of the Socialist Federation of Yugoslavia.¹²⁷

Since the 1950s,¹²⁸ pigeons were considered a benign species, and hunters were asked to be careful and to protect them as a “duty of honor and human superiority.” An association of pigeon breeders named “Columba” has existed since 1953,¹²⁹ and according to the source, pigeon breeders received support from the state in the form of food for the pigeons in sufficient quantities and at official prices.

This symbolism of pigeons as representatives of peace and higher values was also seen in later decades. One of the main purposes of pigeon breeding in the late 1970s, for example, was the humanization of the urban environment. A pigeon breeder who had traveled and lived in Russia noticed how the love for animals and birds must be cultivated in neighborhoods that were made of concrete. He wrote that citizens used to bring into apartments “a cat, a bird, often a dog that was used to guard the courtyard,” and that in both Romania and Moscow, pigeon houses could be seen between socialist blocks or in balconies.¹³⁰

By 1980,¹³¹ however, articles were published about pigeons being affected by the urban pollution and the rapid industrialization in Bucharest. In such discourse, doves were seen as a symbol that should appear everywhere with the soviet man, who was highly sensitive to loving beauty and thus to such a bird of peace and calm. In later issues, pigeon breeding was described

¹²⁷ Pigeon Breeder, No 1, January 1979 (Columbofilul nr. 1, January 1979)

¹²⁸ Hunter's Almanac 1/1950 (Almanacul Vânătorului 1/1950)

¹²⁹ Hunter, No 7, July 1953 (Vânătorul, nr. 7, Iulie 1953)

¹³⁰ Pigeon Breeder, No 4, April 1979 (Columbofilul nr. 4, Aprilie 1979)

¹³¹ Pigeon Breeder, No 5, May 1980 (Columbofilul nr. 5, Mai 1980)

as a passion and a dedication,¹³² and ethical¹³³ breeding was seen as a requirement and a necessity, a principle, a mode of thinking, a way of being and acting, and a citizen duty, since the activity required exemplary behavior in life, society, and the family, the respect of laws, and ardent patriotism.

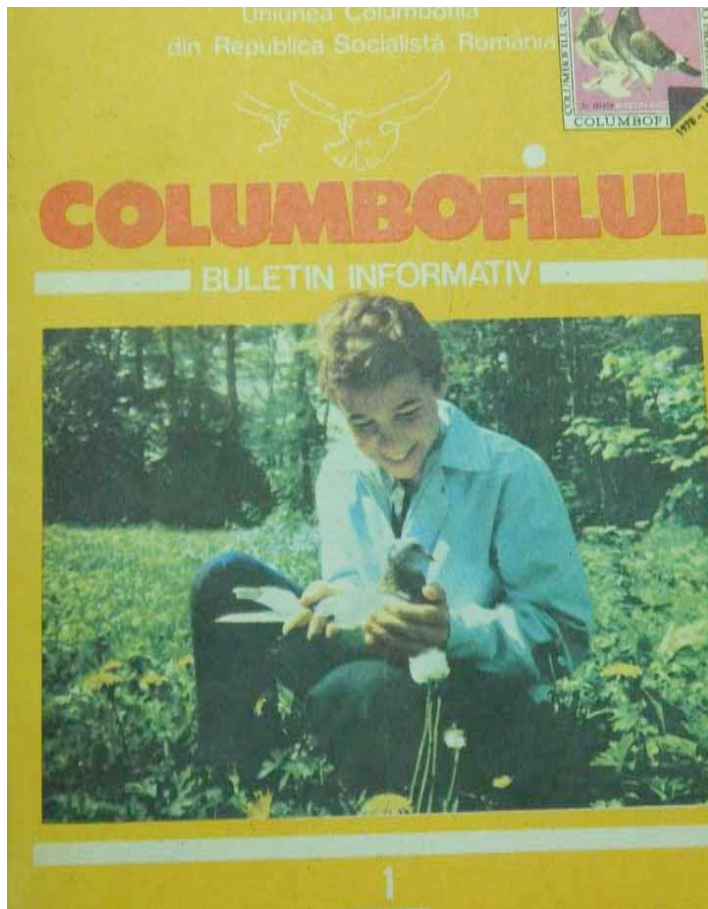


Figure 35: “Columbofilul” cover from 1978.¹³⁴

¹³² Pigeon Breeder, No 1, January 1984 (Columbofilul nr. 1, Ianuarie 1984)

¹³³ Pigeon Breeder, No 3, March 1981 (Columbofilul nr. 3, Martie 1981)

¹³⁴ Material provided by the Library of the Romanian Academy (*Biblioteca Academiei Române*)

During the 1970s, the association of pigeon breeders was part of the Ministry for Agriculture and Food Industry. At the end of a 1979 issue of *Columbofilul* were included pigeon recipes from a restaurant in Bucharest well known for its pigeon cooking. The recipes included pigeon stew, pigeons with white sauce, and pigeons in the pot.¹³⁵ The article described how Romanian cuisine was tasty, healthy, and economical, and how the recipes were transmitted through generations. The restaurant “Colombina” improved upon such traditional recipes to meet modern tastes. The restaurant served high-quality pigeon meat prepared daily in a variety of ways. The chef shared the secret of the success of her chic restaurant, since the recipes were highly nutritious and easily digested. In later issues, there were articles discussing whether breeding pigeons for meat could be profitable.¹³⁶

¹³⁵ “Tocăniță colombină, Ciulama de porumbel, Porumbei la ceaun”

¹³⁶ Pigeon Breeder, No 5, May 1979 (*Columbofilul* nr. 5, Mai 1979)



Figure 36: "Culinary tips" in *Columbofilul*¹³⁷

¹³⁷ Material provided by the Library of the Romanian Academy (*Biblioteca Academiei Române*)

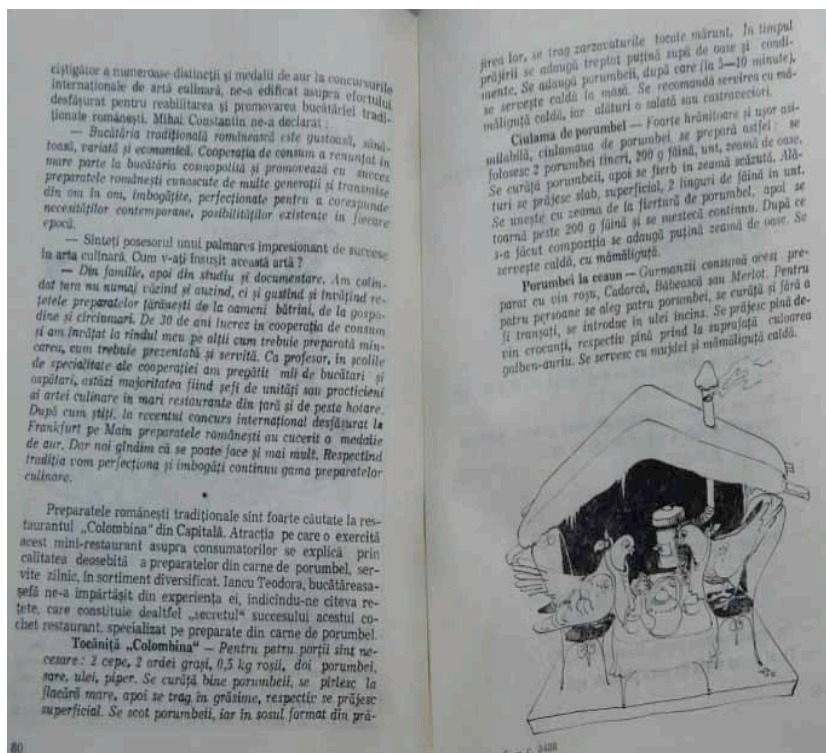


Figure 37: Pigeon recipes in *Columbofilul*¹³⁸

In the 1980s and 1990s, a period that encompassed the last socialist and first post-socialist decades, guidelines for the management of street dogs were similar to those of the previous years.¹³⁹ Regulations still described how the killing of dogs with strychnine in landfills, vacant lots, and streets was necessary in order to combat the proliferation of stray animals, and the city was still separated into different zones¹⁴⁰ based on the types and number of animals one

¹³⁸ Material provided by the Library of the Romanian Academy (*Biblioteca Academiei Române*)

¹³⁹ Official Gazette of the Socialist Republic of Romania, Year XXV, January-June 1980, Executive Committee of the People's Council of the Municipality of Bucharest, Decision no. 414 of 31 March 1980 (*Buletinul Oficial al Republicii Socialiste România, Anul XXV, Ianuarie-Iunie 1980, Consiliul Popular al Municipiului București Comitetul Executiv, Decizia nr. 414 din 31 Martie 1980*), and Decision No 291 of 20 March 1985 (*Decizia 291 din 20 Martie 1985*), Decision nr. 18 of 18 January 1986 (*Decizia nr. 18 din 18 Ianuarie 1986*), and Decision 183 of 17 February 1986 (*Decizia nr. 183 din 17 Februarie 1986*)

¹⁴⁰ Official Gazette of the Socialist Republic of Romania, Year XXVI, January-June 1981, Decision no. 114 of 20 January 1981 (*Buletinul Oficial al Republicii Socialiste România, Anul XXVI, Ianuarie-Iunie 1981, Decizia nr. 114 din 30 Ianuarie 1981*)

could keep. Regulations still also included guidelines about the cleaning of buildings that were about to be demolished¹⁴¹ and forbade the abandonment of dogs and cats when citizens moved from zones that were to be demolished, requiring instead that citizens deliver such animals to *Protan* and receive receipt of delivery.

In 1985,¹⁴² 20,000 animals were captured in the city (4,000 dogs and cats in the first trimester, 6,000 in the second, 6,000 in the third, and 4,000 in the fourth); and 10,000 were poisoned by strychnine (1,500 in the first trimester, 3,500 in the second, 3,500 in the third, and 1,500 in the fourth).

As in previous decades, dogs that had died from strychnine poisoning (*câini stricnizați*) were picked up and delivered to *Protan*. In 1982 the term “amusement dogs”¹⁴³ (*câini de agrement*) appears in the record. Such dogs were allowed in larger numbers in rural than in urban settings, while it was not clear whether the term described hunting or pet dogs.

Regulations addressing the aesthetic appearance of the city, the standard of urban living, and the control of animal populations during that decade, however, were brief. The insistence of the regime on such matters, which was evidenced in previous years by the long and very detailed regulations, appeared to have declined. Moreover, ideas about animal rights began to appear in the record. A journal from 1981 named “Our Dogs,”¹⁴⁴ for example, presented a publication from the newspaper *România Liberă* about animal rights. The article opposed atrocities while

¹⁴¹ Official Gazette of the Socialist Republic of Romania, Decision no. 612 of 1 April 1988 (Buletinul Oficial al Republicii Socialiste România, Decizia nr. 612 din 1 Aprilie 1988)

¹⁴² Official Gazette of the Socialist Republic of Romania, Decision no. 291 of 20 March 1985 (Buletinul Oficial al Republicii Socialiste România, Decizia nr. 291 din 20 Martie 1985)

¹⁴³ Official Gazette of the Socialist Republic of Romania, Decision no. 608 of 6 April 1982 (Buletinul Oficial al Republicii Socialiste România, Decizia nr. 608 din 6 Aprilie 1982)

¹⁴⁴ Our Dogs, article from *România Liberă* of March 18, 1981 (Câini Noștri 1981, Articol in *România Liberă* din 18 Martie 1981)

targeting people who remained indifferent to the suffering of dogs. The article also opposed unpunished violence against nature, which in the article encompassed both animals and plants. Such discourses, which are discussed in Chapter Five, became more common during the 1990s, as did the publication of journals about dog breeds. With the subsequent decline of the functionality of the dog-management service came discussions about the privatization of the *ecarisaj*.¹⁴⁵ Moreover, started appearing articles about how costly the keeping of animals was in public shelters, and lists of costs both on workdays and on holidays.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁵ Official Gazette of Romania, Year VIII, no. 3/1999, 1 July-30 September 1999 (Monitorul Oficial al României, Anul VIII, nr. 3/1999, 1 Iulie-30 Septembrie 1999)

¹⁴⁶ Official Gazette of Romania, Decizion no. 771 of 24 September 1991 (Monitorul Oficial al României, Decizia nr. 771, 24 Septembrie 1991), and Official Gazette of Romania, no. 4/1991, 1 October-31 December 1991 (Monitorul Oficial al României, nr. 4/1991, 1 Octombrie-31 Decembrie 1991)

Chapter Three: Compassion as Spatial Practice: Street Dogs, Private Shelters, International Adoption

This chapter is about the spatial dimension of compassion. It looks at practices of care for street dogs in order to understand the ways in which such animals have a role in everyday understandings of space among former working-class citizens. While those who belong to the former working class are not the only citizens who care for street dogs, they are the ones who have been associated with ideas of underdevelopment and with stereotypical views of backwardness, socialism, and non-genuine urban behaviors. Such associations originated from beliefs that their lifestyle was outdated or that they influenced the urban life of younger generations. Thus, this chapter focuses on such citizens in order to understand the particularities through which they experienced urban life, especially their understanding of urban space and housing, socialist history, and the role of the state. Moreover, this chapter analyzes how other people's behaviors towards dogs become a mode for the former working class to understand fellow citizens and their qualities and character.

Ethnographic material presented in this chapter comes from stories gathered while I was in Bucharest about the lives of particular dogs and the citizens who took care of them. Thus, this chapter traces both humans and canines in their shared experience of urban space. Practices of compassion are discussed in three different settings: a) the neighborhood and the ways in which practices of care for street dogs problematize socialist and post-socialist divisions of public and private spaces; b) private shelters and the ways in which such spaces, while not ideal for animals,

are seen as protecting dogs from the state and from other urban dangers; and c) national space and the ways in which international adoption and Western discourses of compassion challenge local ideas of loving and practices of caring for street dogs.

In addition to focusing on space, this chapter also poses questions about the ways in which practices of care and compassion allow citizens to appropriate urban space by extending their familial bonds. While both NGO representatives and the state prompted caregivers to demonstrate their commitment to the welfare of street dogs by taking them inside their apartments and fully adopting them, citizens appeared to be interested in showing their affection in other ways. While the discourse of dogs as family members has been articulated about pets since the 1990s, as discussed in Chapter Five, and is part of urban developmentalist and Europeanist discourses, caregivers at the street level appear to conceptualize public space as extensions of domestic bonds.¹⁴⁷ Thus, such citizens appear to have a different understanding from NGOs, the state, or the middle class about where family bonds belong. Moreover, practices and discourses of adoption that are articulated by a variety of actors contribute to the personification of dogs, even though such practices and discourses might derive from the reluctance of middle-class citizens to live alongside street dogs, which they consider to be parasitic.

While caregivers at the street level did not directly refer to street dogs as members of their family, they did care for them as such, providing them with shelter, medication, food, and even clothing in order to protect them. They moved them to private shelters, in which street dogs appeared depressed and sometimes got sick, in order to save them from dogcatchers or from poisoning, and by doing so, give them a better chance in life. Dogs were seen as incapable of

¹⁴⁷ For a discussion about the link between space and familial bonds see Harris (1982) and Davidoff, et al. (1999)

protecting themselves. As discussed in Chapter Four, which analyzes processes of both animal and human marginalization and views of humans as being responsible for their poverty and marginal condition, street dogs appeared as innocent beings that lacked the ability to deceive. They were also seen as lacking the ability to understand hidden dangers, such as the one posed by poisoned food, for example.

Finally, this chapter shows that practices of care in the street signified the liminal position of street dogs, which were seen to exist between private and public. However, the same practices of care also signified the liminal position of caregivers, who were members of the former working class and who found themselves caught between local practices of care and international discourses of animal rights. While practices of care for street dogs positioned such animals between strays and pets, the same practices positioned their caregivers between private property and housing nationalization and between socialist ideas of modernization and post-socialist ideas of Europeanization and development. Such caregivers understood other inhabitants of the city through their behaviors towards street dogs. Thus, the spaces discussed here are also liminal. On the one hand, backyards or alleys were understood as being neither completely private nor completely public, while on the other hand, private shelters existed between public shelters and international adoption destination. Once dogs were placed with their adoptive families in Western Europe, they were considered to have reached a new status: a properly loved pet. Hence Romania was also seen as a liminal space by virtue of its having escaped its former socialist status but having not yet reached the ideal of a future European utopia.

Indeed, practices of care in the street seemed to relate to Pierre Bourdieu's discussion of the ways in which spatial arrangements in the "Kabyle House" (1979) are related to the articulation of gender roles, temporal significations, and bodily practices. Indeed, practices of

care for street dogs link views of historical time with considerations of the state and its relation to individual and class roles. As Setha Low (1995) puts it elsewhere, human practices not only construct the meaning of spaces but are also informed by urban materials and by the actor's age, ethnicity, sex, or other positions. In the case of Bucharest, caring for street dogs becomes a habitualized practice (Bourdieu 1977) that uncovers the permeability of the boundary between public and private spaces. Such practices connect humans with dogs, humans with other humans, and humans with specific urban spaces and paths in the city. Like Michel De Certeau's (1984) conception of walking and other urban practices as creating relations among spaces, caring for dogs connects neighborhoods to private shelters and national spaces to the international routes that dogs take in their trip to become "real" family members in Western Europe.

3.1 Neighborhood Life and Practices of Care

My apartment, located in the ninth floor of a socialist-era building built in the 1970s, accommodated my roommate, our landlady's cat, and me. My roommate used the living room as her personal space, and I took the bedroom. Our building was located on one of the smaller perpendicular roads on Theodor Pallady Boulevard that connected the center of the city with the eastern residential side of Bucharest. Most of the establishments and buildings in that neighborhood were constructed during the 1960s and the 1970s. Further down the main boulevard were a couple of socialist-era factories, including the Policolor wall-paint factory, the biggest among them, as well as a large shopping plaza located just beyond the residences and just before the highway exits that connect Bucharest with the east side of the country and the big coastal cities like Constanța. In that plaza, residents of Bucharest could find fitness- and sports-related products at the French-owned Decathlon, or groceries, electronics, and cheap clothing in

one of Romania's biggest supermarket stores, the German-owned Real (later bought by the French company Auchan).

On the other side of the same boulevard, just beyond the socialist-era residences and behind a couple of newer residences that were under construction, was the oldest public dog shelter in the city, still referred to as *ecarisaj*, or simply as Pallady, named by animal lovers and NGOs after the main boulevard that led to the shelter.

In this setting, a number of citizens, mostly pensioners, interacted with and took care of dogs. Among them, street dogs were characterized as *câini comunitari* (community dogs), *câini fără stăpân* (dogs without a master), *câini maidanezi* (dogs of the fields), *câini străzii* (street dogs), and *câini vagabonzi* (vagabond dogs). Street dogs were understood as either individuals or members of a pack and were differentiated, especially in neighborhood disputes about whether or not they were dangerous, as being either *răi* (bad) or *blânzi* (soft, sweet, tamed, docile).

Street dogs occupied much of my neighbors' time and affection, and it seemed as if every residential building had at least one resident who would take care of one or more of them. Just in my corner of the street were Negrilă (Blackie), who had lost a leg in a car accident; Lăbuș (Little Paw), who had an insistent infection in one of his paws and walked around wearing a human sock; Negruța, who died of multiple tumors, and the pain which she suffered was dreadful for residents to observe. As a neighbor told me, the residents of the block outside which she resided tried to gather money and take her to the vet, but they didn't make it before Negruța passed away. There was also Negruțu (Blackie), Panda, Albisoară (White Girl), Vulpoiu (Little Fox), and another Negruța (Black Girl). In a radius of not more than 100 meters were six to seven other dogs that would usually stay outside the nearby Mega Image supermarket; three dogs that were care for by Mrs. Natalia; two dogs that followed Mr. Mircea on his daily walks; (Fe) Tița

(Little Girl), that had been adopted by a neighbor and friend some years ago; two dogs that hung out in Mrs. Zina's backyard, and several others.

This list includes only those dogs in my residential square and on my side of the boulevard whose lives I followed. Yet it was common to see dogs on the other side of Theodor Pallady as well. Although these were dogs I did not follow, I did sometimes talk with older women whom I saw feeding them from supermarket bags full of dog food or bones. In this setting, the ways in which these citizens cared for the dogs proved innovative and surprising. In many cases, to care and to have *milă* (having mercy) meant to appropriate the urban environment and make it animal friendly.

One of the first things one notices upon visiting Bucharest is that the city streets and sidewalks are littered with empty plastic containers, remnants of bones, and piles of cheap, dry dog food (*boabe*). During my stay, I realized that what I had thought was a generalized practice among residents of socialist blocks was in fact very person specific. The ways in which particular people left food for particular dogs in particular spaces was a way to map connections, compassion, attachments, and everyday habits. It was quite common for people to feed specific dogs with which they felt most connected. Mrs. Emilia, for example, to whom I will refer more extensively toward the end of this chapter, was mainly fond of Negruțu and Panda, although she would sometimes feed the dogs outside the nearby Mega Image supermarket. One night, as I was walking Beju in one of the alleys behind the residential blocks, I met a lady and her young daughter who were feeding a hairy, white street dog, as they were walking their own Pekingese. Two days later, I observed them chase away another street dog that came to eat some of the food they had left in the sidewalk for the dog they sponsored. They said that they would like to take their favored dog inside, but they were lacking space, since three people and one dog already

lived in their one-bedroom apartment.

One spring morning in 2013, as I walked Beju in one of the small alleys between the blocks on our streets behind the residential blocks, I met Mr. Vasile, a man in his sixties, who was being followed by two dogs without leashes or collars. Mr. Vasile sat on a bench and we started talking. He explained that Negrilă, one of the dogs accompanying him, had lost his back right leg due to a car accident. The wound became badly infected, and Mr. Vasile had to take him to the vet for an amputation. The scar was visible on Negrilă's hip, and Mr. Vasile explained that the dog seemed to be doing really well after the amputation and that thankfully, the dog didn't become depressed, which would have meant that Mr. Vasile would have had to put him down.

Immediately after explaining the story of Negrilă, Mr. Vasile talked to me about the best way to feed my own dog. Nutrition, he said, had helped Negrilă recover quickly. He then showed me what the dogs enjoyed. Mr. Vasile had a fabric shopping bag with him from which he took a plastic supermarket bag. The dogs next to us started salivating. Unwrapping the plastic bag, Mr. Vasile removed three pork shanks that were wrapped in a cloth. He gave one to each dog and offered one to my own dog, Beju. Both Beju and I happily accepted the offer. As he wiped his hands with the pieces of cloth wrapping the shanks, Mr. Vasile explained that dogs like shanks that are boiled. Mr. Vasile would come often to that field to feed Negrilă and the other dog, far from the street dogs living outside Mega Image. He also talked to me about his family and how his sons had moved and were now living in Germany.

Mrs. Emilia was also a bone buyer. She used to buy ribs from the nearby *macelarie* (meat store) and feed them to the dogs raw. After Negruțu and Panda took the best share, the rest was given to dogs around the neighborhood. The second time I spoke with her, she was carrying a

bag full of bones. She said she had just bought goodies for the dogs and, knowing that I was involved with the university, asked me if there was anything I could do for them.

A month later, after Negruțu had been transported to a private shelter, I saw Mrs. Emilia again as she and I were both exiting the Piața Sudului metro station at the south end of the city. We were getting ready to cross the street to catch the minibus to the private shelter, located in one of the outskirt communities of Bucharest, when I saw Mr. Nicu. Skinny, in his fifties and wearing glasses, he held a Mega Image plastic tote from which he removed a handful of bones that he threw to the dogs that had gathered around him like a flock of pigeons.

Six months later, Mrs. Maria, who had adopted Tița, told her husband to run upstairs and bring me bones for Beju after I gave her some olive oil I had brought from Greece. “It is not a big deal,” she said. “We buy them all the time from the *macelarie* [meat store]. They give them to me for 1 leu per kilogram [about twenty-five cents]. Then we just put them in the freezer so that they last for a while. I cook them for Tița with rice and grated vegetables. Do the same for *Beju*, but be careful to grate the carrots and the zucchini so that they’ll melt while boiling them. They won’t eat them otherwise! And you know, they need them for vitamins, but also because rice and bones alone get them constipated. Another thing you can do is to boil the back of a chicken. It doesn’t have small bones to harm them, and you don’t really waste any meat. And they like the taste.”



Figure 38: Dog with a pork shank outside a neighborhood store.

Feeding street dogs, however, was not the only way in which the appropriation of urban space occurred. Besides artifacts like plastic containers, lids, bottles, bones, and cheap *boabe* (dry food), one could also see a collection of handmade doghouses throughout Bucharest's neighborhoods. The easiest way one could provide shelter for a dog during the harsh Romanian winters was with a carton box. I took numerous pictures of these carton boxes in my own neighborhood and in the neighborhoods in which I met informants and followed NGO actions during my fieldwork. It was common for the whole box to be used for the dog to sit in, but if the box were too small, or it would be broken down and laid flat for the dog to have a warmer and drier place to sit. These boxes would be located outside stores and blocks, usually underneath trees or sheds for extra protection.

Besides carton boxes, the second most common form of dog shelters were flat pieces of

wood for dogs to sit on or wooden doghouses. These were usually located in the yards, or “gardens” as they were usually called in Romanian (*grădinile*), outside the residential apartment buildings. In most of the cases, these spaces were once taken care of by the socialist state. The status of such spaces during the time of my research, however, was unclear. Usually, the association of owners in the building would take care of them, but many people among the residents acted as though it were their own yard. They would either take care of the flowers in the spring, plant vegetables, or use the space for doghouses and other constructions for animals, which in many cases caused disputes between them and their neighbors. Indeed, such spaces were mostly associated with street animals, both dogs and cats. Sometimes, even residents who were not involved with taking care of specific dogs would throw their leftover food out their kitchen windows, assuming that street dogs and cats that roamed in the garden would happily welcome their gift. Other residents saw such practices as responsible for the production of “dirt.”



Figure 39: Typical doghouse construction in Bucharest.

While the residents of some blocks could gather money in order to renovate common spaces like stairways, elevators, or the *gradină*, others could not afford it or could not come to an agreement about what should be done. Usually, the indicator of such differences in the management of residential blocks was whether it was newly painted, which meant that money had also been spent for its insulation against cold in the winter and heat in the summer. Other indicators about the status of the residents of specific apartments were the existence of *termopane*—panel windows that would also provide insulation against cold, heat, and noise, and of course, the existence of air conditioners. My landlady explained such qualities of urban life in apartments when I first moved to Bucharest. On our way to my new apartment, she explained that the apartment had new windows and an air conditioner and that the residents had insulated

the building a couple of years before.

Like the liminal status of block yards, the status of dogs that resided there was also unclear. When I first arrived in Bucharest, I started my queries by pointing at different street dogs in the neighborhood and asking people, “To whom does this dog belong?” People would usually look at me oddly and awkwardly respond, “*Stă la noi, la scară*” (“It stays with us, at our stairway”), referring to their particular entrance in the socialist block as opposed to one of the two or three other entrances, elevators, and stairways that these buildings usually had. For example, I was living in *scară A*, which literally translates as “stairway A,” and my immediate neighbors used the same entrance, elevator, and staircase that I would, along with the residents in about fifty apartments in that section of the building.

I used to pay monthly utilities to an older lady who lived in *scară B*, however, and arrangements had to be made in advance about the time and the space in which I would give her money, since our building had no intercom. The status of “*stă la noi, la scară*,” when it came to street dogs, indicated once again the dogs’ liminal status. In a way, these dogs belonged to everyone yet to no one. During my two-year stay in Bucharest, I noticed only two dogs in my neighborhood that were chained in a yard by residents on the first floor. The owner or keeper of one of them would unchain it during the night, a practice that went back to socialist times, as discussed in Chapter Two.

The extent to which residents in my neighborhood and throughout Bucharest protected street dogs sometimes went beyond feeding or building doghouses. These people actively protected animals against dogcatchers, and took dogs to doctors when they were sick or injured. In a video that was shown on TV during the time of the euthanasia law vote, an older lady is shown sitting on a neighborhood bench. Next to her is a black community dog. Two dogcatchers

arrive carrying hooks to capture the dog. The old lady, unable to fight them off, yells to the frightened dog, “*Run, Negruța. Run!*” The dog doesn’t make it, and the lady breaks down in tears.

In my own neighborhood, I was told of many instances when the *hingheri* (dogcatchers) came. In one, they had to come with the police to pick up the dogs living outside Mega Image because the residents fought them in their first attempt. In another, one of the residents informed the rest by phone about the dogcatchers approach so the citizens could hide the dogs. Most citizens easily distinguished the dogcatcher vans, which had “ASPA” written on them.



Figure 40: A dog that was hit by a car was taken to the vet by a senior citizen. The dog has just had an operation on his back left leg and is waiting for a post-operation x-ray.

In some cases, citizens took precautions. Thinking about how dogcatchers might catch the dogs that they sponsored or how dogs might chase the cats they favored, they created the means for their escape. The most characteristic case was the one of Mrs. Zina. She lived behind me in the “four floor block,” as people usually referred to it. She reported that she had two small dogs already living inside with her and that she sponsored two larger dogs in the garden. In a discussion I had with neighbors about what would happen to them if dogcatchers appeared, one of the neighbors reported that these dogs “know how to hide.” At first, I didn’t understand. When I asked for elaboration, my neighbor said, “Well, they hide in the *boxă* [the basement storage space].” Then she showed me a secret passage in the wall. Indeed, when I looked closer, I saw a hole in the wall, covered with a cheap plastic tablecloth, under the outside cement stairs that led to Mrs. Zina’s kitchen.



Figure 41: Secret passage to the basement under the concrete staircase.



Figure 42: Close up of secret passage to the basement under the concrete staircase.

I never saw a *boxă*, but the space came up often in discussions about animals. I knew, for example, that a *boxă* space was assigned to our apartment, but I never got the keys to visit it. I used to pay the standard fee of twenty lei per month (five dollars) for the space, and I knew that other residents used their own *boxă* to store such things as bicycles and old furniture. But one of my neighbors, Mr. George, who was in his 70s and the owner of a very old dog that could barely walk, told me that he used his own *boxă* for his forty cats, which he took care of with his neighbor, a lawyer and the building administrator. Again, I wasn't sure what he meant, so one day I visited the garden of his block, one of the most beautiful and spacious gardens I saw while in Bucharest. He showed me the wall underneath his apartment windows. The ventilation caps had been removed, and a cat suddenly disappeared into the wall. As I looked around, I saw handmade ladders for cats to access apartments, and holes in the plastic covers of older windows

that were used for extra protection against heat and cold.



Figure 43: Passage to the basement.



Figure 44: Ladder to the kitchen.

A couple of months later, I visited a small farm in Popești-Leordeni with my friend, Mariana, an animal rescuer in her late thirties. She and some of her neighbors were visiting dogs they had taken to cages at the farm as temporary protection from dogcatchers. When I asked her about a large dog that had been especially excited to see her, she said: “Bruno? He’s been in private shelters about two years now. I don’t like him being here, but anywhere is better than the streets. Do you know how I found him? He was *piele și os* [“skin and bones”] and trembling. I kept him in our *boxă* for two months on an IV. He made it, but I don’t think we can find him an adopter. He’s too big!”

3.2 The Story of Lăbuș

Lăbuș was one of the first dogs I met in my neighborhood. The man who fixed zippers and

buttons outside the metro station was extremely fond of him, so Lăbuș used to sit right next to him for attention. Like most of the dogs, Lăbuș was named for a particular trait. His *labă* (paw) had had a persistent infection for at least two years. Mrs. Violeta, the lady who took care of him, was also limping. I met both of them one day on my way to the metro station. Mrs. Violeta was the best friend of Mrs. Cornelia, the lady who sold newspapers and journals at the neighborhood kiosk and who could usually give me information about everything in the neighborhood, both about dogs and people. I talked to Mrs. Violeta about Lăbuș while she was walking her own dog, Negruța, a particularly fearful and aged black teckel wearing a pink vest that had been hand knit for her by Mrs. Violeta.

“Him?” she said. “It’s a long story, dear. I took him to the doctor a year ago about an infection on one of his front toes. He got antibiotics but didn’t get any better. The wound gets full of pus all the time because it keeps getting re-infected in the street. Where are you from?” she finished, referring to my Greek accent. I explained who I was and why I had come to Bucharest. From that day on, she updated me regularly about Lăbuș and several other dogs.

Mrs. Cornelia joined us while Mrs. Violeta and I were introducing ourselves. She asked Mrs. Violeta about the condition of a dog that was being cared for by Mrs. Violeta’s niece, who was a veterinarian and, it turned out, was also pregnant (information like this about families, including my own family in Greece, would often come up during our discussions in the street.) Lăbuș, meanwhile, had left our side. He barked at some bicycles and then sat by a bench outside the metro station. When I asked about the sock Lăbuș was wearing, Mrs. Violeta explained that she had put it on him to protect his paw from microbes. She’d used to tie it up with a thread, but Lăbuș would take it off, and Mrs. Violeta would come to pick the socks up from the sidewalk—at least the ones she could still find.

One day, on a warm, spring day toward the end of my research as I exited the metro station after returning home from the archives, I met Mrs. Cornelia. Mrs. Cornelia looked worried. Mrs. Violeta's husband had passed away from heart failure, and being afraid to stay alone in her apartment at night, Mrs. Violeta would always leave in the late afternoon to spend the night with one of her nieces. Mrs. Cornelia had keys to her apartment and made sure to pick up Negruța for a walk early in the morning. However, that was not her only task. Mrs. Cornelia had also taken over the care of Lăbuș. Out of fear of his getting caught by dogcatchers after the euthanasia law had been in place for some months, Lăbuș had been entering and exiting Mrs. Violeta's apartment for protection.

At night, when the two ladies thought the dogcatcher patrols were over for the day, they would set Lăbuș free. That day, however, Lăbuș had not returned. Mrs. Cornelia told me that one of Mrs. Violeta's friends, who lived in the neighborhood near the Nicolae Grigorescu metro station, the station before ours, had seen Lăbuș wandering around. Her friend recognized him from his disability and his traits. Lăbuș looked like a small German shepherd.

Knowledge about a dog's home neighborhood seemed to be quite common in the city. Another of my neighbors told me a story, similar to the one about Lăbuș, about her loosing and trying to track Albisoara, the dog she took care of, while an online news portal published the story of a dog that had been captured by dogcatchers but relocated in the wrong neighborhood. As the residents of the new neighborhood told to the dogcatchers: "*Astă nu-i de aici*" ("This [dog] is not from here").¹⁴⁸

The resident who had recognized Lăbuș called Mrs. Violeta, who wasn't in her

¹⁴⁸ The adventures of the community dog Lăbuș with the dogcatchers: both castrated and forcibly relocated to a new "residence" (Aventurile comunitarului Lăbuș cu hingherii: și castrat, și cu "domiciliul" schimbat cu forța), available at: http://www.b365.ro/aventurile-comunitarului-labus-cu-hingherii-si-castrat-si-cu-domiciliul-schimbat-cu-fora_28447.html

neighborhood at the time. She then called Mrs. Cornelia to go search for him. When she didn't find him, she panicked. She phoned Mrs. Violeta, who went with one of her nieces who had a car to pick him up from the Nicolae Grigorescu metro station. The two women reportedly had trouble locating him and then getting him into the car, but they finally managed. Lăbuș came back to our neighborhood, and he didn't disappear again until after I left the field in the summer of 2014. When I visited Bucharest and my former neighborhood for follow-up research in the summer of 2015, Lăbuș was still spending half his day inside Mrs. Violeta's apartment and half his day in the street. Outside the metro station, I found one of his socks.

3.3 Private Shelters and International Adoption

My neighbors could reach the store plazas either by taking the metro for two stops to the end of the line and then walking the rest of the way or by using one of the regular mini buses that those stores sponsored so that their customers could carry groceries or other products back to their apartments. The dog shelter, however, was located between two metro stations, and citizens coming about dogs that had vanished from their neighborhood had to walk or pay for a taxi to get there. In some cases, neither option was feasible. Citizens and animal lovers who would come to the neighborhood from downtown or from the outskirts of the city were often too old to walk from the metro station to the shelter in the extreme winter cold or the summer heat, or too poor to pay for the taxi ride. Even when they were able to make it to the shelter, the dogs were often unwilling to walk on a leash, skittish about going down the stairs and into the noisy and crowded train, or too dirty for taxi drivers to allow them to enter their cabs. Usually, such citizens would arrive at the shelter with relatives or neighbors who had been kind enough to drive them there and then back to their apartment.

The shelter that was located close to where I lived was the most accessible. The two other public shelters were outside Bucharest in Ilfov County. The shelter that had opened most recently during my stay in Bucharest and that was supposed to solve the issue of overcrowded shelters, was literally hidden. When I visited it with my friend Mariana, who used to go to shelters to pick the dogs that were sick or old to find them a house in Finland or France, we drove around for almost twenty minutes before seeing a hidden sign on the side of a dirt road that said *adăpost* (shelter.) That particular shelter was close to a prison, and rumor had it that prisoners were working in it, serving in some kind of social-work service capacity.



Figure 45: Dogs in public-shelter cages.

Ilfov County was the site of private shelters as well. The ones I visited hosted between eighty and three hundred dogs. Funds would come from donations, both local and international,

and from fees paid for a dog's safe boarding. One such facility was owned by woman who had turned her badly maintained cottage into an animal shelter. I went there a couple of times to help her with cage cleaning, since it was hard for her to clean up after all the dogs on a daily basis. She reported that she also kept forty cats inside the house. By the end of my research, she had received enough donations to be able to rent a field in which to create a bigger and more well-maintained shelter and to hire some staff.

Dogs did not lead better lives in such shelters than in the public shelters. Because of lack of public funding that would have supported food and staff, the conditions in private shelters were similar to and sometimes worse than those in public establishments. However, many citizens chose private shelters as a last resort, since no alternatives existed. Thus, street dogs were once again an in-between space that became popular as a solution when deciding between life and death or between domestic care and roaming the streets.



Figure 46: Dog in a private shelter in the city of Galați. The local meat-store truck has just unloaded bones that will be then be boiled with pasta or rice to feed the two hundred dogs of the shelter.



Figure 47: Preparing food for dogs in a private shelter in the city of Galați. The tubs are filled with bones and pasta that have just been cooked in cauldrons at the establishment.

While public shelters were owned by the state and managed by ASPA, the leading authority at the city hall of Bucharest for the management of street animals, private shelters could belong to either animal lovers or to people who didn't care much about dogs. Since ASPA had no jurisdiction outside Bucharest, these shelters are essentially unregulated. The owner of one such shelter had hired a couple of men to work as both dogcatchers and cleaners, and together they would patrol the area, pick up dogs, and then hold them without any care. In that shelter, I saw dogs that had frozen to death overnight, dogs that suffered from open wounds with no medical care, and dogs that slowly died of disease or hunger. The owner of that shelter received money from villages and small towns in Ilfov County "to clean these communities from street dogs." The mission of this shelter was clearly not "rescue."



Figure 48: Sick dog at a private shelter, where dogs were left to die. After the end of my research, I heard that the dog had found a home in Germany after the intervention of local rescuers.

In many cases, private shelters would function as small businesses. While officials of city hall and animal rescuers accused each other of making money for themselves from donations, and while there was always distrust about how much of the money actually went to the welfare of the dogs, there were some shelters that were clearly functioning as family businesses. The most popular among them was in Popești-Leordeni, almost half an hour's drive outside Bucharest. It opened in the yard of a house and then moved to a rented field outside the village. The owner allowed organizations and rescuers to visit, to take pictures of the dogs, and to feed them biscuits and wet food. The owners of such business-like shelters would ask for money from animal lovers to help defray the cost of the dog's monthly lodging and food.

In some cases, dog rescuers would take pictures of dogs that would then be advertised on the Internet for international adoption. Although taking pictures or filming was not allowed in public shelters, rescuers took pictures at private shelters. Dogs usually had two pictures taken of them, one of the dog's face and one of its body right next to a human so that potential adopters could get a sense of its size. The photographers needed to be careful as they entered cages so as not to step on tails, paws, urine, or feces as they patiently waited for the right moment to take a good shot of each dog. Most of the dogs were curious enough to try and sniff at the humans who entered the cages. It was common for a rescuer or a worker at the shelter to keep a log of the dogs that had already been photographed to keep track of the dogs that still needed to have their pictures taken. The pictures would then be sorted by the rescuers and posted on Facebook to find adopters.

Spaying marathons were also included among the events that were organized in such spaces. Veterinarians hired by the private shelter owner or by the rescuers would come to a shelter to sterilize as many animals they could in a day. Once, while in the semi-private shelter in

Ilfov County where dogs were left to die, I observed almost seventy dogs spayed by three veterinarians. This was a period in which one of the rescuers I knew had decided to stop protesting against this infamous shelter and actually to try to help the dogs. She convinced the owners to invest more money in the shelter and to relieve the overcrowding, and she helped raise donations so the dogs could be properly sheltered and cared for. Through donations, she bought dry food for the animals, paid the vets who performed the spaying, bought rice to be mixed with dry food so that it could keep longer, and bought straw and wind shields to keep the dogs warm at night. The shelter owner built new cages with his own money so that fewer dogs would need to be housed in each cage.



Figure 49: Dogs at the semi-private shelter that have just been neutered during the neutering marathon. The dogs were marked as sterilized with ear tags and kept warm in blankets until they woke up.

In many cases, taking care of a dog by sheltering it and feeding it in one's neighborhood wasn't enough. After signing for the release of a dog from a public shelter, citizens who cared for dogs in the neighborhood would move them to private shelters to prevent possible capture by dogcatchers or because relevant legislation obliged them to keep the dog off the streets. Signing for the release of a dog meant that if the same animal were again found roaming the streets, it would be considered abandoned and the same person would lose the right to take it from the public shelter a second time. Since many residents didn't want or couldn't take such dogs inside apartments, their only solution after releasing a dog from the public shelter was to place it in a private establishment.

Many of the dogs at private shelters had been in cages for years. While visiting one of the private shelters with other female rescuers, I met an older lady. Wearing a thick blue coat, glasses, and a hat, she came to ask us to help her find adopters for her dogs. When I asked her for details, she explained that although she come by bus every weekend to visit them, she had not been able to find someone to adopt them, and the dogs had been in the same cage for almost two years now. She gave me the dogs' names and asked the rescuers if they could advertise them on the Internet together with the twenty dogs they were taking care of.

Other residents searched for a better fate for the dogs they sponsored inside Romania. On one occasion, Mariana and I shared car and gas with some of her neighbors. We went to a house whose owners were renting some of their yard space for hosting dogs. At first I thought we were all going to care for and feed Mariana's dog. However, once we arrived, I realized that each of the neighbors had one dog sheltered in that private yard. Mariana's older neighbors took two dogs out of the kennels and left for the country, where they had made arrangements for them to stay with some relatives. Those people carried the dogs in their arms, although they were quite

large. The dogs were put in the backseat of the car and left with the people, who became emotional while taking their favored dogs out of what they called a “temporary settlement.”



Figure 50: A dog rescuer with one of her neighbors carrying a former street dog from a private sheltering establishment to the car to be transported to the country.

Mariana, her two younger friends and neighbors, and I stayed for the rest of the day. They washed the cages, mixed wet and dry food, fed the dogs, and petted the dogs inside the kennels. Moşu (Oldie), one of the older dogs, cried heartbreakingly when they moved him to another cage. Mariana’s friend explained that he most probably suffered from arthritis that caused pain with movement and that they needed to save him from spending the last years of his life in the public shelter.

After the euthanasia law was enacted in 2014, I heard similar stories outside the public shelter. Citizens would come to rescue dogs that had disappeared during the night. A man in his late thirties, removed a male dog. I met him as he was waiting for one of the dogcatchers to bring the dog. After a while, a shelter employee in his fifties appeared carrying a dog whose mouth was bleeding. He was holding it from the sides of its neck, and he put it in the back seat of the young man's car. He explained that the dog had bitten him in his attempt to capture it and that in doing so, it had also bitten the hook with which he initially tried to catch it, causing the dog's gums to bleed

Dog adoption was promoted on the Internet and at events organized by NGOs and rescuers that were sponsored by dog-food companies. Attempts to find an adopter in both settings were characterized by an extensive description of the dog. Usually referring to external characteristics but also noting personality traits, such descriptions attempted to persuade potential adopters by evoking emotion. Either on Facebook folders or on actual albums, dogs were advertised through pictures and language.

One day, Mrs. Emilia told me that pictures alone were not enough to get a dog adopted. "You need to write something," she said, "and you need to write it like you are Negruțu! You need to start like this: 'I am Negruțu. I am loving and friendly, and I am searching for a permanent house.'"

Indeed, dog personification was the best approach to finding an adopter. My rescuer friends would usually group the pictures they had taken during the day and post them on Facebook the same night. In this way, they would raise donations for a specific shelter or persuade people to donate money for a particular expense (e.g., dog food for a month or payment for a medical bill for a particular dog that had been abused or found sick.) Sometimes, people

would sponsor a particular dog for a given period of time, and others would arrange to have the dog travel across borders in order to adopt it.

One day, I asked Mariana to advertise my research among those in the Facebook rescuing world. A couple of people got in touch with me, and we decided to talk about their experience adopting a Romanian dog. A young woman from the United Kingdom described that she had been wanting to adopt a dog from Romania for a while, since the country has been infamous as the “hell for dogs.” She couldn’t decide on one until one day, while looking at pictures on Facebook, she found her dog. “Don’t ask me how I knew,” she said. “I just felt a connection with this particular dog, and I decided to take it. It was frightened at the beginning, but now it has adjusted well.”

Most of my elderly friends in the field already knew how the system worked, although they didn’t know how to access the Internet. Mrs. Cornelia, for example, gave three dogs for international adoption through associations, dogs that she used to keep inside the booth where she spent most of her day selling newspapers. One of the puppies, which she called Pufuleț because of its resemblance to a fury ball, ended up in Germany, and Mrs. Cornelia was mailed pictures of it with its new family that she used to show to me every time I would go by her booth to say hello.



Figure 51: Pictures of one of the dogs Mrs. Cornelia gave for adoption in Germany.

In Romania, citizens would make sure to say a proper goodbye to their sponsored dogs. They would hug and sometimes cry for them. The dogs would then be transported in vans filled with kennel crates, usually driven by a woman rescuer or by a driver whom she had hired to help her with the long trip. All the animals needed to be screened for illness and internal parasites before they crossed borders; this was especially true of dogs sent to the United Kingdom. All tests had to be done days before; if a dog were found to be sick or if it hadn't had time for all the required tests, it would miss a particular shipment and had to wait in a shelter, which put it at risk of getting sick or dying. Such cases caused distress for rescuers, since they created issues about their credibility, especially if they had received payments for medical expenses or for transportation of a particular dog.



Figure 52: A van getting ready to depart for the United Kingdom. Some of the dogs have already been loaded.

Once, together with Mariana and two young female rescuers, I searched in the fields and throughout the town of Popești-Leordeni for a dog that had escaped the private shelter during the night. It had jumped over the fenced cage in which it had been kept and ran through the main gate that had been left open accidentally by one of the cage cleaners. On our way back to Bucharest, after we had desperately searched for a couple of hours, we found the dog walking on the highway. The rescuers managed to capture it and send it for adoption almost a week later.

Representations of dogs on the Internet became representations of the country. A BBC video that appeared some time after the euthanasia debate featured a press conference during

which a European delegation that had recently visited Romania to assess the situation at public dog shelters presented their findings to the public. The representatives said that they had visited the country after receiving a large number of letters from Romanian citizens about the inhumane treatment of street dogs in the country after the enactment of the euthanasia law. According to the representatives, some of those letters described dogs being killed in front of citizens and children.

The representatives, who visited the country twice, described the situation as very worrying. They said that the first time they met with government representatives, they were assured that dogs were being treated in humane ways that were consistent with European standards. However, their second visit to public shelters was different. During that visit, they found that although the public shelters were described as being run privately, they were actually functioning with government funds. Adopting a dog from a public shelter demanded adherence to a number of unrealistic requirements. The situation of dogs in such establishments was described as shockingly ineffective and inhumane, since not all animals had access to food and water. Hence, according to the press conference, the word “shelter” did not accurately describe such establishments. The representatives underlined that the ineffectiveness of city hall in managing street dogs had allowed private shelters to flourish. It was in the interest of such companies to maintain the flow of suffering dogs in the streets.

Animal cruelty was described as particularly immoral, and Romania was described as a country whose image would suffer as a result of the shameful conditions in public shelters, especially after having only recently entered the European Union. Animal lovers were seen as the persons who really wanted to help the dogs. Referring to the level of civilization in the country, the representatives paraphrased Mahatma Ghandi’s saying that one can “recognize a

civilization’s development stage by the way it treats animals.”¹⁴⁹ As one of the members said in reference to civilization, “We’re trying to create an attitude toward animals that reflects our stage of development in the twenty-first century, but unfortunately—I’m putting things diplomatically—the situation in Romania isn’t quite up to that level.”



Figure 53: Anti-euthanasia protest in front of the country’s government building. Banners are citing simultaneous protests that were taking place against the Romanian euthanasia law in Belgium, Germany, Greece, France, Spain, Finland, and elsewhere.

The situation was further described as “upsetting to the whole European Union,” which expressed discontent with Romania’s being a member of the EU, saying that the acceptance of such inhumane countries as members indicated that the recent EU expansion in 2007 had not been well planned. As was noted, killing dogs in inhumane ways equated with the killing of the

¹⁴⁹ The exact quote is: “The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated.”

European values that were promoted by the Treaty of Lisbon. However, the inadequacy of the European Union to deal with such issues was also underlined, since no particular funds were available for the management or the humane treatment of street animals and other sentient beings. Italy was modeled as a country that managed to solve the problem of street animals in a humane way, even though the country was known for its large number of street cats and despite rumors that horse and dog skins were used in its famous leather industry.

The representatives referred to poor monitoring of the situation in shelters by Romanian officials as part of the problem. As they said, Romania is a country where legislation is not implemented. They displayed pictures showing pools of blood in public shelters in the city of Craiova as evidence that dogs were being killed there by violent means, in clear violation of the law. Since those press conference, street animals have fallen into the interstices of European treaties and regulations, which, while favoring animal rights, have mainly focused on the treatment of wildlife and farm and laboratory animals.



Figure 54: “Which Dog Did Your Money Kill?” banner during anti-euthanasia protest in front of Romania’s government building.

Romania was depicted as a country of heartless people who would abuse animals for the pleasure of it. Indeed, this was my own perception before I went into the field and after I had followed the story on Facebook of a shepherd mix named Zoe. Having been on a leash for most of her life, Zoe developed a severe infection after her collar tore and got attached to her skin. She had to undergo surgery in order to remove the collar, and she was advertised on Facebook as a case that needed urgent attention. A British woman adopted her in less than a month, and Zoe still lives with her, her family, and her other two dogs in rural England. Zoe’s adopter explained to me that she couldn’t believe that such treatment of animals existed in the world, that Zoe’s case was heartbreaking, and that not acting was not an option for her or her family. She also described how Zoe had been living happily with her family after her adoption and how good she had been about her training.

Similarly, a Romanian colleague's mother, who lives in Rochester, Michigan, told me that she had had her dog, Mura, sent to the United States from Romania after she saw her suffering in a yard, tied up and dying of starvation, subsisting on potato peels. In such cases, the “before” and “after” photos of adopted animals became proof of the differences between the uncivilized and the civilized, between being alive by luck alone and being loved and thriving as a member of a family. Even the dog that had allegedly killed a Japanese tourist in 2004 by biting one of his central arteries found a loving home in England after being advocated for by a Romanian lawyer who was also an animal lover, according to an article published in the local *Esquire* magazine (2009). As the article describes, “At the bloc people were calling her Coco. The press made her famous under the name Bosquito. Now, the only dog from Romania charged with murder lives the last years of her life in Germany, under the name Ziva.”¹⁵⁰



Figure 55: A picture indicative of the “before” and “after” representations of an adopted dog. The dog is seen sleeping on a sofa and with a toy in Western Europe, in contrast to its depiction as a street dog in a wet and cruel shelter in Romania.

¹⁵⁰ Bosquito. A dog's life (Bosquito. Viața de Câine), article by Ani Sandu, *Esquire* Romania, April 2009

Representations of Romania as cruel do not take into consideration the ways in which rescuers and citizens act for the good of animals or the ways in which sentiments of love and compassion are expressed by different practices of care across the world. Cultural context, combined with national, economic, and political history, have formulated a specifically Romanian perspective according to which care for a dog does not necessarily mean always keeping it tied on a leash or taking it inside an apartment. Rather, it means that the creature belongs in in-between spaces like the yard, the back alley, the *boxă*, car trunks, and the private shelter.



Figure 56: A dog being transported in the trunk of a car after its release from the public shelter.

Representations of such practices as compassionate are absent from representations of

Romania in international animal-rights discourses. Such representations are also seen by the Romanian state and by new types of citizens, like the ones belonging to the new middle-class, as being the source of a constant, non-civilizing process affecting the country through the condition of its cities and the mentality of its citizens. Spatial history has been for Romania not only the history of socialism and modernization but also the history of the working class and the way they perceive the state, the current situation, the guilty and the innocent, themselves and others, the rich and the destitute, compassion, hatred, and indifference.

Exploring the cultural specificity of animal loving in Romania uncovered the tensions between local and international notions of animal loving and animal rights. While local meanings of animal loving are related to traditional positioning of animals in space, newer discourses articulated by NGOs against animal citizens and city hall aim to educate people about how to love street dogs in civilized ways. Such discourses attempt to change the practices related to sentimentality exhibited toward street animals, the ways in which the mentality and habits of the former socialist working class were constituted in relation to housing and public spaces, and the ways in which such citizens understand their relation to the state and their fellow citizens.

Paul Manning (2004) discusses how the categories of belonging and owning¹⁵¹ have been differentially infused with affect in the case of the Welsh bourgeois society of the nineteenth century and how such differentiation has been expressed linguistically in deictic forms. He specifically notes that ideas of civil society as an “affective regime” lie at “the intersection of the two other opposed regimes—the unruly passions of the family (private sphere) and enlightened reason of the state (public sphere),” and how the category of civil society “shows an affective category foundational for liberal capitalism, the hybrid category of *interest*” (2004:306).

¹⁵¹ For a differentiation of the terms and the moralities associated with them, also see Edwards and Strathern (2000) and Veblen (1898-1899).

In the case of Bucharest, while practices of care seem to belong to a sphere of moral belonging, both the state and Western pet-loving discourses appear to call for such practices to change and for citizens to shift from the morality behind practices of care in the street to a morality that is defined through economic ownership and through the making of pets from street dogs. Ideas of civil society and responsible citizenship, however, seem to align more with discourses of rationale produced by the state than with having a mediating role between private and public life. All these actors call for former working-class citizens to shift from ideas of extended kinship and the appropriation of urban spaces to adopting ideologies and practices of a new political economy that has been largely defined by practices surrounding purebred pets and by discourses of civil society and responsibility. Treatments of street dogs have exemplified how private sentimentalities contrast with publicly acknowledged reasoning and how moral discourses about the common good and civic responsibility have appeared as civilizing principles. Such ideas contrast with the ways in which discourses of compassion and *milă* (mercy) can indicate sentimentally invested ownership and thus belonging.

3.4 The Story of Negruțu

I met Mrs. Emilia one morning in my neighborhood as I was walking to the nearby supermarket. It was November 2012, almost a month after I had arrived in Romania for my long-term fieldwork. The weather was getting quite chilly, but there was no snow yet. Mrs. Emilia was trying to feed a sick, elderly, white dog. Close to her, a younger lady dressed in a robe looked worried. I approached and asked if I could help. Hesitant at first, the two ladies explained that they tried to feed the dog, named Panda, some milk in order to induce vomiting. Since Panda hadn't been acting like herself, they were worried that she had been poisoned. She seemed foggy, sad, and not as responsive as usual. Although Panda was very old and could barely see or hear,

she would always respond to their calls with a wagging tail and was more than willing to eat the goodies they gave her, like buttermilk and bread, bones and rice, or ham and raw bones.

Although Panda survived without ingesting any of the milk that Mrs. Emilia and Mrs. Georgeta tried to give her, Mrs. Emilia continued to worry about dogs being poisoned in the neighborhood streets. Some days after we met, Mrs. Emilia called and asked for my help in catching and transporting an eighty-pound dog, Negruțu, to a private shelter. As she said, almost in desperation, “If he stays here [meaning the neighborhood street], he has no chance [of surviving].”

Our first attempt to catch Negruțu, who was usually friendly, was fruitless. Mrs. Emilia had made arrangements with one of her neighbors to help with the capture and then drive Negruțu to the private shelter in the Popești-Leordeni community in Ilfov County outside Bucharest. Her neighbor, a man in his forties, had prepared the trunk of his Dacia to transport the dog and patiently waited until the women captured him. Although Negruțu let us approach and pet him, he showed his teeth when he saw Mrs. Georgeta approaching with the thin rope with which she planned to tie his snout. After a couple of attempts, during which Mrs. Georgeta and Mrs. Emilia chased him around, Negruțu left. He crossed the main boulevard, sat with other dogs between the tram lines, and stared at us.

The second attempt took place almost a week later, after Mrs. Emilia had attempted with no result to sedate Negruțu. After realizing that the pills the nearby clinic had given her had no effect on a dog as large as Negruțu, Mrs. Emilia called a professional. When I went downstairs, she introduced me to a man whom she characterized as a private dogcatcher. He explained that his wife was a veterinarian and that sometimes he helped citizens catch street dogs and transport them to his wife’s clinic or to a shelter. He managed to capture Negruțu after tranquilizing him

from a distance with a dart.

At the end of that day, I found myself sitting in the back of a small professional van with cages of tranquilized dogs and cats. Negruțu was awake but unable to move, and I was sitting right next to him on a smaller empty cage. Behind us, a cat was crying. After twenty minutes of driving, we arrived at the private shelter, which was owned by a family whose house was in the same space as the dog kennels. All the dogs barked at us. Their cages were muddy and full of feces. Some of them shared a couple of wooden doghouses, but the majority of dogs lived outside. The owner of the shelter and the private dogcatcher unloaded Negruțu and the other animals. One of the employees entered the cage to protect Negruțu from the other dogs, which ran toward him to smell or bark at the newcomer. The employee made sure no dog would bite Negruțu until he was able to move. Mrs. Emilia looked happy that Negruțu was safe, although the shelter conditions appeared horrific. Before we left, we entered the owner's house. His wife jotted down the date and the fee that Mrs. Emilia had to pay. For the first month, Mrs. Emilia paid 150 lei (almost thirty dollars), which covered shelter and food. She was reassured that Negruțu would be safe and that they would soon find an adopter through the various organizations that came to the shelter to photograph the dogs and advertise them on the Internet.

Almost two months later, after taking the metro to the other side of the city and then a minibus for another thirty minutes to visit Negruțu with Mrs. Emilia to bring him his usual goodies, I received a phone call. The lady with whom I spoke told me that the association she belonged to had found a family for Negruțu in the United Kingdom. The same night, Mrs. Emilia called me crying, asking for Negruțu to stay in Romania. Referring to international adoption, she asked, "What are the foreigners doing with Romanian dogs?"

Indeed, after many days of negotiations and phone calls, Negruțu remained at the private shelter, although Mrs. Emilia reported to me of that he was very depressed in that setting. Talking on Facebook chat to the woman from the association, I realized that the two, she and Mrs. Emilia, had negotiated two different meanings of compassion. While Mrs. Emilia wished for Negruțu to be adopted somewhere closer than the United Kingdom, somewhere she could monitor him, this desire made the NGO woman furious. In one phone conversation, she said, “I don’t care why the *babă* (old lady) doesn’t want Negruțu to be moved to the UK, where they love and treat animals like humans, taking them into their houses, and even on their beds! I don’t care how much she loves him. I always care for the good of the animal first. If he gets adopted in Romania, most probably he’ll end up chained in a yard somewhere in the country eating old bread.”

Negruțu stayed in that shelter until spring. Mrs. Emilia had no more money to pay and told the shelter to do what they wanted with him. She also started exhibiting signs of dementia. On some occasions, she didn’t recognize me in the street. Mrs. Cornelia, who sold newspapers, told me that Mrs. Emilia got lost a couple of times. When I visited the same shelter with another rescuer after some months, I was told that Negruțu had finally been adopted in Germany. I was never able to trace him through the association that took care of him.

3.5 Animal Loving and Dogs as Mediating Social Judgments

During my long-term stay in Bucharest, the issues of responsibility and compassion came up in many circumstances. The first time I heard of it was when I was discussing the issue of street dogs with a friend over early afternoon tea. I had been describing one of my first research

findings, when Adrian objected. “It is not just compassion you should be thinking of,” he said. “These people care about dogs, but at the same time don’t care about people.”

Adrian, an artist, said he had nothing against or in favor of dogs. He also explained that he never had any emotional proximity to any member of the species and that he wasn’t sure whether killing them all was correct. Adrian also told me that he really disliked street dogs but only because they seemed to “fit well with the post-socialist character of Bucharest.” He talked to me about the dirt dogs produced through their scavenging behaviors, the dangers dogs posed to small children and bicyclists, and the ugliness of Titan, the former working-class neighborhood I resided in, which was brought about by the socialist apartment buildings there. Indeed, my neighborhood was described by other friends as “hardcore communist,” or as a neighborhood where “real people” lived, in contrast to downtown. That day, Adrian compared areas in the city with post-socialist blocks to his own neighborhood around Park Carol at the southern end of downtown, where houses had not been demolished during socialism and where one could still see how old Bucharest looked.

As I asked him to elaborate on responsibility and compassion, however, I realized that dogs and humans were entering spheres of indirect competition in everyday encounters at the neighborhood level. It wasn’t the survival of dogs or humans per se that was at issue as much as it was the dependence of street animals on the compassion of humans for their survival, humans who, in their acts on behalf of these animals, were commonly seen as being irresponsible and disrespectful to their fellow citizens. Animal lovers were seen as being at the center of the street-dog problem and responsible for the increase in the canine population. Indeed, one of the ways in which city hall had tried to resolve the issue of street dogs in the city some months before Ionuț’s death was to forbid the feeding of street dogs by citizens. According to the proposed legislation,

if citizens were caught feeding street dogs or leaving food for them in the streets they would have to pay a five-thousand-lei fine. This fee equaled almost fifteen-hundred US dollars at the time, an amount extremely high for Romania, where the median wage is barely eight hundred lei (three hundred dollars).

When the fine for the feeding of street animals was announced, many of my pensioner animal-loving neighbors became worried. Knowing me as the “Greek who knows things about dogs,” people started asking me questions. Mrs. Narcisa, for example, was worried that the fee didn’t refer only to people who fed dogs but also to people who fed cats, as she did. Others wondered whether feeding the animals at night would be a safe practice and whether feeding animals in the backyard of their building would be considered as feeding street dogs or domestic dogs. This proposed fee, however, was only one of the ways in which the state had attempted to resolve the issue of street dogs in the city. Right after Ionuț’s death, city hall launched an adoption campaign as an alternative to euthanasia.



Figure 57: Doghouses located at the back of Casă Poporului, as typically seen throughout Bucharest.

Some of my elderly former working-class neighbors recalled their dog adoptions during the 1990s. Mrs. Stancu remembered finding Țițelica, a cocker spaniel mix, freezing inside a public phone booth. Mr. Dumitru remembered finding his dog as a puppy, trembling from cold and fear in one of the metro stations. My own landlady remembered her daughter’s coming home with Misty, our cat, after finding it crying in a dumpster. As she said, Beju and Misty lived well together in our one-bedroom apartment because they could understand each other—they were both *tomberonezi* (*tomberoane* are big trash disposal areas and dumpsters).

All of those people said that although both humans and animals suffered during those times, they couldn’t just leave animals freeze to death. For them, mercy was a quality to be shown during harsh times, and although civic responsibility was not the way they described their actions, they definitely did not remain indifferent.



Figure 58: *Tița, the dog that was taken inside the family apartment after her owner found her sick on the sidewalk.*

The city authority responsible for the management of street dogs, the ASPA¹⁵², called on all people, especially on those who were against euthanization, to adopt street dogs. Bucharest was quickly filled with banners picturing a sad looking puppy next to whose face the word “adopt” was written in huge letters. Around the same time, the mayor of the city, through his Facebook account, asked people to become “real” animal lovers and not just “lovers of dogs in the streets.”¹⁵³ Without the supporting actions of adopting these animals, bringing them into homes, and making them pets, caring for street dogs was seen by city hall and the Europeanists as being

¹⁵² Association for the Supervision and Protection of Animals (Asociația pentru Supravegherea și Protecția Animalelor)

¹⁵³ “...va invit sa fiți iubitori de animale, asumându-va grija lor, si nu iubitori de câini in stradă...”

an expression of empty humanitarianism and ultimately an act of irresponsibility toward one's fellow human beings.

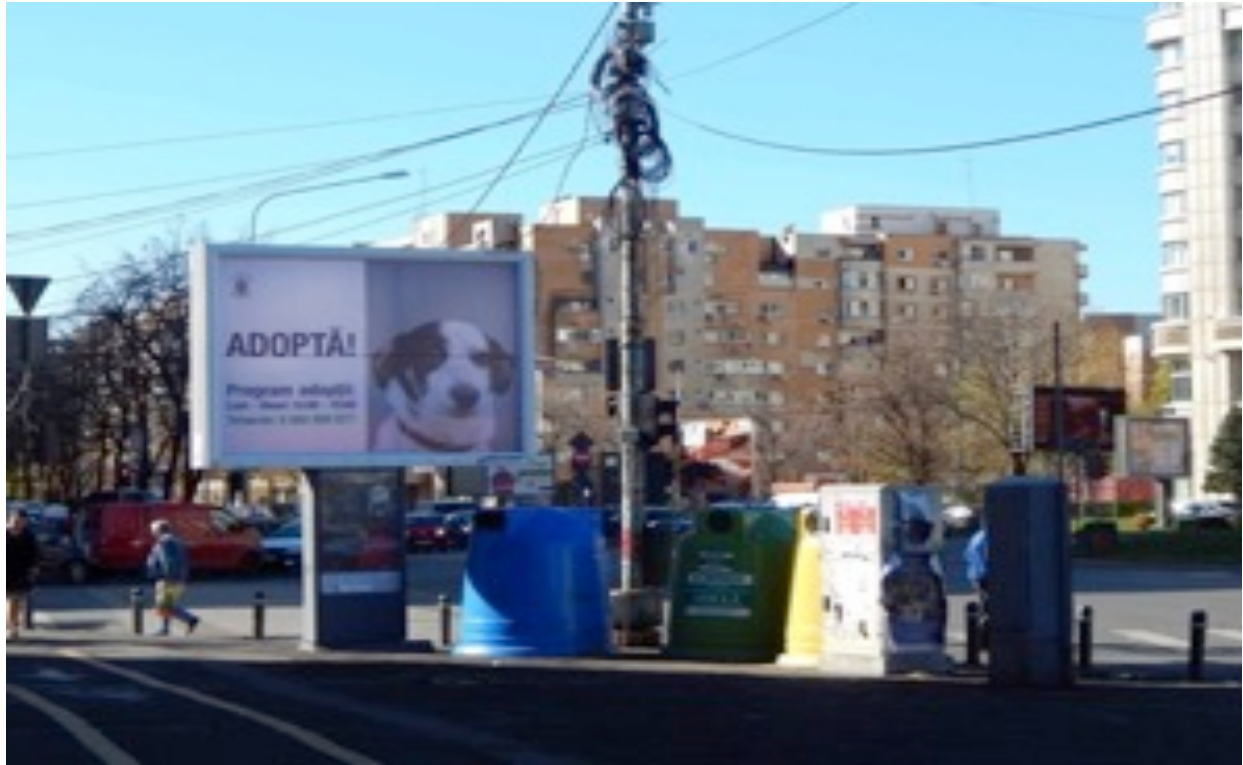


Figure 59: “Adopt” campaign before the implementation of mass euthanasia. Banner at the south of the city, an area with reportedly larger numbers of street dogs.

Local practices of care were condemned by the state and by international communities of animal lovers as irresponsible and not truly compassionate. Talking to one of the women who came to rescue a former street dog from the public shelter, I was surprised to see that she transported the dog back to its neighborhood in the trunk of the car. Her tears indicated her confessed “attachment” to the dog, but her action of not allowing the dog to enter the car seemed antithetical to her discourse. As I realized later, such practices were related to the spaces in which dogs were seen to properly belong, such as the yard.

Loving an animal in the Western way became for Romania the way in which city hall could attempt to normalize what was considered deviant animal loving. While animal opponents repeated that a dog's place is not in the streets, animal lovers continued to ask whether mass euthanasia was just. Soon after Ionuț's death, citizens organized protests around the family's drama. It was the first time that dog opponents found each other and formed a group around a common goal. Enraged by the elevated number of street dogs in the city, which had ultimately led to the tragic event, dog opponents called for the dogs' eradication from the streets.

In many discourses, dog worlds were symbolically linked to understandings and constructions of social differentiation and marginalization after the collapse of the socialist regime. According to animal lovers, dogs can sense the human soul and thus were turned into tools in the making of social judgments. The stereotypes of citizens who were either *nenorociți* (wretched) or *sufletești* (good souled) served as general terms for describing the ethics of people in many circumstances. However, the terms appeared to be used among the former working class to characterize both their own behaviors and those of the aspiring middle-class, who had the power to decide which lives mattered and which were disposable. Dog opponents demanded leisure spaces in the city for their enjoyment and seemed to agree with city hall about which beings had the right to life and which practices were legitimate or illegitimate. Ideas about the soul were modes of negotiation for the meaning of urban life, similar to the ways in which ideas of the soul became ways to understand the post-socialist transition in Russia, as discussed by Dale Pesmen (2000).

My first encounter with ideas about the inner qualities of humans as judged by their behavior to dogs came on a chilly morning in January 2013 while walking to the nearby "1 December 1918" metro station, named in commemoration of the date of Romania's reunion.

Outside the block I was living in, I met Mrs. Zina, who lived in the residential block behind ours, “The one with the four floors and the red roof,” as she said. Mrs. Zina, in her late sixties and with red hair, was carrying two buckets filled with boiled rice and bones. Her heavy winter jacket had a couple of holes on it, and she was walking with difficulty. With one of the buckets, she first fed the street dogs on our side of the street, and then, after I helped her cross Theodor Pallady boulevard, she fed the dogs that usually stayed on the other side.

Mrs. Zina explained that dogcatchers, especially those who were Roma, were people “without a soul” (*fără inimă*), since they kill dogs in inhumane ways. She also explained that she sterilized almost thirty dogs that lived in the area, spending her own money to do so over the years, and that people’s behavior to street dogs is indicative of their education and civilization. As the dogs chewed on the bones that Mrs. Zina had just given them, she talked to me about humans who are bad. “You must be a monster in order to poison or hit an animal,” she said. “What do you think? The ones that throw the poisoned food in the streets are some mean people (*niște nenorociți*) from the sector city hall. They say that dogs bite people, but I have never, never seen a dog do something like that out of nowhere. You must have either kicked or hit it first, or you must be a bad person. The dogs know.”

At that point, I hadn’t yet realized what it was that the canine species knew so well. With time, however, I began to see that the discourse of “*se simțe sufletu*” (sensing the soul) often appeared during discussions with neighbors or passersby at the park. Beju’s friendly behavior toward unknown persons while we walked in Cișmigiu Park, for example, was usually perceived as an indication of his having a good soul. Once, an older lady whom Beju had just greeted asked me, “Did a dog bite you? Who knows what you’ve done?” Turning toward the dog, she said, “How do you [all] know that I love you? How can you tell that I also have dogs?” Turning to me

again, she said, “He can sense the soul. They all can. Dogs are much more clever and loyal than humans.” Indeed, it seemed that through such views, dogs also appeared as having good and innocent souls, as being *sufletişti* themselves.

Although animal lovers, vets, and dog trainers told me that dogs experience the world first with their noses, second with their ears, and third with their eyes, one additional sense is being invoked. It is a sense through which dogs can understand what humans cannot, to concretize the invisible, to turn the inside outward. Such judgments about the soul were used to concretize the morality of social “others,” as the aforementioned groups of various socioeconomic backgrounds were represented through their interactions with or through their sentiments about dogs. Although animal loving appeared as an emotional state and a lifestyle that would often overlap with a variety of socio-economic categorizations, the stereotypes with which the terms of *nenorociţi* and *sufletişti* became linked in the animal-loving world served the former working class as expressions of the understanding and representation of certain behaviors.

In contrast, dog opponents whom I interviewed discriminated against animal lovers—who were usually from a lower socio-economic background—for taking care of street dogs. The stereotypical characterizations included being a person who was “dirty, crazy, and obsessed with dogs,” or a *babă comunistă* (communist old lady), a person bearing the remnants not only of socialism but also of a village-like mentality. Once, a pro-euthanasia citizen characterized animal lovers as not really loving animals but being animal collectors instead, attributing pathologic elements to the sentimentality they exhibited toward street dogs. This stereotype was similar to that of the “cat lady” or “animal hoarder” in the United States. Euthanasia proponents, and sometimes even public officials, saw animal lovers as mentally deficient, exhibiting toward

animals excessive emotions that would approach the limits of obsession. They were also seen, along with street dogs, as remnants of socialism.

The transformability of street dogs, being on the boundary of a series of significations, such as the ones of objects and subjects, persons and non-persons, rural and urban, and domestic and non-domestic was many times extended to define humans, as well. While the former working class was seen to belong to the socialist period, and the middle class to modern and contemporary times, there were other human populations such various marginal urban citizens, who were seen as outcasts and frozen in time, in parallel to street dogs. Thus, street dogs were not the only boundary beings I encountered in the field. Beggars, the Roma and the homeless, who are the topic of the next chapter, would also many times find themselves on the boundary of significations and would be alternatively seen as subjects or objects. When it came to their definition as objects particularly, it seemed like everyday actions of parasitization and racialization was strategically chosen and produced through different interactional and representational capacities.

Chapter Four: Urban Marginalization: Agency, Begging, Race, and Parasitization

One of my research objectives when I arrived in Bucharest for my long-term research in 2012 was to trace the relation of street dogs to social mechanisms that are responsible for the production of urban marginality. As I have already discussed, I was interested in how street dogs are seen by some as an unwanted population that indexes post-socialist urban degradation and non-civilized urban futures. Specifically, I was eager to find out whether discourses that depicted dogs as urban elements that added to the degradation of Bucharest along with trash, old crumbling buildings that “turned into dust,” and other urban dangers, were similar to, or overlapped with, discourses about human marginal populations, such as the Roma or the homeless.

This chapter examines the meeting points of canines and humans in relation to understandings of both as social actors. It asks how some people come to see dogs as persons, who deserve compassion, while others see them as parasites, which deserve extermination. It focuses particularly on the mechanisms behind such evaluations and extends such understandings of dogs to discuss whether marginal human populations are also conceptualized as either persons or as parasites. Thus, this chapter asks how dogs, as well as beggars, homeless citizens, and members of the Roma ethnic group, have been produced and represented at different times as marginal—even parasitic—to an otherwise flourishing society. Central to this discussion is the issue of how marginalization occurs through different processes of understanding others, specifically through systemic representations of marginal groups as

cunning and through everyday communication and human interactions in the public space. The material presented shows how representations of social otherness, as well as canine-to-human communication, become central to the understanding of street dogs as persons, in the same way that the avoidance of eye contact by citizens who consider themselves legitimate with marginal urban populations such as beggars renders the latter as non-persons and objects. Eyes, both canine and human, become central in this chapter as windows through which one can gain access to the internal worlds of the canine and human soul—another venue for the making of social judgments.

Alaina Lemon has talked about the importance of human eyes in understanding other people's qualities and in "touching the gap" that the Cold War had created (2013). Elsewhere, while discussing the Moscow metro dogs (2015), she notes that marginal populations like the Roma and street animals are sometimes seen in parallel. Indeed, such considerations extend her previous work, in which she notes that the Roma in Russia are sometimes equated with trash (2000a). This chapter draws inspiration from such analyses and seeks the meeting point of visual communication, animal and human interaction, subjectification and objectification, personification and parasitization, and marginalization and social legitimacy. It focuses on practices such as the politics of invisibility that render the marginal parasitic, as when citizens choose to ignore beggars, for example, to avoid any emotional or financial exchange with them. It also focuses on the semiotic processes that lie behind the production of such taxonomies and their links to ideological and moral worlds of the middle classes and the working classes. It discusses, for example, how marginal humans or animals are understood as such based on their physical qualities. Yet it also explores how choices that are made about whom to help, defend, or

stand for are based on ideas about the responsibility that marginal citizens are seen to bear for their own social condition, in contrast to dogs, which are victimized based on lacking agency.

Besides comparisons between the treatment of beggars and the treatment of street dogs, this chapter also discusses preconceptions about dogcatchers, especially those among them who belong to the Roma community. This group is examined here for two reasons: because they exemplify how marginalization is systemically embedded, and because dogcatchers appear to mediate between animal and human worlds, domestic and non-domestic orders, and ideas of docility and wildness in nature and behavior. As already mentioned in Chapter Two, the profession has been associated since at least the 1850s with violence, scandal, and maltreatment of street dogs, and citizens appeared to be fighting with dogcatchers since the inter-war period. The demonization of dogcatchers discussed in this chapter is related both to their engagement with dogs and to their status as marginal people or members of the Roma community.

One focus of this chapter is to show how marginalization occurs in layers, since lower classes of animal lovers, because of the compassion and sentimentality they exhibit toward street dogs, have been seen by aspiring middle classes as being parasitic or crazy. These two groups, however, come together in discriminating acts and discourses against the marginalized, since the former working class—having now slid into poverty—finds itself in a liminal position once again, on the one hand being discriminated against by middle class citizens and the state, and on the other hand being left out of international aid and other discourses that appear to advocate for racially and socially marginalized populations. This layering of social discrimination becomes interesting in the case of Romania because of its socialist history, and it is relevant to discussions about the condition of the working class in the Western world, where radical right-wing discourses and movements appear to be gaining legitimacy through their appeal to the working

class. While the history of socialist regimes has been connected to, based on, and empowered by the creation and continuous support of the working class, discourses that come from newer articulations of the Left mainly point to the empowerment of marginalized populations, creating a gap in the representation of the now-impoverished working class. While such people are considered by the state to belong to legitimate orders of economic exchange, they actually find themselves at the lower end of wage and resource distribution, which is mainly understood through consumption patterns and the means by which everyday needs are met.

Finally, this chapter addresses considerations of dogs as technologies in processes of marginalization, which they appear to confirm when they are actually used to reinforce preexisting patterns of social discrimination. Populations that were otherwise treated as being invisible become parts of the urban social fabric only when dogs bark at them, moments that are read as confirmation of the qualities that rendered them marginal in the first place: racial characteristics, degree of personal hygiene, and mental state or character. While it is common around the world for dogs to be seen as capable of sensing race, homelessness, and social disorder, Bucharest is an interesting case since its street dogs are considered marginal in the first place. In their alleged ability to smell, bark at, or bite at those who are seen as being responsible for their own social status—the Roma or the homeless—dogs are seen as sensing not one of their own but one of the “others.” Dogs thus keep changing parties, as they continuously enter and exit spheres of social representations.

Once again, the positioning of the former working class is critical to such understandings of both dogs and humans. While some animal lovers stated at public debates that the homeless, especially orphans, should be cared for by the state, such statements were only made after the animal lovers were accused of caring more for dogs than for humans. However, questions asked

by middle-class animal opponents about whether or not animal lovers cared for humans did not necessarily refer to empathy for underprivileged populations only but also to middle-class citizens who were bitten by dogs and were therefore deprived of enjoying a safe city and leisure spaces, such as parks. Moreover, during encounters with neighborhood animal lovers, I was told that dogs, in contrast to marginalized humans, deserved to be treated with compassion because they were not responsible for their own situation. Thus, while middle-class citizens considered dogs to be marginal elements of the city and called for their extermination, former working-class citizens saw dogs as allies in decision-making processes that determined who should not be prioritized for receipt of social aid. In contrast to the working class, marginal citizens were seen as incapable of maintaining the minimum standards of survival for themselves. Being able to make it through life using no more than minimal resources was for many of my neighbors an expression of strength when they found themselves in difficult economic and social situations. The word commonly used to describe this condition, *a se descurca* (meaning to be able and handle things), indicated the ways in which such citizens were able to just make it through life by getting out of a complicated situation that could easily lead to homelessness or begging.

Thus, beggars were seen as being responsible for their own situation because of the wrong choices they made in life, while the Roma—the *țigani*, as they are commonly known and referred to in Romanian—were sometimes seen as responsible because of their adherence to their “gypsy-ness” and their lack of ambition. Even when Roma citizens managed to achieve more in this system of social discrimination, they were acknowledged only if they became famous and entered the spheres of international representation and national pride. Stories about the Roma mayor of a district of Bucharest, for example, were linked to pre-conceptions about his

fraudulent, comic, or even incompetent character; his managing to ascend the social hierarchy was seen as suspicious and not as proof of personal value.

4.1: The Marginal

During my stay in Bucharest, the marginal presented itself in more than one circumstance, in more than a single form, and with more than one face. Even before I started my research, many of my friends and family members, both in the US and in Greece, considered Romania to be a marginal place to live, dangerous and underdeveloped. Some years ago, when one of my brothers visited Bucharest, he described the city as depressing because of its gray skies and huge, ugly buildings. The first time I visited the country, Romanian friends who had lived in the US complained that “older people in Romania smell bad.” The same friends, during a trip to the train station *Gară de Nord*, an infamous area of Bucharest despite the name’s reference to the glory of the station of the same name in Paris, were embarrassed by the presence of a sick street dog in the street. They also complained about Romanian money “not really feeling like money,” since the Romanian lei bills I exchanged for Euros were made of plastic. Finally, they made sure to warn me about beggars, Roma, street dogs, and fraudulent taxi drivers, all of whom were seen as urban dangers, especially for newcomers.

Taxi-drivers figured especially as threats to foreigners, whom they could easily exploit by charging higher than the legal rates or by taking longer than necessary routes to a destination. Indeed, by the end of my research in Bucharest in 2014, the state, in an attempt to fight corruption in the taxi transportation system, had installed a new electronic system at the airport arrivals hall in order so tourists and other visitors could use a touchscreen apparatus to call cabs from certified companies.

As will be discussed later in this chapter, ideas of distrust were associated with ideas of corruption and fraudulent networks that became infamous in the 1990s. Sometimes, such distrust was aimed at the whole country, not just Bucharest. A woman who worked at a university library where I used to study, for example, knowing me as a foreigner, made sure to warn me against leaving my belongings unattended when searching for books or visiting the restroom. As she said, “Don’t leave your stuff here. You’re in Romania!”

After the collapse of state socialism, urban marginality became a sign of urban deterioration in international representations of post-socialism. The documentary *Children Underground* (2001), which won an award at the Sundance Film Festival and was nominated for an Academy Award for best documentary film of 2001, for example, portrayed the urban drama of life in post-socialist Bucharest. Romanian homeless children, some of whom were later adopted internationally (as were street dogs), were shown living underground in freezing metro stations, using drugs, belonging to gangs, and earning money or food from prostitution. The phenomenon of *copii ai străzii* (“street children”) was explained to Western audiences by citing Nicolae Ceaușescu’s policies, especially the policies outlawing contraception and abortion that occurred in the 1960s, which were imposed to increase the country’s population and workforce. Children of families who were unable to support them were at first hosted in state institutions and orphanages. However, after the collapse of the socialist welfare state and the closure of such premises, these children were forced to live on the street. Western European news media covering the drama of such victimized populations described the orphaned children as “scraps of humanity.”¹⁵⁴

¹⁵⁴ “Romania’s blighted street children” by Glenda Cooper on Friday September 17, 2004 available at: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/3665646.stm>

During the time of my research in Bucharest, locals and neighbors explained how marginal human populations increased in the city after the revolution of 1989. Street children and teenagers were often referred to as *aurolacii*, a term derived from their use of *aurolac*, a cheap, gold metal paint with hallucinogenic vapors that they inhaled from plastic bags. Such citizens were seen in downtown Bucharest quite often, and *aurolac* came to mean “beggar” or “drug addict.” My neighbors referred to marginal populations with other terms as well, including the *oameni fără casă* (“the homeless”), the *drogați* (“drug addicts”), and the *bețivi* that referred to those who were visible consuming large quantities of alcohol.

Besides these marginal citizens, Bucharest also witnessed an increase in the dog population (as I discussed earlier) and even an increase in trash, which accumulated from a combination of poor management, lack of funds, and, according to some, from changing patterns of consumption. The Roma were also seen wandering in the city again, gathering metal items from the trash. After a long hiatus during which they worked for the state during socialism, the Roma became the group that was hit the hardest by post-socialist unemployment.

After two summer visits to Romania for preliminary research, I noted that marginalization appeared to be systemically embedded at certain times and as socially produced at others. As discussed in Chapter One, for example, besides being seen as dangerous, street dogs were also seen as being polluted and able to pollute, both in city hall discourses or newspapers and in discussions I had with friends. Representations of the Roma and beggars, however, were similar. Beggars composed a category that included both the Roma and the homeless. Besides manifesting the polluting capacity of humans, the act of begging was also a canine communicative practice. Dogs were usually seen to establish lengthy eye contact with a person who carried food in public. Beggars, along with dogs, were seen as people who lived by picking

up or living among trash. They thus signified disorder. Bucharest was a city where Roma, beggars, street dogs, older residents (who were seen as still having a rural mentality), former communists, crumbling inter-war or previous-century buildings, and fans of *manele* music co-existed with a strong new movement in the arts, with high-end luxurious urban areas with hipster cultures of downtown clubs, and with foreign businessmen, who also circulated in downtown areas.

Marginalization—or at least devaluation—was moving in two different directions and articulated on multiple levels of signification. While people in the arts saw the newly rich, and occasionally politicians, as signs of a new, decadent era, the new middle class saw former socialist workers as remnants of times best forgotten. And yet they both saw the Roma and the homeless as social outcasts. City hall was also running campaigns against both street dogs and begging. Representations of backwardness were associated not only with the existence of such marginal populations but also with the existence of people who tolerated them or helped them survive, either by giving money to beggars or by feeding street dogs. Such actions were seen as perpetuating the problems and thus as harmful to the wider community.

In processes of marginalization, however, it also appeared that human agency and representations of social others as fraudulent became prevalent. Since begging, unemployment, homelessness, and stray-ness were supposed to have been eliminated during socialism, their current presence in the city was perceived as symptomatic of a new order, and beggars, the homeless, and drug addicts were sometimes perceived as results of the 1989 revolution. Rather than being considered victims of Romania's political history, such populations, along with the working class, were seen as being responsible for the country's backwardness after 1989. Such discourses were similar to discourses about the country being a victim of international

geopolitical dynamics, of its own socialist history, and of populations such as the Roma, who prevented it from moving forward. Such self victimization, however, presupposed that the “self,” in contrast to the “other,” had always been sincere, hard working, and socially correct.

When talking about urban marginalized populations, my neighbors explained how during state socialism, nobody was allowed to wander in the streets,¹⁵⁵ something to which they actually referred as a positive outcome of the socialist management. Thus, according to their narrative, the homeless were a capitalist category used to describe urban populations, and neoliberal changes were a common denominator for the production of social inequality. Interestingly enough, however, it seemed that after the collapse of state socialism, the former working class entered into an indirect form of competition with marginal populations. While both groups seemed to enjoy the benefits that derived from the socialist welfare state’s modes of governance, they were both seen as being excluded from the competitive orders of the 1990s that replaced the almost egalitarian working system of the previous decades.

Following patterns that erupted from the deindustrialization of the socialist urban centers and from high unemployment rates, such citizens, whether because of their race, age, poor education, or inadequate training, were left out of the new corporate structures that were legitimized as working venues in the country. In this social setting, both the former working class and the marginal populations were left with limited resources and questioned who had the right to social legitimacy. In contrast to middle-class citizens, whose skills and consumption habits made them fit participants in the post-1989 world, working-class citizens claimed their legitimacy by evoking notions of morality and righteousness. These notions were expressed in

¹⁵⁵ In archival material, the category of being “homeless” was presented in dossiers from the police department of the city even before the 1850s. The homeless—similarly to street dogs—were described as people *găsiți în stare de vagabondaj* (“found in a state of vagrancy”), and without any official documents.

discourses about the responsibility marginal citizens bore for their situation. The responsibility discourse articulated by the working class, however, only resulted in the further marginalization of the homeless, the beggars, and the Roma, in the same way in which state and middle-class civilization discourses resulted in the marginalization of the working class.

During my stay in Bucharest, I had a conversation with a middle-class citizen who equated the situation of the Roma with the situation of “lazy Americans” who were at that time portrayed in the conservative rhetoric of Mitt Romney’s presidential candidacy. One day, on my way to the library, I watched a Romanian woman yelling at an ethnically Roma Romanian who was pushing a cart with old iron items. The woman was accusing him of being responsible for the situation of the country and for Romania’s lack of progress. Similarly, the responsibility attributed to beggars and the homeless was attributed to actions like “not working, and spending all their money on drinking.”

In some cases, I heard stories of such people living like street dogs, and I noticed secret laughs and meaningful gazes when dogs barked at Roma carrying carts with trash, or the homeless carrying an excessive number of bags. One day, walking my own dog, Beju, in a park with a Romanian friend, my friend explained to me that Beju’s barking at a Roma child who was yelling was most probably because “he recognized the voice,” implying that voices of all Roma are similar and thus a characteristic racial quality. While the noise produced by carts was not offered as a possible explanation for Beju’s barking at other cases, the Roma boy’s voice became another evidence that Beju could sense otherness. When Beju barked at people who were carrying carts and bags, the explanations that were given mainly included that Beju could either smell the Roma and the homeless or just recognize their abnormality.

4.2: Agency, Deception, Trust

It was during the 1990s when stories about fraudulent begging and child-exploitation networks in southeastern Europe became known. The image of the sneaky Roma, which was already a stereotypical representation of these countries in the rest of Europe, was reinforced. In some cases, stories about which country was the worst, as measured by its percentage of Roma populations, were common among southern Eastern European countries.

When I was growing up in Greece during the 1990s, for example, the perception of living conditions in Bulgaria, Romania, and Hungary as being worse than Greece because their larger Roma populations was prevalent. With regard to Romania specifically, many Greeks believed that because their language is known as Romani, the Roma are actually Romanians—a confusion that is still prevalent today. Many Romanians are aware of this confusion, and they usually offer clarification concerning the differences between Roma and Romanian. There were even stories about such countries being responsible for the existence of Roma in Greece, since “all the gypsies” were seen to “come from Romania.” Such stories have reemerged during the current financial crises, since many stories about robberies and attacks in Greece are attributed to Bulgarian Roma citizens, who are seen as having entered the country just to commit crimes.

Southern Eastern European movies of the 1990s, especially the “*Time of the Gypsies*” (*Le Temps du Gitans*) (1988) by Emir Kusturica, presented Roma culture as eternally romanticized because of its “wandering nature,” which was taken as a given and even desired by the Roma themselves. Such films also reinforced conceptions of the Roma as liars and thieves. In the movie *Perhan*, the title character, a young Roma from Serbia, leaves his country in order to find a better life in Italy. However, a begging network that was taking advantage of children exploits him as well. Perhan, however, also has special telekinetic powers, which complicate the

plot. By the end of the movie, he becomes rich and returns to Serbia in order to take revenge for the death of his wife and unborn child and for being exploited by the begging network. Perhan's special powers render him as a character completely outside the norms of society since he doesn't act like a human. However, his special powers help Perhan survive; they are his "personal" capital, his inheritance even before he became wealthy. Similarly ideas of dogs as special creatures with super powers add to their bohemian character, as belonging to everyone and yet to no one.

In Romania, stories about begging also became prevalent during the 1990s. According to friends who explained to me why many people were willing to donate money for street dogs but not for beggars, the Romanian public was alerted to begging networks by TV shows that uncovered scandals by secretly filming beggars. Such stories showed beggars pretending to be disabled and made the point that giving money to such beggars was not a philanthropic act of helping the impoverished but rather a scam that enriched them illegally. The purpose of the beggar's method was to add to their corrupt wealth by stealing from legitimate citizens. However, such stories came out during a time when the formation of social classes was changing in Romania. While it seems like the upper classes and the marginalized were easily discernible during pre-socialist, socialist, and post-socialist times, what has happened to middle populations after 1989 is debatable. The former socialist working class has either slid into poverty, become the newly rich or the aspiring middle class, or has just remained static. Members of the working class population that did not manage to escape their former character and ascend in the social hierarchy were mainly the class of people that remained trapped in their status due to their age or lack of flexibility when it came to changing careers, as mentioned above.

The 2002 Romanian comedy *Filantropica* (2002) describes the professionalization of begging in Romania after 1989. In it, a couple goes to expensive restaurants without having the money to pay for their meals. When a waiter would start arguing with the couple about the pending payment, the husband would offer a moving story about their economic situation, victimizing himself for not being able to offer his wife a happy life. The incidents usually end with someone among the rich clientele paying the bill after having been moved by the story. The movie continues by introducing us to the *Filantropica Association*, located in a desolate basement, where the leader of Bucharest's beggars is teaching people how to beg effectively. Besides being taught to offer emotional stories, the beggars also learn how to communicate their pain through facial expressions and body language in order not only to survive but also to rightfully recover the wealth they were deprived of after the collapse of the welfare state. The movie begins with the quote, "Welcome to Romania, a land of kings and beggars, and where everyone in between are just street dogs." Street dogs, in this case, are equated with the middle, which is seen as homogenous and as comprised of citizens with equal economic, cultural, and educational capital.

The changes in social-class formation during post-socialist years become obvious when it comes to the urban anthropogeography of Bucharest. Neighborhoods like Ferentari in the south of the city or the Gară de Nord area next to downtown, for example, are marginalized. Such areas often figured in discourses as signifying danger. A friend once told me, for example, that she liked the neighborhood we lived in because she wouldn't encounter many Roma citizens at streets or on public transportation. She continued her story by telling me how she avoided visiting Rahova and Ferentari, and she explained how she used to be extra cautious about her belongings when she had to travel through them on the tram. Neighborhoods like Dorobanți and

Pipera, on the other hand, in the north of the city, belonged, to old wealth and the newly rich, respectively, and were seen as having different material signifiers, different cultures, different education, and different urban habits.

Residents of mixed income and occupation (Marcinczak, et al. 2013) inhabit the rest of the city, in neighborhoods toward the east and the west. These areas are the ones best connected to former factories with metro, tram, and bus lines, since they were largely the neighborhoods in which socialist workers resided. They also consist of relatively well-maintained socialist-type blocks, in contrast to Ferentari and Rahova. These mixed neighborhoods also don't look like the wealthier areas, where inter-war and previous-century architecture has been preserved or where gated-community type residences and villas have been built. These mixed-population neighborhoods are the neighborhoods in which much of the debate about street dogs, compassion, and responsibility occurs.

While the initial quote from *Filantropica* equates street dogs with the “middle,” it also implies how such mixed middle populations—especially the segment that remained the country's working class—suffered after the collapse of the socialist regime in 1989. The protagonist of the film is a teacher who is somehow forced into the begging network largely as a result of the socioeconomic conditions in the country. Although he didn't keep an industrial position, his profession was now also devalued, and he didn't manage to earn more than the basic wage. Thus, along with the former working class, he is depicted as having fallen through the cracks of socialism and post-socialism. Such middle populations are equated with street dogs in the film, as they, too, are seen as seeking opportunities with which to make a better living and to survive.

During my time in Bucharest, however, it was actually the Roma, the homeless, and the beggars who were equated with street dogs. One of the youngest people I met, for example, a

medical student in his early twenties, described to me how really difficult it was to control the canine population, since dogs usually have many puppies, exactly like the Roma. He continued by expressing the fear that at some point, the Roma will outnumber Romanians. A few days later, one of my neighbors, a taxi driver, stated the same thing while driving me to the airport.

This statement reminded of socialist birth-control practices and legislation in southern Eastern European countries. More importantly, it also touched on the ways in which marginalization tied into the recognition of personhood and on whether animal and certain human populations shared social significations. Both dogs and the Roma were seen at certain times as objects and as possible threats to legitimate Romanian citizens. In parallel to Roma citizens, street dogs were also compared to the homeless, since they both lived out of normal domestic orders. Finally, beggars were often seen as similar to street dogs, since exhibiting compassion toward them signified either that they will persistently and annoyingly try to extract more from their sponsors (either materials or sentiments) or that such populations will flourish and increase in the city. According to the second scenario, dogs would be strong and healthy enough to continue to reproduce in the city, and beggars would see such relationship with a “host” as an easy way to get through life, thus never needing to find a job or a house. In both cases, caring for dogs and beggars generally or for a specific dog or a specific beggar required a long-term relationship and commitment, which many people were unwilling to undertake.

While dogs were considered to exhibit “true suffering” by animal lovers, animal lovers themselves were considered to constitute yet another fraudulent network. Many people whom I met in the anti-euthanasia protests told me that not everyone truly loved animals. They told me to be cautious, since “fake” animal lovers used animals in order to exploit people in Romania and Western Europe by raising donations for animals that didn’t actually exist.

Similar ideas also surrounded the issue of international adoption. As I discuss in Chapter Three, many animal lovers saw such adoptions as “fake,” and they assumed that the rescuers who organized them were selling dogs to foreign institutions to run experiments on them. As discussed in Chapter One, the ASPA official who showed me the city neighborhoods with dogs also talked to me about such scandals. According to his knowledge of the matter, many shelters actually bred dogs in order to keep producing “victims,” fed dogs with the bones of dead dogs, and sold dogs to foreign countries. In the context of the long-term rivalry between the ASPA and animal-loving organizations, the same public official claimed that he had managed to film the situation in such shelters by using drones that flew over such establishments. His purpose was to uncover them, and he showed me some of these clips on his computer, although it wasn’t easy for me to discern the actual conditions in which dogs lived.

Distrust was also expressed by two rescuers, one Romanian and one from the UK, with whom I visited shelters in the country. After three months working in a semi-private shelter in order to improve its conditions, the UK rescuer stopped trusting the shelter owner. She returned to the UK after fighting with her Romanian colleague, and she stopped sponsoring activities in the shelter. At the same time, pictures of the three of us were circulated on Facebook by other animal lovers. I discovered to my surprise that rather than being portrayed as dog rescuers, we were instead being reported as dog traffickers who sold dogs to the UK and Greece for lab experiments and other horrific uses. In such discourses of animal lovers, the world was described as dark and pitiless, in contrast to their own attention to compassion and mercy. Dogs were once again seen as victims being exploited by vicious humans for their own profit.

Distrust of street dogs and animal rescue was also cultivated by the media. An episode of the TV show “Romania I Love You” (“Romania te Iubesc”) that aired on September 9, 2013,

pictured cases of fraudulent shelters in the city whose purpose was to extract money either from individuals who cared about dogs or from public funds that were meant to be used for the development of the city. Sometimes, city hall was also accused of such corruption scandals, and shelters were seen as businesses to launder money. The show informed citizens about one of the public shelter's officials, who was described as the director's friend and was filmed commuting in the city in a luxury car, even though his job was only to organize the daily plans and routes of the dogcatchers. Besides the car, the show also focused on the public official's luxurious apartment. The show went on to show examples of dogs that had been supposedly castrated but that had later been seen mating in the city streets. Thus, the money spent for sterilizations was assumed to have been spent for other purposes, while orphans and other legitimate citizens were deprived of support.

One of the most well-equipped and modern public shelters, named "Dogtown," that had opened at the southern margin of the city, was also accused by the media and animal lovers of money laundering, especially because the son of Bucharest's mayor had been appointed to administer the facilities. Distrust of behaviors around street dogs came from the distrust of the government. Discourses of corruption were common during the time of my research, proof of which could be seen in the ability and the capacity of certain groups of people to spend money and become consumers. In some cases, for example, it was assumed that only the poor would really care for street dogs. Animal-lovers who were perceived as richer were assumed to have gained money through activities like selling dogs for their skin and other animal products.

Such ideas were in accordance with general views of corruption in the country. Some stories that I heard, for example, included the ways in which neighbors used to give gifts such as perfumes or flowers to secretaries to gain preferential treatment when making administrative

requests. An example came from a university student who used to give gifts to the department's secretary in order to gain access to early registration for those classes she was interested in. Some of the stories included explanations about gift giving being the means for avoiding having to wait in queues during state socialism. The teleology behind such discourses pointed again to the socialist period as the source of outdated mentalities.

In the image below, for example, part of the campaign “without bribes,”¹⁵⁶ also discussed in the introduction, two kinds of residences are depicted: on the left is the socialist-type apartment of a citizen who gave bribes; on the right is the villa of a public official who took bribes in order to help citizens navigate bureaucratic issues. The poster was featured at the entrance and at desks of the National Municipal Archives of Bucharest. Thus, it seemed that the state fought against not only what was seen as signifying the post-socialist way of life, such as street dogs and marginal populations, but also against what was seen to be the remnants of socialist practices of the second economy exchange (Chelcea 2002; Sampson 1987) .

¹⁵⁶ Details for the campaign can be found at www.faraspaga.ro



Figure 60: Poster: “Without villas constructed with your money.”

4.3: Dogcatchers and the Roma

My first understanding of marginalization as systemic came from public dog shelters and their employees. While these institutions were administered by middle-class citizens who either had personal connections to the mayor or had supported his election campaign, the majority of the employees were Roma. Besides shelters, the Roma also worked in other, lower-ranking positions such as street sweeper, a position that often required the removal of pet dogs’ waste from streets and sidewalks, since cleaning up after one’s pet was not a popular practice in Romania, as discussed in Chapter One. The people I met in such positions who were not Roma were usually former long-term unemployed citizens, and their wages would only suffice to buy cigarettes and alcohol. Living close to the public shelter, I sometimes saw shelter employees

during their break coming to buy cheap beer at the nearby *magazin* (small grocery store), a behavior that was noted by local inhabitants and also criticized by the shelter veterinarian and the shelter secretary, as I observed one day while visiting the shelter. Bribes were seen as a common method by which dogcatchers could supplement their wages in order to be able to survive. It was also a practice used since at least the 1930s by citizens who wanted their dogs to survive and not be taken to the *ecarisaj*, as shown in Chapter Two.

One day, as I was walking my own dog, Beju, I met two young women standing on the sidewalk of Theodor Pallady Boulevard. They were standing right next to a dog that looked dead. While Beju sniffed the dog with interest, I approached and asked what had happened. The women explained that the dog had just been neutered in the nearby public dog shelter, and one of the dogcatchers had offered to give them and the dog a ride back to their neighborhood. The younger of the women explained that she only wanted to visit the dog that day after she was unable to find him anymore in the neighborhood. After seeing the conditions in the shelter and feeling sorry for him, she decided to take the dog with her. The dogcatcher, however, ended up leaving the two women and the dog less than a kilometer from the shelter, since the women refused to give him the three hundred lei he demanded after they had already entered the car. He unloaded both of them and the sedated dog on the sidewalk, and the two women found themselves unable to convince another taxi driver to take them, since the dog was still bleeding and very dirty. I brought them a blanket in which they wrapped the dog, and a taxi driver finally agreed to take them to their destination. He helped them put the dog in the trunk of the car, and they left. As they were entering the taxi, the younger woman thanked me for the blanket and said in desperation, “And I don’t even know what I’ll do with him next. I promised my husband I

wouldn't take him out of the shelter! Hopefully we can find somewhere to take him in the country.”

The majority of animal lovers whom I talked to accused dogcatchers and shelter employees of incompetence and animal cruelty more than bribery. Dogcatchers were also accused by “animal haters” of not doing their job correctly. However, when citizens fought with them while trying to protect a dog, they never depicted dogcatchers as being victims of the regime's collapse, or as suffering from dog bites, poor equipment and training, poor working conditions, low wages, or even as being victims of violence. Moreover, dogcatchers were never depicted as compassionate. As I observed on more than one visit to the public shelter, dogcatchers, along with other shelter employees, had formed attachments to specific dogs and had even helped find homes in the country for some of them so they could avoid being euthanized. In almost every shelter that I visited, for example, there was a dog that enjoyed different privileges than the dogs in cages. Such dogs were usually taken out of cages in order to reside in the shelter as owned by one of the employees, or as being the manager's favorite dog. It was assumed, however, that dogcatchers and other employees were only interested in taking bribes or that they just killed dogs, often in inhumane ways.

Animal lovers thus considered Roma dogcatchers as “the worst” of all people in their dealings with street dogs. One day, as I was waiting for the minibus outside the Real super market in my neighborhood after shopping, I ran into Oana, who, with her sister, had a private dog shelter outside Bucharest. Although I had donated some dog food at one of the donation events they were periodically organizing, I never managed to actually arrange for an interview with them or to visit their shelter. That day, however, Oana talked to me about dogs and the situation in Romania for almost thirty minutes. She said that she and her sister had rescued many

dogs from the public shelter and that the situation was absolutely horrible. I told her that although I wanted to ride with dogcatchers to see them in action, I was refused access, since their activities were considered dangerous because of the possibility of being bitten by a dog. Oana explained that this wasn't the real reason I was denied access. According to her explanation people in the shelter didn't want me to see how cruel they were to dogs, especially since I was a foreigner and could publish a story in international media that might become a scandal. When I talked about the connections I had managed to make at the shelter with a dogcatcher and his wife, who worked as a cage cleaner, Oana said, "Who? Mircea? Keep away from him! He is the worst of all! He is a gypsy!"

Similarly, when interviewing a council member from one of the six districts of Bucharest, my interviewee claimed that the Roma were the ones to be blamed for the existence of street dogs in the city. I met him and his wife, an international student from Asia, on a spring evening. We met at the downtown restaurant Hanul lui Manuc, well-known for its class and its medieval architecture. We sat in the interior yard of the building, which used to be an inn. A couple of violinists played music on one of the restaurant's balconies. Under the sound of violins, the public official explained how he himself, as a citizen, had to find a solution for a box full of abandoned puppies that he had recently found outside his building one morning as he was leaving for his job. He continued that he was sure that local gypsies had abandoned the puppies, although he had not witnessed the act, and said that such unacceptable behavior of Roma to both dogs and humans had to stop. The city hall sector in which he worked was the only district that collaborated with one of the biggest animal NGOs in Romania to spay and neuter as many animals as possible before they would be relocated in the city. The mayor of that sector was

Roma and was the only one to collaborate with NGOs, in order to provide free sterilization of street animals and pets.

Besides being portrayed as sneaky, violent, or unable to show compassion, the Roma population was marginalized via even more explicit paths of parasitization. One day, for example, as I was walking toward the library of the veterinary school at the University of Bucharest with a librarian I had met at the Library of the Romanian Academy (*Biblioteca Academiei Române*) and who had offered to help me make connections in other libraries to find information about breeds during state socialism, I found out something peculiar. The librarian told me that members of the Roma community were often referred to as “crows” because of the color of their skin, which was perceived as being darker than the skin of legitimate Romanian citizens. As explained in Chapters One and Two, crows had appeared in discourses with friends as an unwanted urban species that spoiled leisure spaces in the city, such as parks, by their fecal dirt. They had also appeared in archival material as one of the species the early socialist economy had stood against in the 1950s, prompting hunters at the time to kill them along with dogs, cats, wolves, foxes, and other species that were characterized as raptors or predators. The parallels between the parasitic orders in which both the Roma and crows seemed to belong were striking. Either due to their perceived color or to their being considered socially or economically useless, both crows and the Roma were often pictured as unwanted, as were street dogs.

Another example of such parasitization came from depictions of Roma communities and Romanian society in the 1800s that was presented in the recent Romanian film *Aferim!* (2015). The film tells the story of Carfin, a Roma citizen in Wallachia in 1835 who lived as a slave of one of the landowners of the area. The film starts with the journey of a local constable and his teenage son who have been hired to track down Carfin and return him to his owner after he is

accused of stealing money and has run away. As the constable travels in the countryside and conducts research about Carfin, we learn that Roma slavery was legitimate during that time, when Romania was still under Ottoman occupation. We also find out that the nickname “crow” was indeed commonly used to refer to Roma citizens. After the constable appears to humiliate and even abuse other Roma citizens whom he encounters in his journey while gathering information about Carfin, he manages to find him living in the house of an elderly peasant couple. On their trip back to Carfin’s master, the slave confesses that the real reason he is wanted is that he had an affair with his master’s wife. The constable promises Carfin that he will use his influence to convince the master only to beat Carfin and not to kill him. By the end of the movie, however, we find out that Carfin’s punishment is castration by the hand of his master. Roma citizens in the film are equated not only with crows but also with dogs, the sterilization of which during the time of my research was assumed to gradually diminish their numbers in more humane ways than euthanasia.

In the archival record, the marginalization of the Roma population was based on both their appearance and their habits. In a municipal meeting of 1932,¹⁵⁷ one of the council members brings to the attention of the other members that a group of Roma women have appeared in Bucharest selling boiled corn. As in other examples from that time, the presence of the Roma women was characterized as uncivilized, especially since the product they were selling, which was described as dirty,¹⁵⁸ was especially alluring to children. The discussion continued about how the dirty, boiled corn must have been the cause of the cases of dysentery that had appeared

¹⁵⁷ Municipality of Bucharest, Secretariat, Dossier 1/1932, Session of the General Community Council of the Municipality of Bucharest, Friday, July 22, 1932 (Primăria Municipiului București, Secretariat, Dosar 1/1932, Ședință Consiliului Gommunal General al Municipiului în Ziua de Vineri 22 Iulie 1932)

¹⁵⁸ ...cu toată murdăria lor...

in the city. The Roma's presence was characterized as unaesthetic and did not appear to conform to the council's standards of civilization.¹⁵⁹

The business was seen to require a major cleanup operation. As one of the council members put it, "You should know that this is not the quality of Roma women, to be clean."¹⁶⁰ Having entered Roma houses in the past, he said that he had been able to see for himself the level of dirtiness in such households and that the Roma were living in almost "animal misery." The members agreed that they could not keep "poisoning" citizens in such ways by letting them consume the corn sold by the Roma women. Besides, as the members emphasized, many of these women were also unethical, as evidenced by their suffering from syphilis. In much later regulations of the 1980s,¹⁶¹ articles also included measures for the management of "nomad and semi-nomad Roma" in the city. It was mentioned particularly that the circulation of such populations should be prevented, and that the establishment of tent camps in villages and communities should be banned.

4.4: Reading Sentience, Denying Personhood: Dog Eyes and Metro Beggars

One of my neighbors, Mrs. Emilia, would often talk to Negruțu, the fifty-pound black street dog that lived outside her block, holding his head between her hands and looking him in the eye. Sometimes she would clean his dried tears or pet him around the eyes while talking to him. "Look at his eyes," she told me one day. "He is a dog with a good soul." Throughout my

¹⁵⁹ ... de o murdărie și de o inestetică, care nu mai cadrează cu cerințele noastre de civilizație....

¹⁶⁰să știți ca numai această nu este calitatea țigancilor, ca să fie curate...

¹⁶¹ Official Gazette of the Socialist Republic of Romania, Decision no. 291 of 20 March 1985 (Buletinul Oficial al Republicii Socialiste România, Decizia nr. 291 din 20 Martie 1985)

research, discourses and practices concerning dog eyes and dog faces became interesting components of the recognition of animal personhood in more than one setting. Posters with sad-looking dogs inside cages would be displayed on the front lines of anti-euthanasia protests, and animal lovers would explain to me that their decision to start rescuing dogs was made after they looked a street dog in the eyes for the first time, which triggered their compassion. At private shelters, I saw people taking close-up pictures of dog faces so that the dogs' eyes would show. Such pictures would then be posted on Facebook along with a story about the dog's individual character in order to find a suitable adopter. As discussed in Chapter Three, dog eyes and faces were also a crucial component of pictures and representations of dogs that were to be adopted. People taking pictures of dogs at shelters focused on taking both a cute picture of the dog's face and a picture of the dog's body, preferably next to a human so a potential adopter could judge the dog's size.

One day, the dog trainer in an obedience class I was taking with Beju advised me to look at Beju in the eye, saying that establishing eye contact was a prerequisite for giving him an order. "It is not only about saying something to the dog," the dog trainer said. "You have to establish a relationship with him. He must trust you, and he should do what you tell him to do without hesitating. You have to treat him like a person." On other occasions, Beju was described as "really expressive" based on the movements of his head or the ways he looked at humans or toys. Such use of human eyes in observing canines looking at objects or directly at human faces appeared to be central to human and animal emotional attachments.

Such examples bring to mind Donna Haraway's (2008) argument about the need to explore the process through which both human and animal subjectification takes place when interspecies "contact zones" are established. However, in understanding processes of urban

marginalization in Bucharest, we need to explore what happens in those cases when such zones are not established at all, neither between different species nor between individual humans. Months after the aforementioned training session, I began to notice practices that were related to the invisibility of marginal human populations. One day, as I was waiting for the blue-line train to take me from the city hall archives in the Văcărești area to the central Unirii square, an announcement was made: “We ask you to not support begging by giving money. You have the right to a civilized trip.”¹⁶² It was during that trip that the politics of invisibility became clearer to me. The discourse on civilization was turned into a mechanism for the expulsion of the marginal, while the metro car was one of the places where mechanisms like the avoidance of eye contact were put into action.

While legitimate citizens had the right to civilization, beggars did not even have the right to a physical presence in the train. They could only sneak onto trains that were bought during the socialist period and consisted of separate cars. City hall was probably not able to afford to hire guards for each train car, in contrast to the single-compartment modern trains that would need two to four guards standing right next to the doors, making sure that every trip would run without problems. Every time I witnessed a beggar entering onto one of the noisy cars from the 1970s, I was surprised by the other passengers’ behavior of inattention toward them. Besides the lack of eye contact, their observance of the beggars’ physical appearance would also add to the dynamics through which such persons would be isolated and treated as intruders.

Such entrances in train cars would appear as parasitic interruptions (Serres 2007) to the car’s normal interactions that would take place between the stations. Social interactions would almost freeze, something that Katia Trumpener (1992) noted in her analysis of how Roma appear

¹⁶² “Va rugăm sa nu încurajati cerșetorie in metro dând băni. Aveți drept la o călătorie civilizată.”

in Western texts as freezing historical time. Inside the metro cars, most people would ignore the presence of the beggar, who would either approach passengers asking for money or just stand silently in the middle of the car holding a sign. The only time citizens seemed to give money to such passengers was around Christmas, when bands of Roma musicians entered the cars and sang Christmas carols.

Liviu Chelcea and Ioana Iancu (2015) recently provided a similar account of the parasitization of marginal populations in Bucharest that are seen as interrupting normal life in the city. Writing about *parcagii*, the self-appointed parking attendants in downtown Bucharest, the writers underline how misunderstandings about the nature of their “work” result in their marginalization, especially when they are seen as trespassing in middle-class spaces of leisure and consumption. While *parcagii* perceive their activities as “work,” middle-class drivers perceive them as an obstruction to the free parking and a disregard for proper work ethics. As the authors put it, because *parcagii* “are particularly visible, they are often singled out by middle-class fundamentalists who lament their existence using such terms as “rats,” “invasion,” “mafia,” “infection,” “parasites,” “young men who do not want to work,” “enemy number one in our community” (2015:70).¹⁶³ Beggars, too, perceive their activity as a legitimate request for help, while metro travellers perceive their appearance in the cars as an interruption to an otherwise smooth trip in the city, which legitimate citizens are entitled to enjoy. Both *parcagii* and beggars, however, are trying to become incorporated into the urban fabric and earn some money, either by

¹⁶³ For a similar discussion on the work of *parcagii*, the penalization of poverty in Romania, and privatizations of public spaces in Bucharest, also see Adrian Deoancă (2012), *Parcagii și anomii: Despre privatizarea spațiului public bucureștean*. Think Outside the Box. August 8. Electronic document at <http://totb.ro/parcagii-si-anomii-despre-privatizarea-spatiului-public-bucurestean>.

just asking for it or by opting for activities that could be seen as legitimate work instead of begging.

4.5: Invisibility and the Modern

In Bucharest, rendering someone visible as a person or a non-person is an act of modernity and civilization and rests on presuppositions about human and non-human capacity for iconic, indexical, and, most of all, symbolic associations (Peirce 1955 [1902]). If modernity were a project of dichotomization, then this story of personification uncovers how such a dichotomy is semiotically understood and reproduced, as well as the qualic presences and absences through which civilization becomes tangible. The presence of unwanted human or canine populations appears to alter some of modernity's qualia through interruptions in ideas of social order. Such ideas of modernity, however, whether contemporary or historical, are not exclusive to the middle and upper classes. They also result in the further marginalization of urban outcasts and in the perpetuation of what the privileged define as "uncivilized."

Ideas of dogs as dirty and dangerous that were discussed in Chapter One actually pointed to ideas of proper citizenship and orderly urban life, just as they did in the years of state socialism. In stories against feeding street dogs, much of the effort to convince citizens to stop their feeding practices was focused on how dogs would get "stuck" outside a building because of the food that animal lovers would provide, annoying those residents who didn't want to live alongside them. Such ideas were similar to ideologies of street dogs as being useful or harmful to an otherwise flourishing economic system of the 1950s. As I discussed in Chapter Four, there was a time when city hall's plan was to forbid the feeding of street dogs. Such ideas of initiating a transaction, financial or otherwise, that would require one party to give but not receive was

similar to considerations of human marginal populations. Both street dogs and marginal populations were seen as not participating in reciprocal systems of interaction and exchange—basic conditions of human sociality, as Marcel Mauss has already explained (Mauss 1990 [1925]).

One afternoon, as I was having a glass of beer with some friends in one of Bucharest's downtown bars, a beggar approached our table. Barefoot and with dirty hands and tattered clothes, he asked for a cigarette. While most of my friends ignored him, assuming he would leave, I kept looking at him. After a couple of minutes of his staying right next to our table while my friends continued their discussion as if he weren't there, I offered him a cigarette. Before he had time to thank me, a girl from the next table—who later departed in a Range Rover—yelled at me, “What are you doing? Now he'll never leave!” One of my friends, an artist, asked me why I had given the cigarette and insisted that the beggar leave. The man took a few steps back and stood there staring at us until everyone completely ignored him again. For many, making one's own suffering invisible became a choice about whether or not to participate in a nonreciprocal mode of interaction.

Rendering an individual or a social group visible or invisible was how different modes of governance also dealt with marginality. According to some stories, during the 1960s and 1970s, Nicolae Ceaușescu forcibly moved the Roma, along with the homeless, inside socialist-type apartments, the living conditions of which were actually much worse than the ones legitimate citizens were moved to. It appeared that Nicolae Ceaușescu had tried to do with such communities exactly what Traian Băsescu, the former president of Romania, and Sorin Oprescu, the former mayor of Bucharest, had tried to do with street dogs, as discussed in Chapter Four: getting them inside apartments through adoption campaigns so they would not be visible. As I

explained in Chapter One, discourses about a civilized city and civilized citizens during socialism also included the ways in which the city was aesthetically presented. Regulations in the 1960s, for example, educated citizens about how to hang laundry in domestic spaces so that it wouldn't be visible by passersby and thus wouldn't become signs of an uncivilized urban environment.

Civilization appeared in many cases to be a matter of invisibility and not of finding feasible, long-term solutions. City hall practices concerning the capturing of street dogs, for example, were for a while much more effective in downtown areas than in residential neighborhoods. Although dogcatchers continued to catch dogs in downtown streets and parks, they didn't seem to visit the neighborhoods as often, at least at the beginning of my research. This was because downtown urban areas were considered to be exhibits of civilization, with a greater chance of being visited by tourists and foreign businessmen, while residential areas presented dog catchers with practical difficulties, such as the resistance of citizens. In response to my question during interviews with anti-dog citizens about a feasible solution to the problem of street dogs, people either advocated for euthanasia or expressed indifference to the fate of the dogs as long as the dogs would be hidden from view.

4.6: Marginalization and the Symbolic

While the way in which dogs combine person and non-person qualities is more obvious than the ways in which humans might be seen as persons or not, there are population groups that are denied person-like qualities in more than one way. Examples such as the above show that both humans and dogs can be treated as pure material bodies that sometimes become parasitic by forming illegitimate attachments to legitimate citizens. The processes of marginalization I have

described thus far, however, never stood alone. Rather, they were usually related to ideologies of innocence and guilt, to conceptions of agency and responsibility, and to moral worlds. While in some cases, animal lovers formed emotional—and not parasitic—attachments to street animals, such attachments were not formed with beggars, Roma, and the homeless, who were always seen as parasitic and incapable of having emotions. Moreover, the parasitization discourses in which such populations, especially the Roma, were cast, often equated them with street animals or other urban parasites that were defined as such because of their uselessness and negative characteristics.

In his book *How Forests Think* (2013) Eduardo Kohn analyzes the capacity of animals and other entities, such as the forest, to exhibit a “self.” Drawing on Bateson’s idea of canine meta-level of communication and playful nips (Bateson 1972), Kohn talks about the symbolic as the only semiotic process that is unique to humans. At the same time, he sees iconic and indexical meaning making as a capacity common to humans and other species. In Bucharest, animal lovers understood modes of human-canine communication, and they furthermore related them to worlds of symbolic representation. Such human-made symbolism of street dogs exhibited either the recognition or the negation of such creatures’ ability to be involved with iconic and indexical patterns of understanding life and their human others. While it was assumed that dogs, just like humans, have the ability to express emotions and needs through bodily signals or eye contact, it was also assumed that canines are incapable of complex communicative practices like lying, pretending, or tricking. The only human population that seemed to belong to similar orders as street dogs were children, who were also seen as innocent beings that hadn’t yet mastered the more complicated communicative techniques of tricking others. However, Roma children escaped such categorizations, as it was assumed that the Roma were inherently good at

lying or at evoking pity, skills they acquired at an early age; for them, deceptive practices were not something they learned later in life.

Both the innocence of dogs and the guilt of humans appeared as the ideological worlds to which processes of marginalization are bound. As people talked about the absence of individual responsibility that characterized beggars living in the streets, they also pointed out that dogs cannot lie. They also mentioned that while dogs are not responsible for their own situation, humans are. Animal-versus-human agency was related to making wrong decisions in life, as was the ability to trick others for food or money, a behavior that would be seen as another parasitic action and not as a need for survival. In some cases, dog rescuers and private shelter owners were also seen as liars who didn't really care for the well-being of dogs but instead exploited them in order to make money for themselves from national and international donations. Which group was hit hardest by the post-socialist crisis of the 1990s—whether it was the Roma, the former socialist industrial workers, or women and other citizens that became rescuers—remained unquestioned in such discourses. The opportunities such people were given before making a choice about their lives remained unquestioned as well.

I never discovered whether innocence and guilt could be detected in human or canine eyes. However, moral discourses behind actions of care and support fueled discussion in various directions. In public debates about euthanasia, animal lovers were accused of advocating for the welfare of animals rather than humans. In counter arguments, animal lovers would site their limited resources, which were barely sufficient to sponsor the dogs already in their care. Moreover, they would accuse city hall and opponents of euthanasia of indifference to Bucharest's problems, whether human or animal. Such interplay of responsibility discourses was related to the politics of invisibility I have mentioned so far. Whether compassion or disdain

were shown to street dogs or the homeless depended upon the canine or human qualities people chose to see.

Whether parasitization is a basic convention of social life, as Serres supports, or not, ideas of individual or common responsibility and the paths people “chose” after the revolution became central to understandings of personhood. It is this state of mind that street dogs confound. Being at the intersection of objects and subjects and of material urban bodies and immaterial superpowers yet also at the center of a multitude of other meanings, street dogs became a critical point in discussing and deciding who has a right to life and to life in the city. Street dogs also became indicators of morality for different classes as well as mediators in understanding and discriminating against human others. Such ideas often derived from the ways in which street dogs were seen to be using urban space: either as inert objects that slept and sat on the pavement while observing urban life (as did beggars), or as active subjects who moved and exhibited interactional capacities through their ability to beg and initiate interactions.

Being beggars themselves, street dogs were seen either as the victims of history and society, since they were remnants of socialist urbanism policies and sometimes abused by citizens, or as responsible for Romania’s “non-civilized” situation. While the marginal groups I discussed here were rarely lucky enough to be seen as victims (mainly due to their ability for meta-communicative practices), they were categorized with dogs when responsibility was assigned for backwardness and when producing the victimization of the country. And yet there were times when marginalized humans were equated with animals, and times when their basic differences were blurred. Such blurring was discovered in discourses about similarities between such populations and street dogs, and it uncovered the politics of seeing, being seen, and

recognizing the existence or nonexistence of souls, along with the everyday choices about communication that were related to them.

Referring to qualia as the unique qualities that material items carry, Webb Keane (2006) notices that the bundling of such qualities is associated with human choices and that usually, a series of other properties waits to be uncovered. Similarly, I have claimed that personification and the making of subjects or objects from beings such as dogs, which clearly combine both object- and subject-like qualities, are processes of prioritizing qualia. I have also claimed that the ways in which humans are socially evaluated, understood, and treated is also a process of prioritizing qualia. Besides such prioritization, the act of personification involved the politics of invisibility, public discourses, and ideologies about modernity. It also involved ethical choices, compassionate moralities, and the politico-economic systems in which social discrimination is embedded. Once again, street dogs along marginal humans appeared to have the character of boundary entities and to become the center of selective significations. Whether boundary “objects,” or not, they both humans and dogs circulated among different levels of personhood and through different positions in a subject-object spectrum.

Chapter Five: Following Breeds: Urban Culture, Market Economy, and Purity as Semiosis

The purpose of this chapter is to explore the interconnections between discourses of breeds and discourses of pets in the country in order to further understand the basis on which street dogs are seen as unfit urban inhabitants. While Chapter One discussed how discourses of purity, health, and nature in the city contributed to the marginalization of street dogs by portraying them as dirty and dangerous, and Chapter Three discussed how both city hall and NGOs advocated for citizens' caring for street dogs inside apartments rather than on the street, this chapter links discourses of dogs belonging to domestic spaces with the purity of purebred dogs. On the one hand, it examines how purebreds are valued on the basis of their physical characteristics. On the other hand, it explores how having a purebred pet occurred as a sign of urban culture in the 1930s and a characteristic of the new market economy in the 1990s. Besides examining the role of having a purebred dog in the culture of keeping pets, this chapter also discusses how discourses of purity work as yet another mechanism of exclusion. As in Chapter Four, which analyzed the parallel mechanisms behind the marginalization of both human and canine populations, this chapter looks at breed defects as a mechanism of devaluation.

The discussion of breed defects brings us again to the issue of dog subjectification and objectification. A dog's physical traits were often crucial in the process of its objectification, either determining its value through traits or defects in the case of purebreds or devaluing it as polluting and dirty in the case of street dogs. The same mechanism lay behind the ways in which purebred dogs were commodified in the newly constituted market economy during the 1990s. However, the devaluation and objectification of dogs, which resulted from either their

parasitization or their use as status symbols, was substituted by their subjectification, which occurred on a ground of more sentimentally tangible characteristics. Sweet eyes and fluffy tails, as traits that were alluring to people's emotional worlds, often resulted in the formation of attachments. Being loved or being looked at first by a dog was often seen to initiate an interaction and a long-term connection. In contrast to the parasitization of street dogs that were seen as wasting resources without giving anything in return, sentimental and affectionate exchanges between street dogs and humans resulted to dog personification.

This chapter analyzes material from agility games, dog shows, dog-training sessions, and dog-themed magazines and other related publications. While discussing how purebred dogs became a trend after 1989, the material presented here also provides information about the status of purebred dogs in the socialist system, as well as discourses about animal protection that appeared after 1989. While there are examples from purebred dogs and breed shows, mainly from the 1970s, it appears that purebred dogs entered commodification routes after 1989. Besides the dogs themselves, dog-related products and services, such as food, kennels, pet sitting, and grooming, signified new ways in which purebred pets became embedded in the new market economy. At the same time, street dogs became even more marginalized as useless entities. In addition, discourses of animal protection, which were prevalent during the same period, point to discourses of compassion, which were articulated by NGOs and communities of animal lovers in Western Europe, as being yet another representation of the character of post-socialism. While purebred dogs became an expression of a new way of living in urban centers, street dogs became a metaphor for post-socialist poverty and decline.

5.1: Purebred Dogs as Passion and Spectacle, Purity as Semiosis

At the same time as the 2013 citywide protests that were described in Chapter One over the euthanasia law, Roșia Montană, and bicycle infrastructure, a series of events took place in northern parks such Herastrau intended to promote life with pets. Such events, which primarily showcased purebreds, included the promotion of agility games and dog-training courses and often featured dog trainers offering some kind of show, either inviting dog owners and their dogs to practice an agility game round or performing tricks with dogs that had already been trained; stations at which children could play, draw, or practice tricks with their canine friends were also available.

The events were usually organized by agility-training centers such as Woof Woof Planet (Planetă Ham Ham) or the Association of Working Dogs (Asociația Cânilor Utilitari) and were sponsored by dog-food companies such as Purina and Royal Canin. In an agility-game competition I observed earlier that year, prizes for the winners included medals and dog food provided by the sponsors. The trainers distributed informational materials—also provided by the sponsors—to participants and audience members. A booklet that was distributed at another event, titled “Train People to Train their Dogs,” described basic commands that one could teach his or her dog, such as “sit,” “down,” and “come,” along with advice about how to properly reward dogs with training treats manufactured by the same brand that produced the brochure. Dogs, owners, breeders, and trainers were all seemingly embedded in a market system that treated dogs as commodities and owners as consumers.

Street dogs were almost entirely absent from such events. They were mainly visible as

inhabitants of the parks, and they sometimes even observed the games. In a dog-show competition I observed in the spring of 2014 that was organized by the Romanian Kennel Club (*Asociația Chinologică Română*) in Parcul Tei, also on the northern side of the city, I noticed a white street dog sitting in the stands near the exhibition area and paying attention to both the purebreds and their owners. The only street dog I remember participating in such events was a dog named Codruț that looked rather like a fox terrier mix. Codruț had been adopted and trained and had become skilled at agility games. Since his former life in the streets gave him a certain allure with audiences, Codruț was promoted as a central attraction in such shows, portrayed as being both smarter than the other dogs and having to work harder in order to learn tricks that the rest of the dogs learned as puppies. He was also seen as capable of adapting to both domesticity and street life, and his intelligence was associated with his portrayal as a tramp. Codruț was used as a marketing tool in order to prove the value of the species by highlighting their mental capacities. In the end, though, consumers chose to buy purebred dogs, mainly for reasons of aesthetics.



Figure 61: A street dog watching a purebred show sponsored by Belcando Specialty Dog Food



Figure 62: Agility games exhibition at IOR Park

At purebred competitions, owners and breeders were pictured as having a passion¹⁶⁴ for their pets; owning a purebred dog and spending time with it or for it was promoted as a hobby—and a way of life—requiring devotion. Such images contrasted with the way in which many animal lovers, especially those belonging to the former working class and those who were attached and devoted to the care of street dogs, were seen by citizens and public officials as being mentally unstable. The discourse of dog breeding as a passion appeared on banners and advertisements of dog-related products. Although animal lovers and dog breeders seemed to me

¹⁶⁴ For a discussion about the link between economy and the production of sentiments see Hirschman (1977), Silver (1990), Rothschild (2001)

to be equally devoted to dogs, loving street animals was seen as a mental illness because of the inability of street dogs to demonstrate any redeeming or reciprocal value besides producing dirt in the city.

I have already discussed in previous chapters how images of purebred dogs were present throughout the city, from parks and malls to advertising banners and commercials. Purebreds, however, were also present at Pallady, the public shelter and former *ecarisaj* that was one of the shelters responsible for managing street dogs. When rescuers visited the shelter, they always prioritized purebreds over street dogs since purebreds were considered to be more adoptable. Once, a rescuer friend of mine sent me to the shelter to ask about the fate of a Rottweiler that she already knew to be on the premises. Cage cleaners would also talk to me about breeds and take me to cages with purebreds. The day I met with Beju and his sponsors at the public shelter, cage cleaners had shown me some white mutts first, and then they had tried to convince me to take home a Pekingese. The authority's website featured a family of Labrador retrievers carrying their leashes in their mouths, while I was surprised to discover that the office at the shelter, where the veterinarians and secretaries rested and processed paperwork, was decorated with magazine pictures of purebred animals. Representations of dogs in the office were contrasted starkly with the actual dogs in the shelter itself, where street dogs, some of them sick, were cramped in dirty cages waiting for either adoption or euthanasia.



Figure 63: Pictures of purebreds decorating the offices of the public shelter

Animal lovers often portrayed veterinarians who accepted to euthanize dogs as unethical and heartless. They pictured them as unprofessional, since they didn't see them as adhering to the work ethic, which demanded veterinarians to euthanize animals only for medical reasons. Some veterinarians at the public shelter, however, besides dealing with the sterilization or other medical procedures involving street dogs, were also breeders of purebred dogs. One of them, who was also a breeder talked to me during a chance meeting that we had in Rome during a short trip I made. She talked to me about the difficulties of her job and explained how the city hall subcontracted with many veterinarians to perform the euthanizations once a week. She also talked to me about dog competition shows, and invited me to see one of them, which would take place one month afterwards.

A main element of such dog competition shows was proving the degree of purity of

individual dogs that belonged to a specific breed. Romanian shepherds, terriers, and poodles entered different exhibition areas one after the other, while judges observed the dogs' physical traits. First, judges noted how the dogs walked and their posture when walking or standing still. Sometimes they checked the dog's teeth, eyes, ears, legs, tails, and genitals. As a breeder of Airedale terriers explained to me, all parts of a dog's body needed to be perfectly aligned. It was possible, for example, for dogs to lose a competition if their paws had a slight outward or inward inclination when compared to the breed's standards. Such variations in physical characteristics were described as defects, some of which could be identified by breeders only when a dog was fully grown; buying a puppy with defects was something that many people could not avoid.

Personality traits were also described as defining a specific breed. Such personality traits, however, were not descriptive of individual dogs—as happened with street dogs—but were discussed as general tendencies that were common to the breed as a whole. Purebred personality traits included intelligence, for example, while physical characteristics described strength or muscularity. Both physical characteristics and personality traits were components of breed definition, determining what made a fox terrier a fox terrier and not a bulldog. The more representative such physical and personality traits were of the collective concept of the “ideal” individual, the more representative of a breed—and thus “pure”—a dog was considered to be.

Characteristics describing breed purity were many times explained through diagrams. Theories about the purity of purebred dogs focus on characteristics, dimensions, and coloring. Examples from a book written by a Romanian expert on the four Romanian shepherd breeds, titled *Romanian Shepherd Dog of Bucovina—references in breed standardization* (Moroşanu 2014), include long explanations and diagrams of both physical and personality traits and defects. Diagrammatic depictions of characteristics exhibit how another part of the Peircean

theory is seen to complete the puzzle of dogs' embeddedness in theories of valuation and devaluation. Breed characteristics are distilled through *iconic* relations to other characteristics that are devalued as defects, in similar ways in which beggars, socialism, or post-socialist aspects of urban life are devalued as being non-authentic replicas of legitimate citizens who are embedded in exchanges of economic character, of interwar times of development and glory, and of Western European urban civilization. Breed defects belong to a system of comparisons, the purpose of which is to create value (or diminish it) through the establishment of relations and qualities. While breed personality traits are heavily invested with symbolic understandings of dog behaviors and reflexes, canine physical characteristics are defined as signs of purity or defect by virtue of their iconic resemblance to similar characteristics of other individual dogs.

In the two images that follow, for example, characteristics of the cranium and movement of the Romanian shepherd dog of Bucovina are exemplified with the help of geometry, as stated by the author. The first image of four sketches illustrates the ideal movement for the breed in contrast to faulty walking. The quadrilateral balance of the dog when standing, between points A, B, C, and D pictured in the first image, supports symmetrical movement that is coordinated by both anterior and posterior limbs on each side of the body. When moving, the limbs form equal angles that are vertical from their point of intersection. The vertical axes that go through the shoulders and pelvis of the dog and the ones that go through the forelimbs and hind quarters form equal angles. As it is noted under the sketches, this is how a beautiful symmetry of movement is shaped. The sketches on the right page similarly illustrate a symmetrical movement, showing the alignment of lines that go through the scapula and femur and the foreleg and tibia. The second image similarly explains how the characteristics of the left side of the top of the head are correct, while the ones in the middle and last rows are characterized by a pointed

or flat snout and a narrow and overly wide cranium, respectively. The right page explains how in the top right image, the protruding zygomatic arches are a defective characteristic, and the rest of the images explain how a protruding occipital bone is also a sign of impurity.

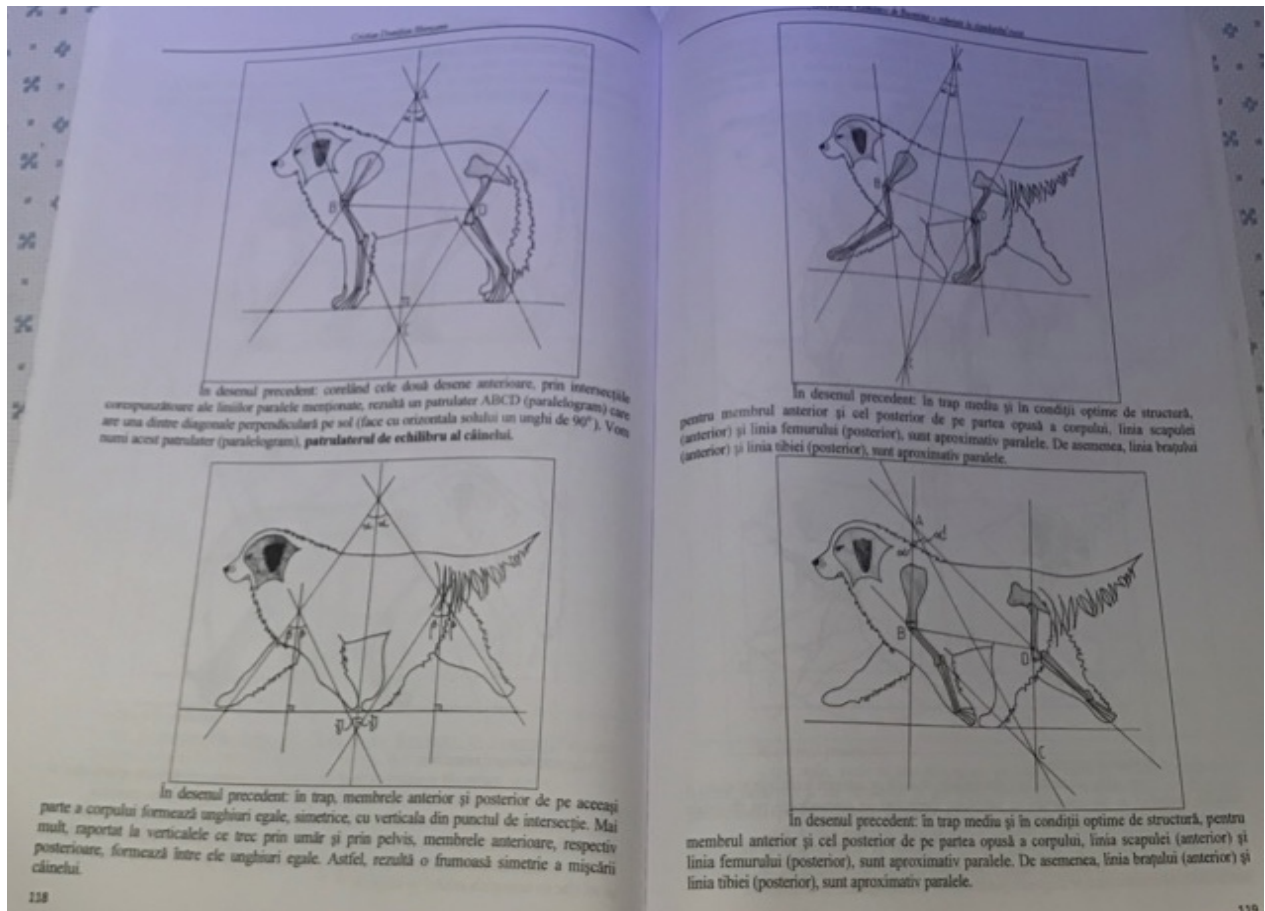


Figure 64: Sketches explaining right movement in contrast to defective walking¹⁶⁵

¹⁶⁵ Image available at *Romanian Shepherd Dog of Bucovina—references in breed standardization* (Moroșanu 2014),

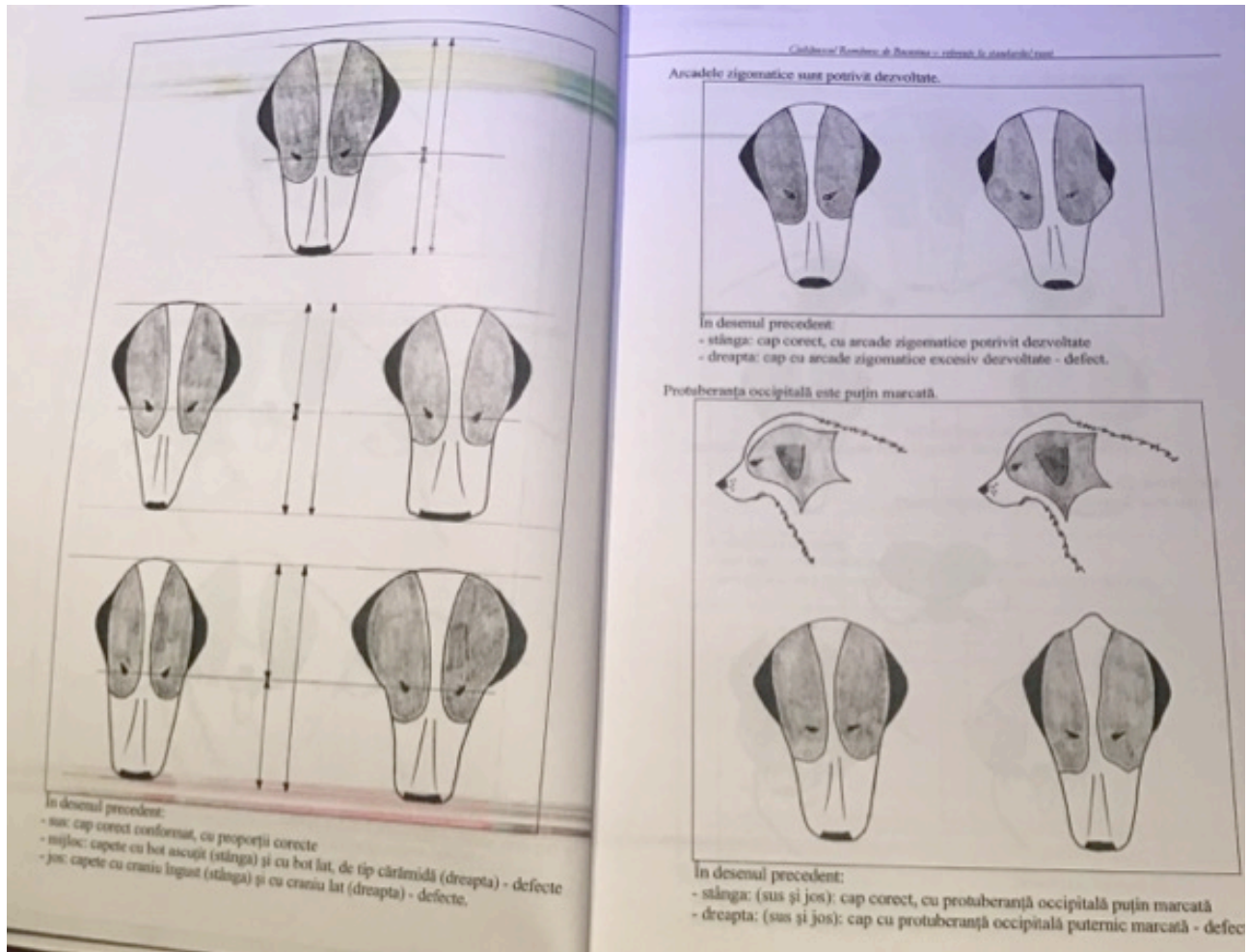


Figure 65: Sketches explaining the right and faulty characteristics of crania¹⁶⁶

Similar sketches describe the shape of correctly and wrongly shaped snouts, teeth, noses, eyes, ears, lips, vertebrae, paws, legs, chest, tails, shoulders, knees, and toes, as well as variations in gait, coat, and coloration. Some defects, such as an all-white coat, are described as being acceptable; others, such as an all-black coat, as being tolerated; still others, such as a striped, tiger-like coat, are considered unacceptable. Certain variations, such as a coat with white and black patches, are considered ideal. Defects such as very short hair are considered major defects,

¹⁶⁶ Image available at *Romanian Shepherd Dog of Bucovina—references in breed standardization* (Moroșanu 2014),

while the absence of a tail or the existence of an atrophic one are considered minor defects.

Among other information, the book includes a history of the breed's standardization; information on the breed's spine and legs, proportions of other body parts, and comparisons with other shepherd breeds (or "breeds of the mountains"), such as Molossoids, Swiss mountain dogs, and pinscher-schnauzers.

Understanding dogs through breed defects, though, offered a stark contrast to the ways in which most of the street dogs were perceived. Most of the animal lovers I knew did not consider street dogs' physical characteristics in the same way that such information was considered for purebreds. Street dogs were not held to standards of perfection as were the purebreds. Beju, for example, has an intensely protruding occipital bone, an underbite, and crooked front legs, while his head is disproportionately small for the rest of his body. Many other street dogs had lost teeth, tail, or ears in fights with other dogs or had been neutered or spayed during the sterilization project that had preceded the enactment of the euthanasia law. While breeding was at the epicenter of attention for purebreds, the reproduction of street dogs was seen as one of the most problematic aspects of mutt life in the city. Many NGO anti-euthanasia campaigns, proposing an alternative to euthanasia, stressed that sterilization was the only feasible, long-term solution. As they put it, mopping the water on the floor is not enough; one needs to turn off the faucet.



Figure 66: Airedale terrier, champion in its category at the dog show competition, Parcul Tei, spring 2014



Figure 67: A judge checking the testicles of a Romanian shepherd dog at a dog show competition before choosing it as a champion. Parcul Tei, spring, 2014



Figure 68: Mioritic Romanian shepherd dogs parading at a dog show competition at Parcul Tei, spring 2014

In contrast to the strictly measured characteristics that were criteria for determining breed purity, there were other characteristics perceived by owners of purebreds and advocates of street dogs alike that de-objectified their dogs. Such characteristics were the ones mainly responsible for the formation of emotional attachments. I once spoke with a friendly couple about their dog, a female terra nova (Newfoundland) named Tuba, who explained that the dog had recently moved to the husband's family in the country because it was shedding too much hair in the apartment, making their life with three small daughters much more difficult. The couple explained that Tuba had a defect. Although they had bought the dog for almost eight hundred Euros, Tuba was not able to win at dog show competitions, even though she had come with a dossier full of documents and a pedigree certification. As the couple explained, the dog's

mandible was shorter than it should have been, a fact difficult to discern at an earlier age and only discovered later at a competition. The couple assumed that Tuba's defect was the fault of the breeder, who had probably bred a medium-sized with a larger-sized dog. Although they expressed disappointment about their bad luck with Tuba, the wife concluded her story by telling me that Tuba's shorter mandible must have been the reason she looked so cute and non-threatening.

Street dogs and cats were understood and loved on the basis of traits that made them lovable, as Tuba had been, even though their adoptive parents or street sponsors often tried to associate them with a breed. At the waiting room of a veterinarian clinic I visited weekly, for example, clients were often seen trying to match the color, fur, face, or tail of their rescued dogs and cats with pictures of the breeds they'd seen on posters showing "Dogs of the World" or "Cats of the World." Such citizens assumed that breed characteristics were present in the street dogs and cats they adopted, so although they didn't try to find purity in them, they still sought breed traits. However, in the end, most of them talked about how their animals were friendly, loving, docile, cute, funny, fluffy, or playful.

Often while visiting parks with friends, I would have conversations about Beju's breed characteristics. The two most frequent comments I would get about Beju were that he had a *față de fetiță* ("face of a girl") and *ceva din rasa in el* ("something from a breed in him"). Beju was often identified as being a Pekingese dog; as many people told me, one of his two parents must have been a Pekingese. In such stories, a degree of purity was assumed at the level of Beju's ancestors. Although I could certainly imagine that one of the thousands of dogs that had bred in the streets of Bucharest for generations must have been a Pekingese or looked like a Pekingese, other people assumed that Beju was half *maidanez* (one of the terms used for street dogs) and

half “Pekinez.” However, in most cases, such people also noticed that Beju was loving when licking their hands, how he had sweet eyes when looking at them, and how his tail was *pufoasă* (“fluffy”) or *stufoasă* (“bushy”) when he wagged it. Finally, they noticed that his crooked front legs made him look funny and cute. Indeed, in contrast to the criteria that were used to determine breed purity and defects, Beju’s value seemed to come from those imperfections and elements that caused him to be understood as cute and loving.

At adoption campaigns, the value of street dogs was measured by their character and, unless they were a purebred mix, almost never from their physical characteristics. During adoption events at parks, for example, organizations had dossiers with pictures of dogs that were available for adoption. Descriptions of the dogs as being friendly, playful, timid, or extrovert accompanied pictures of the dogs at public or private shelters. Daisy, the dog pictured below, for example, is described as feminine and very timid. In contrast to purebreds, the adoption of street dogs was expected to occur when they were represented as subjects rather than objects for consumption.



Figure 69: “Daisy, for adoption. Character: A bit timid, very feminine”

5.2: Purebred Dogs as Signifiers of Urban Culture—1930s

As explained in previous chapters, the interwar period in Romania is still celebrated as a period of elegance, Europeanness, and urban development, a period when it appeared essential that Bucharest develop in ways similar to Western capitals, especially Paris. Such a setting was also the time during which purebreds became symbols of a genuine upper-class urban culture and signs of a civilized urban center.

The Romanian Kennel Club, which was founded on November 21, 1934, as the Romanian Cynologic Federation (*Federațiunea Chinologică Româna*) and was still in operation during the time of my research, published a journal named “Our Dogs” (*Căini Noștri*)¹⁶⁷ that

¹⁶⁷ “Our Dogs, Year I, No.1, March 1938” (*Căini Noștri*, Anul I, Nr. 1, Martie 1938)

educated dog owners about various breeds and also the care of purebred dogs. The magazine specified the scope of the Kennel Club as the breeding of dogs, especially of the four types of Romanian shepherd dogs—the Carpathian, Mioritic, Bucovina, and Raven breeds; the keeping of breeding records and dog lineages; the collaboration with other countries on breeding issues; the organization of expositions; and the issuance of pedigree certifications. The journal advertised such activities and sought wider membership, especially among those who were interested in perfecting the Romanian breeds. Some journal issues informed readers of breed characteristics and noted the fact that pedigree certification increased the monetary value of a dog.¹⁶⁸

King Carol II was considered the honorary president of the association during that time, and the first pages of some issues included pictures of him with other members of the nobility visiting canine expositions; both the king and the royal family were pictured as fans of the “canine sport.”¹⁶⁹ Some issues featured a column named “Our Friends with Their Friends” that included stories of upper-class citizens who owned purebreds, among whom were Mrs. Don,¹⁷⁰ who owned a well-groomed chow chow, Mrs. Burlet with her purebred dog Tzouky, and Mrs. Petrescu, the wife of general Petrescu, with her purebred named Sasa.¹⁷¹ The women posed in fur coats and stylish hats as they walked in the streets of the city with their leashed purebred pets. The magazine warned such owners of purebreds that the authorities were poisoning street dogs in

¹⁶⁸ “Our Dogs, Year I, No. 2, April 1938” (Câini Noștri, Anul I, Nr. 2, Aprilie 1938)

¹⁶⁹ “Our Dogs, Year I, No. 1, March 1938” (Câini Noștri, Anul I, Nr. 1, Martie 1938)

¹⁷⁰ “Our Dogs, Year I, No. 1, March 1938” (Câini Noștri, Anul I, Nr. 1, Martie 1938)

¹⁷¹ “Our Dogs, Year I, No. 3, May/June 1938” (Câini Noștri, Anul I, Nr. 3, Mai-Iunie 1938)

the neighborhoods of the capital and that they should always have their dog wear a muzzle for protection, even if the dog was right next to them and leashed.¹⁷²



Figure 70: The cover of the magazine “Our Dogs,” 1938¹⁷³

¹⁷² “Our Dogs, Year I, No. 3, May/June 1938” (Câini Noștri, Anul I, Nr. 3, Mai-Iunie 1938)

¹⁷³ Material provided by the Library of the Romanian Academy (*Biblioteca Academiei Române*)

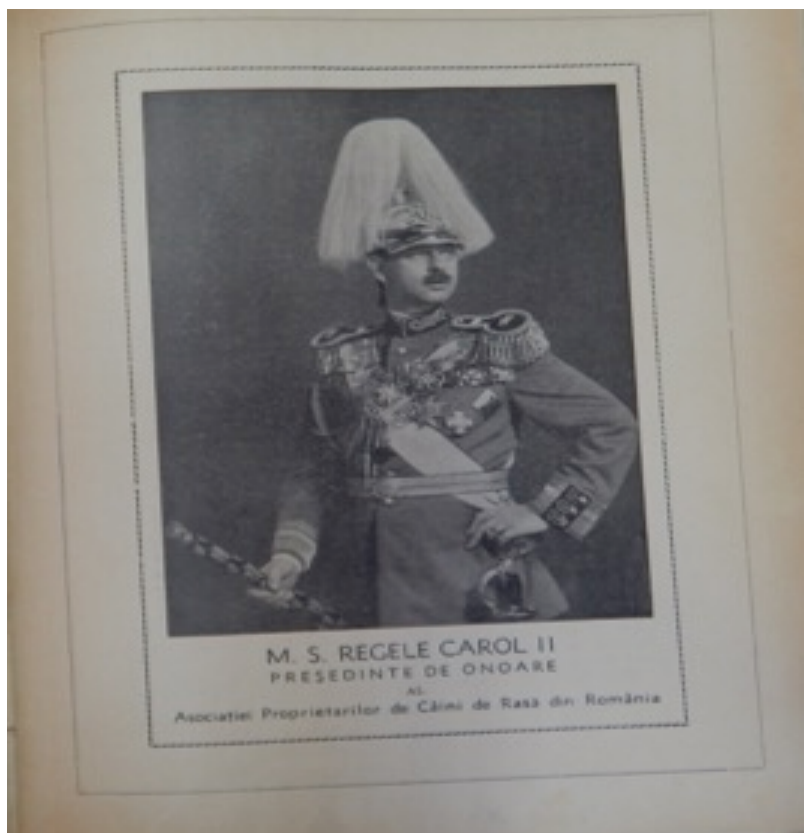


Figure 71: King Carol II, honorary president of the Romanian Dog Kennel, 1938¹⁷⁴

¹⁷⁴ Material provided by the Library of the Romanian Academy (*Biblioteca Academiei Române*)



Figure 72: The King and the Voievod (grand prince) Mihai visiting a canine exposition, 1938¹⁷⁵

¹⁷⁵ Material provided by the Library of the Romanian Academy (*Biblioteca Academiei Române*)



Figure 73: “Our Friends with their Friends” article, 1938¹⁷⁶

Among the breeds featured in the magazine, the four Romanian shepherd dogs were treated as a source of national pride, and articles described how Romanian shepherds had always been integral to traditional Romanian households in the country. In addition to describing breed characteristics, articles included advice about the best ways to care for a dog, such as by taking good care of its fur, and information about aesthetic surgeries for specific breeds, such as the docking of ears and tails.¹⁷⁷ Among such articles, one could also find advertisements for dog vitamins, grooming products, and places to buy purebred puppies. Sometimes, articles included information about dog body language or specific breed personalities.

¹⁷⁶ Material provided by the Library of the Romanian Academy (*Biblioteca Academiei Române*)

¹⁷⁷ “Our Dogs, Year I, No. 2, April 1938” (*Câini Noștri, Anul I, Nr. 2, Aprilie 1938*)

Diagrams of breed purity and defects were also common during this period. The picture below compares the defect of superior and inferior prognathism of the maxilla and mandible (on the left) with the correct denture (on the right). Similarly, the “rabbit-like” paws and a very “soft” or “hard” paw grasping the ground that are shown on the left are considered defects, in contrast to the “normal” medium grasping and “cat-like” paws that are depicted on the right. As for back legs, both “cow’s elbows” on the left and crooked, “O-shaped” back legs on the right are considered defects.

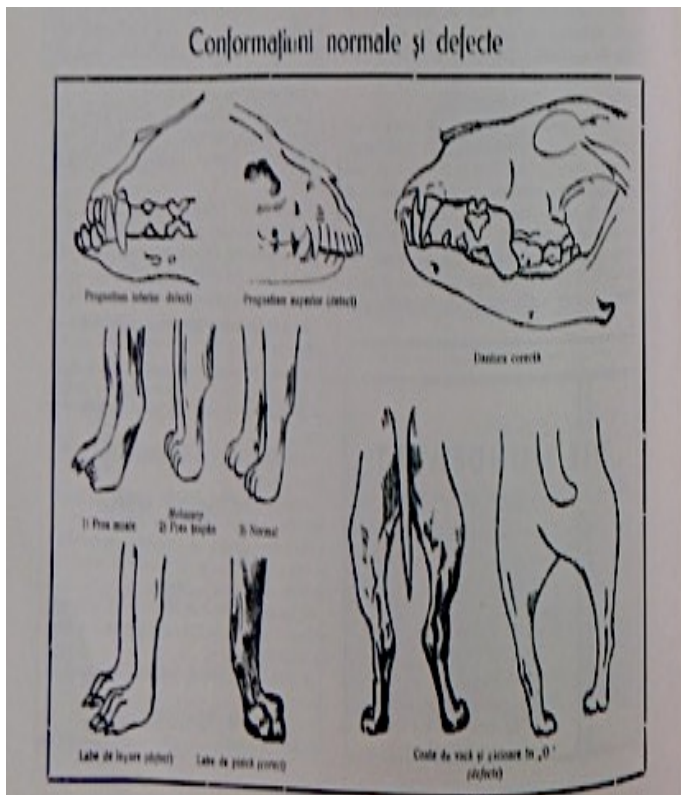


Figure 74: Normal characteristics and defects table, 1938¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁸ Material provided by the Library of the Romanian Academy (*Biblioteca Academiei Române*)

5.3: Purebred Dogs during State Socialism—1970s

When I travelled to Bucharest in the summer of 2015 to conduct follow-up research, I visited two of my former neighbors in Titan, Mr. and Mrs. Stancu, a couple in their 70s. Knowing that I now lived abroad, Mr. and Mrs. Stancu invited me into their apartment, where they served me biscuits and warm coffee into which they dipped a ball of ice cream. That day, they showed me how Vulpu and Negruța, the two former street dogs they had adopted, had adapted to apartment life. Each dog had its own space in the living room, and both of them had learned how to jump into the tub after walks to have their paws washed and their fur combed. A year earlier, when I met Mr. Stancu walking Negruța in the midst of a late evening snowstorm as I was walking Beju, Mr. Stancu described to me how he fought with the dog each step of the way when he tried to bring it inside—first into their residential building, then into the elevator, and then into the apartment. After his first successful effort, from which he bled from Negruța's bites, he didn't walk her for twenty-four hours, until she begged to go outside and use the bathroom. Mr. Stancu had to show Negruța who the new boss was.



Figure 75: Vulpu in the tub after taking a walk



Figure 76: Negruța, cozy in her spot in the living room



Figure 77: Former Dogs of Mr. and Mrs. Stancu. Țițelika, a former street dog, and a teckel with her puppies they had during socialism.

On the day of my visit, the couple also told me about Țițelika, a former street dog they had found freezing in a phone booth in the 1990s, and a teckel dog that Mrs. Stancu owned in the 1970s. While I had heard stories about some people owning purebreds during the period of state socialism, Mrs. Stancu's story surprised me when she explained that she used to take her teckel to shows during that period. Except for some stories about citizens who owned Pekingese dogs, the only record of purebreds during state socialism I had come across until then was that of Nicolae Ceaușescu's two black Labrador retrievers, Șarona and Corbu, which he had received as a gift from the British. Since owning a purebred dog was assumed to be a bourgeois habit and thus a taboo, this was a fact that had been made public only after the Revolution and the collapse of the regime in 1989.

When I asked Mr. and Mrs. Stancu for more information about purebred dogs during state socialism, they explained that breeds like German shepherds, cocker spaniels, and Pekingese were fashionable during the 1970s among people who loved dogs. Pet ownership was not very popular, however. Mrs. Stancu showed me the program and catalog of a canine exposition from 1978 that showed very few participants. Some of the breeds that participated in the show included Caniche (poodle), Teckel, Pointer, Brac, Setter, Boxer, Doberman, German Shepherd, Collie, Romanian Shepherd, and Rerrier. Other material from informational leaflets included articles about Vizslas, Schnauzer Terriers, Saint Bernards, Terra Novas, Fox Terriers, Airedale Terriers, Beagles, Irish Setters, Scottish Setters, English Setters, Greyhounds, Pekingeses, Maltezes, Pomeranians, Chihuahuas, and Basset Hounds.

Dog-related publications from the socialist period in the Library of the Romanian Academy (*Biblioteca Academiei Române*) were scarce. Romania's Kennel Club, for example, which had been quite active both before and after the socialist period (the club was active

between 1918 and 1938 and again after 1975), published only a small number of magazine issues, which, because of the high degree of nationalization in the period, focused primarily on the Romanian breeds of shepherd dogs.¹⁷⁹ Although some issues did include information about purebred dogs and breed characteristics, they were characterized by an absence of discourses on purebred dogs or pets being embedded in the everyday life of socialist citizens. Instead, the main purpose of the magazine was to organize exhibitions and competitions for Romanian shepherd dogs. The Kennel Club publication notes in particular that according to Communist Party and state guidelines regarding the “effective exploitation of national resources,” the Kennel Club of the Socialist Republic of Romania has “proposed to make true a life-long dream, which is the evaluation of native dog breeds.”¹⁸⁰ The evaluation of the Romanian breeds would occur through the formalization of standards. Articles included a list of characteristics that made Romanian shepherd dogs unique¹⁸¹ and regulations guiding their breeding. Sometimes, the journal included articles about similar breeds, such as Saint Bernard dogs.¹⁸²

¹⁷⁹ For a similar account of the history of Romanian shepherd dogs and for information about their breeding during the 1970s, also see Puicin, Laurentiu Florin, 2014, *Romanians and their Dogs—History, Typology, Mentalities* (Români și Câini Lor—Istorie, Tipologie, Mentalități), Mirton Editions, Timișoara

¹⁸⁰ “Our Dogs, 1981—Documentary Bulletin” (Câini Noștri, 1981—Buletin Documentar)

¹⁸¹ “Our Dogs, 1981—Documentary Bulletin” (Câini Noștri, 1981—Buletin Documentar)

¹⁸² “Our Dogs—Documentary Bulletin, Dog Kennel of Large Breeds, Year I, No. 3, March 1978” (Câini Noștri—Buletin Documentar, Clubul Raselor Canine de Talie Mare, Anul I, Nr. 3, Martie 1978,” and “Our Dogs—Documentary Bulletin, Dog Kennel of Large Breeds, Kennel Magazine of the Association of Purebred Dog Owners of Romania, Year I, No. 4, April 1978” (Câini Noștri—Buletin Documentar Clubul Raselor Canine de Talie Mare, Revistă Chinologică a Asociației Proprietarilor de Câini de Rasă din Romania, Anul I, Nr. 4, Aprilie 1978)



Figure 78: Mioritic Romanian shepherd dog with a family in traditional Romanian attire, 1976¹⁸³

¹⁸³ Material provided by the Library of the Romanian Academy (*Biblioteca Academiei Române*)



Figure 79: Mioritic Romanian shepherd dog in a canine exposition in Bucharest, 1978¹⁸⁴

Official documents and legislation indicate how purebred dogs during that time were embedded in the system of central socialist economy. As with the sale of all commodities, the sale of purebred dogs, as well as exotic birds such as parrots and canaries, was controlled by the state, which sold purebred dogs for fifty lei each and exotic birds for only five lei each.¹⁸⁵ Livestock species were by and large the only other animals seen in periodicals at the time, appearing in publications devoted to livestock management. Employees at the veterinary school at the University of Bucharest told me that in the 1960s or 1970s, purebreds were not really supported. There were no veterinarian clinics and no specialty dog food; citizens fed their dogs

¹⁸⁴ Material provided by the Library of the Romanian Academy (*Biblioteca Academiei Române*)

¹⁸⁵ Official Gazette of the Socialist Republic of Romania, Year XXII, January–April 1977, Decision no. 22 of January 14, 1977 (Buletinul Oficial al Republicii Socialiste România, Anul XXII, Ianuarie-Aprilie 1977, Decizia nr. 22 din 14 Ianuarie 1977).

leftovers or bones and rice, a practice that was also common with street dogs during the time of my research, as discussed in Chapter Three. Moreover, there was only one state-owned clinic, Ilioara, which I was familiar with from having had to certify Beju's passport so he could travel in Europe and the US. Although the clinic of Ilioara did care for pet dogs during the time of my research, its main purpose during state socialism was to care for hunting dogs and livestock.

5.4: Pets as Family Members and Animal Rights Discourses in the New Market Economy, 1990s and 2000s

Alexandru Solomon's documentary *A Dog's Life* (1998) describes how "here [in Bucharest], man and dog are two species intimately mingled with one another like the damned souls of Dante's inferno. Here, the human-eyed dog daily confronts the dog-eyed human." The film pictures street dogs as social and urban outcasts in the 1990s. However, it also describes the life of small purebred dogs in apartments, which are filmed sleeping in beds, eating healthy food, and being loved as family members.

Indeed, besides street dogs, purebreds, especially small breeds, were also present in neighborhoods. The family who lived in the apartment next door in Titan, for example, used to tell me how they potty trained their newly acquired bichon frise puppy, Oscar, by walking him four times a day. Another neighbor, the owner of an elderly black collie, seemed surprised—almost offended—when it seemed that I hadn't recognized the breed. One day, while taking the stairs when the elevator in my building had broken down, I discovered that the walls in the hallway of the fourth floor were covered with magazine pictures of purebred dogs and cats—just as had been displayed on the walls at the office of the public dog shelter; especially during the 1990s, pet-themed magazines and TV shows were the primary source of information and education about dogs.

In a breed-valued world, information about dogs was plentiful. People whom I talked to in the park told me how they managed to deal with their dog's behavior by watching Cesar Millan, a well-known dog trainer in the United States, on the TV. When I visited Mr. and Mrs. Stancu, they also recommended Cesar Millan's publications. The book of Millan's (2013) that they already owned (and recommended) was about purebred dogs, training, canine psychology, and behavioral problems. Mrs. Stancu kept it covered with pieces of cloth so that it wouldn't accumulate dust, in contrast to the rest of the books she kept in their bookcase. Before I left their apartment, they even called the publishing house in Bucharest to ask for the names of bookstores that carried the book so I could find one before I left again for the United States.

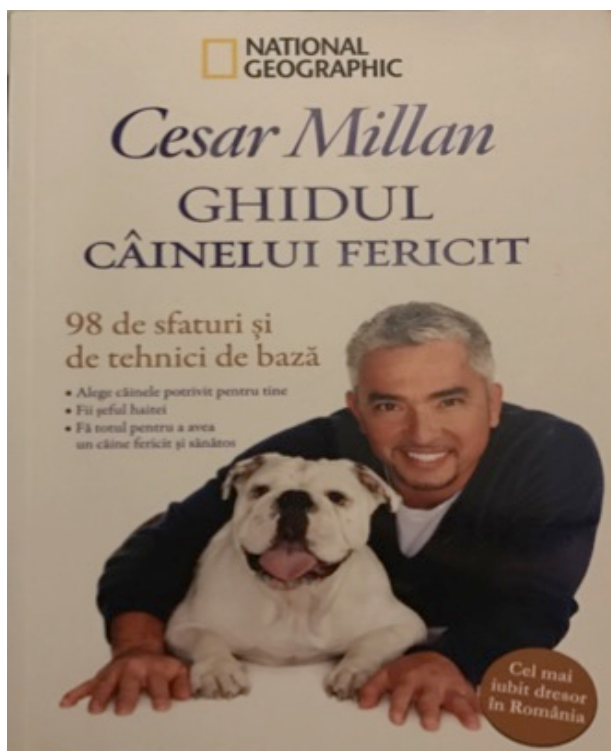


Figure 80: “Happy Dog Guide” by Cesar Millan, the “Most loved trainer in Romania”

Besides journals, TV shows were common sources for information about animals. I remember on one of my first days in Bucharest watching a morning show that featured dog

trainers visiting a school to teach children about life with dogs. Animal Planet was a popular show with the public, and it was often playing at the veterinarian clinic and at households I used to visit. My neighbor who was feeding pigeons from her balcony and who had adopted Tița, the dog that used to stay mainly in the balcony, showed me how she and her husband loved to watch Animal Planet while sitting in the living room. They were able to watch not only shows about purebred dogs and training, but also shows about African or Australian wildlife.

In some contexts, pets—especially dogs and cats—were promoted as family members. One of the questions in a questionnaire I was given at an animal clinic that used to keep a “mercy box” (*cutia milei*) for donations for street dogs asked whether I considered my animal to be a pet or a family member. The questionnaire was given to each of the clinic’s clients to determine if public opinion about keeping pets in Romania had started to change. The film *Domestic* (2012), however, which was released during the time of my fieldwork, depicted the contradictions that characterized family life as centered around animals, either pets or those residing in the streets. The film included family discussions about whether rabbits should be kept as pets or used as food and neighbors’ conundrums about the fate “staircase dogs.”

The shifting social status of dogs that took place after 1989 was not unique to Romania. In the United States, discourses of empathy and compassion became prevalent in the 1960s and 1970s, a phenomenon that led to dogs being considered family members and to dog-specific rescue initiatives in later years (Markovits and Crosby 2014). Similarly, during the late Soviet era, dogs were considered both as part of the family and as modes of re-appropriating bourgeois urban culture (Nelson 2006), as they were associated with forms of Soviet consumerism and urban modernity. Other accounts describe the keeping of dogs during the socialist era as a mode of appropriating state-owned property and a way through which citizens mocked the system

(Barker 1999).

In Romania, contemporary discourses about street dogs as a crucial part of urban life, even as family members, are not new. Rather, they follow patterns that became common during the 1990s. One of the women I met at the animal clinic told me the story of her acquiring a female Labrador retriever from a breeder in Hungary in the early 1990s. She told me that she used to buy food and other products for her dog from Pet World, the first pet shop in Bucharest, located in the area of Vitan. Indeed, authors writing about the post-socialist world have already noted how pet discourses and the commodification of animals that occurred after the collapse of the Soviet Union signified the beginning of a new era (Barker 1999). In Romania, pets were similarly embedded into the newly constituted economy of those years, as they were also characterized by a new morality around keeping animals that emerged from their new commodification—a morality that was expressed most prominently in publications during the 1990s.

Pet-themed magazines from the first decade after socialism again included articles about specific breed characteristics and care. An issue from 1990, for example, included articles about skin diseases in dogs,¹⁸⁶ the history of greyhounds, tips on how to teach a dog to walk next to its master, and letters from readers asking about characteristics of purebreds they were interested in acquiring. Others asked for advice about problems that owners had with their dogs; one reader asked for advice about his Labrador retriever that was obsessed with tennis balls. Dogs were seen as family members¹⁸⁷ that needed to be walked three times a day, to be trained and exercised, to eat good food, and to age well at the side of their masters, especially since they were considered

¹⁸⁶ “Dog Today, 1990” (Căinele Azi, 1990)

¹⁸⁷ “You and Your Dog, Vol. 5, 1999” (Tu și Căinele, Vol. 5, 1999)

to improve their owner’s quality of life. As an issue from 1998 put it, “Today, living together with our animal, we are much calmer and happier!”¹⁸⁸ People who loved dogs were seen as living longer,¹⁸⁹ and stories of pet owners described life becoming “much more beautiful since they acquired a dog.”¹⁹⁰ Pet dogs became a positive element of urban life, and they needed to be cared for accordingly.



Figure 81: The magazine “My Dog,” featuring Dobermans, 1998¹⁹¹

¹⁸⁸ “My Dog, Year I, No. 2, March/April 1998” (Câinele Meu, Anul I, Nr. 2, Martie/Aprilie 1998)

¹⁸⁹ “My Dog, Year I, No. 1, February/March 1998” (Câinele Meu, Anul I, Nr. 1, Februarie/Martie 1998)

¹⁹⁰ “My Dog, Year I, No. 4, May/June 1998” (Câinele Meu, Anul I, Nr. 4, Mai/Iunie 1998)

¹⁹¹ Material provided by the Library of the Romanian Academy (*Biblioteca Academiei Române*)



Figure 82: Magazine article on grooming methods, 1998¹⁹²

Besides articles about dogs, journals of that period also included articles about cats (as well as articles about birds, fish, turtles, and hamster).¹⁹³ The array of topics was similar: articles about feline anxiety,¹⁹⁴ cat breeds, and reviews of cat litter. An article from 1999, for example, in the journal “Animalul Meu” (“My Animal”), included advice about giving a massage to one’s cat to relieve its anxiety. According to the article, the strokes used during a cat massage should be affectionate and full of love, since “massage is the delicate touching of the animal’s fur, with circular, clockwise movements starting from the six o’clock position and completing a full

¹⁹² Material provided by the Library of the Romanian Academy (*Biblioteca Academiei Române*)

¹⁹³ “My Animal, August/September 1999” (*Animalul Meu*, August/Septembrie 1999)

¹⁹⁴ “My Animal, November/December 1999” (*Animalul Meu*, Noiembrie/Decembrie 1999)

rotation.”¹⁹⁵ With time, the animal would learn to accept massage techniques and to focus more on its master. A 1993 journal named “A Passion for Dogs and Cats”¹⁹⁶ mentions that human owners give their souls to such animals with the hope that the animals in turn will find equilibrium in an urbanized world. In the same spirit, another article from 2007 described Chihuahuas as the “salt and pepper of life, that will become the master of your heart in the house.”



Figure 83: Chihuahua; The salt and pepper of life, 2007¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁵ “My Animal, November/December 1999” (Animalul Meu, Noiembrie/Decembrie 1999)

¹⁹⁶ “A Passion for Dogs and Cats, 1999” (O Pasiune pentru Câini si Pisici 1999)

¹⁹⁷ Material provided by the Library of the Romanian Academy (*Biblioteca Academiei Române*)

By 2007, some of the pet-themed journals that appeared in the 1990s were patterned directly after their American equivalents. One of them was published by the future head of the ASPA, the authority for the management of street dogs and public shelters during my time in Bucharest. The journal, named “Dog Fancy,” was advertised as the “most read journal about dogs in the world.”¹⁹⁸ Besides the usual dog-related themes, the journal included articles about dog-related topics in the United States, such as walking dogs in parks and along the lakeshore of Chicago and regulations governing dog adoption in California. Dog owners were given advice about issues for which there had been little or no information until now—dog sitting, taking dogs on vacation, and crating dogs when not at home, a common practice in the United States.

¹⁹⁸ “Dog Fancy, No. 3, October/November 2007” (Dog Fancy, Nr. 3, Octombrie/Noiembrie 2007)



Figure 84: *Dog Fancy*, 2007¹⁹⁹

Some of these articles discuss how fluffy dogs were in fashion in the 2000s, but also how the Yorkshire terrier, bichon frise, shih-tzu, and Pekingese were popular among people living in apartments.²⁰⁰ In promoting ideas about urban life with animals, some of the articles also included interviews with Romanian celebrities in columns called “VIP.” In an issue from 2007, the interviewee was the Romanian journalist Mihai Tatulici²⁰¹ The discussion turned to how perceptions about pets and street dogs signified an outdated socialist mentality in the country and

¹⁹⁹ Material provided by the Library of the Romanian Academy (*Biblioteca Academiei Române*)

²⁰⁰ “Dog Fancy, No. 1, June/July 2007” (Dog Fancy Nr. 1 Iunie/Iulie 2007)

²⁰¹ “Dog Fancy, No. 2, August/September 2007” (Dog Fancy, Nr. 2, August/Septembrie 2007)

how there was still a long way for Romania to go in developing public concern for such issues as street dogs and a culture pet ownership.

According to the interviewee, criticisms of pet owners about such things as their spending on animals while not giving to humans in need were signs of an outdated socialist mentality, signs even of a primitive society. Romanians were described as not really educated about how to live alongside animals, since “the uselessness of a pet in the urban environment was considered a luxury,” as it had also been during state socialism, when pet dogs had no utilitarian role (in contrast to dogs “leading a flock, fighting against wolves, or watching one’s property.”)²⁰² In line with articles that were published in the previous decade about pets’ improving one’s life in the urban environment, the interviewee discussed how such perceptions about the uselessness of pets did not take into consideration how animals in the urban environment were necessary, connecting humans to nature. As discussed in Chapter One, ideas of nature were only linked to pets and not to the existence of street dogs in the city.

Both Tatulici and the interviewer emphasized the need to develop a pet culture in the country as a sign of civilization, emphasizing that affection toward animals did not necessarily mean lack of affection toward humans, a popular belief among many people. In the midst of their disappointment about the situation in Romania, however, both the journalist and the interviewee recognized the increase in the number of pet shops in the country as a sign of significant progress. As the interviewee noted about pet shops in particular, “this was the first sign after the Revolution that Romanians were normal!”

²⁰² “Dog Fancy, No. 2, August/September 2007” (Dog Fancy, Nr. 2, August/Septembrie 2007)

Discussion during the interview turned to the threat that street dogs posed to public health, especially since some diseases were now more easily transmitted by mosquitos, which had increased because of global warming. The existence of street dogs was described as a problem of the post-socialist world, the payoff from the destruction of single houses and the construction of apartment buildings. The interviewee, however, saw street dogs as only one sign among many of the backwardness of Romanians. For street dogs to disappear from the city, a series of other indicators of underdevelopment would also have to disappear, among which were trash and children hanging out in the back areas of apartment blocks. Having a city with such a large population of street dogs was categorized as indicating the same mentality as the one belonging to citizens who don't pick up after their dogs or who pay exorbitant prices for housing in areas like Băneasa or Pipera in the north of the city that had no proper sewage systems.

Not caring about public issues such as street dogs was equated with believing that common areas in socialist-era block apartments, such as building entrances, elevators, and staircases, belonged to nobody (in the same way that responsibility was not taken for street dogs that lived in staircases during the time of my research). However, the appearance of apartment blocks with clean entrances and janitors, and the proliferation of pet shops in the country were seen as hopeful signs of change. As both the interviewer and the interviewee agreed at the end of their discussion, Romania was a country in which there was much still to be improved, especially with regard to such considerations of animals as pets, the mentality of pet ownership, and the proper education of citizens as pet owners.

Such discourses, along with discourses of animal rights in the city became characteristic of the 1990s and the 2000s. While they contradicted each other, one focusing on urban life along pets, and the other on the salvation of animal marginal populations, they both became signs of

the post-socialist era. Some journals from the late 1990s, for example, began including articles about animal rights to raise awareness about the suffering of street animals.²⁰³ Besides discourses on pets as crucial components of a happy urban life, discourses about exhibiting mercy toward street dogs started to become popular during that decade, as the differences between purebred pets and street dogs now became more prominent. According to such articles, a purebred that sleeps in an armchair and a mutt that lies in the street both have the same rights. Similarly, wild cats needed to be as respected equally to aristocratic cats. Another article explains that the first association for the protection of animals in the city, which appeared in 1992, was founded by twenty animal lovers and received donations that included food, vaccinations, and sterilizations from similar German organizations.²⁰⁴ Later publications²⁰⁵ include coverage of Brigitte Bardot's visit to Romania that publicized the plight of street animals.

While the archival record indicated that a society for the protection of animals (S.P.A—Societatea pentru Protecția Animalelor) existed in the city since the early 1900s, the 1990s was a time when discourses of animal rights become publicized and when raising awareness did not only concern members of the nobility and upper classes. The association for the protection of animals that existed during the previous century, for example, functioned under the auspices of the Royal House, especially of Queen and Princess Maria, and it was concerned about the well-being of horses carrying carrels and carts in the city. One of association's requests was for streets to have sand besides regular pavement, so that horses won't slip in slime and break their legs,²⁰⁶

²⁰³ "A Passion for Dogs and Cats, 1999" (O Pasiune pentru Câini și Pisici, 1999)

²⁰⁴ "Animal World, Year I, No. 2, 1994 (Din Lumea Animalelor, Anul I, Nr.2, 1994)

²⁰⁵ "My Dog, Year IV, No 4, April 2001" (Câinele Meu: Anul IV Nr 4, Aprilie 2001)

²⁰⁶ Municipality of Bucharest, Secretariat, Dossier 26/1907 (Primăria Municipiului București, Secretariat, Dosar 26/1907) and Municipality of Bucharest, Secretariat, Dossier 9/1905 (Primăria Municipiului București, Secretariat, Dosar 9/1905)

while another was for workers at the tram to stop hitting the horses in barbaric ways²⁰⁷. Other requests included the installation of apparatuses that would release food for birds in public parks and gardens, such as in Cismigiu and Kiseleff²⁰⁸.

Discourses about street dogs during the 2000s were quite similar to the discourses I came across during the time of my fieldwork, since stories about the euthanization of street dogs, animal rights, compassion, animal shelters, and animal trafficking had already started to circulate in the country. NGOs during the time of my research always referred to the 2000s as the decade in which they managed to stop euthanasia and institute sterilization and relocation as more humane solutions. Indeed, in magazine issues from 2001, street dogs were described as being slaughtered, while the objective of animal rights activism was to organize education campaigns. The purposes of such campaigns were to raise public awareness, especially among children, about the respect for “every form of living being,” to organize sterilization campaigns as the only feasible solution to overpopulation, and to promote adoption of animals in shelters.²⁰⁹

²⁰⁷ Municipality of Bucharest, Secretariat, Dossier 6/1906 (Primăria Municipiului București, Sanitar, Dosar 6/1906)

²⁰⁸ Municipality of Bucharest, Secretariat, Dossier 9/1905 (Primăria Municipiului București, Sanitar, Dosar 9/1905)

²⁰⁹ “Dog Fancy,” No. 1, June/July 2007 (Dog Fancy, Nr. 1, Iunie/Iulie 2007)



Figure 85: A day at the ecarisaj. Pensioners are shown visiting dogs at the Shelter and bringing them food.²¹⁰

Besides discourses of a civilized city, visions of the middle class for an active and natural urban lifestyle, and parasitization discourses as discussed in previous chapters, were also perceptions of street dogs as being unfit for the market economy that replaced the central socialist economic system in the 1990s. Street dogs were not marginalized as parasites and enemies of the economy as they had been during the 1950s, but they were perceived as signs of post-socialist deterioration that impeded development. Discourses of animal rights and compassion that were articulated by animal-rights organizations during that period, were often

²¹⁰ Material provided by the Library of the Romanian Academy (*Biblioteca Academiei Române*)

perceived as signs of a post-socialist discourse about animal rights that was either meaningless or empty (human populations had also suffered from the collapse of the welfare state, after all) or disingenuous (trying to raise donations for victims that could not testify for themselves that indeed used the money).

Street dogs, however, were perceived as impure not only because they symbolized dirt or danger. They were also considered impure by virtue of their inferior status in a system that celebrated purebred characteristics and abhorred breed defects, a system that promoted purebred dogs as commodities to be consumed for the improvement of urban life. Street dogs were held responsible for the worsening of public life, while purebred pets were associated with discourses of mitigating the hostility of the urban center by helping to construct domestic spaces as safe, quiet, and full of love refuges in the midst of the craziness and hostility that characterized public urban life.

Conclusion: Dogs as Boundary Objects, Value as Semiosis, Neoliberalism as a Paradox

Serving on a panel at the Soyuz Symposium, the network of scholars for post-socialist cultural studies that took place in March 2017 at Indiana University in Bloomington, Ilana Gershon approached my paper about street dogs' liminal position in contemporary Bucharest using two key notions: Star and Griesemer's (1989) notion of "boundary objects," which explains how taxidermy alters the meaning of wild animals in order to offer a representation of California in natural history museums; and Bonnie Urciuoli's (2005) notion of "strategically deployable shifters," which analyzes how certain words, such as "diversity," are strategically chosen over others, such as "multiculturalism," in academic settings in order to quote links between liberal arts education and business and management values. My presentation drew material from Chapter Three of this dissertation and focused on how street dogs are seen as either entities that deserve to be cared for with compassion or as unwanted urban inhabitants that need to become pets and enter households or be euthanized as strays. Gershon noted in her discussion of this paper and of other papers presented at the symposium that dogs, in a way similar to plants²¹¹ and even laughter,²¹² become bearers of different qualities and occupy different roles based on the different structural positioning of actors that give them meaning. Indeed, as this dissertation has already discussed, street dogs and certain human populations become boundary beings in a spectrum of subject and object significations.

²¹¹ Paper presented by Tatiana Chudakova on the role of plants in Buddhist medicine in Siberia

²¹² Paper presented by Elana Resnick on Holy Laughter and Experiences of Joy in Bulgaria

This dissertation has also attempted to explore the different roles that street dogs occupy in trying to understand the socioeconomic—and often, sentimental—positioning of actors who live their lives alongside street dogs, actors who care for them, stand against them, or vote for policies about their management. By taking advantage of the shifting roles of dogs, this dissertation has thus attempted to do something ambitious: to understand how street dogs, as loaded with symbolic and other meaning materialities as they are, help us to understand contemporary Romanian society in all its complexity. Street dogs have been approached as mediating between heterogeneous groups of people—between the former working class and an up-and-coming middle class, and between state representatives and NGO proponents of animal rights. In a similar way, dogs have been helpful in providing an understanding of aspects of urban marginalization as well as the constitution of bourgeois urbanism and the upper classes. While the social role of material objects has already been theoretically and ethnographically discussed, the polysemy of animals can offer insight into the mechanisms through which structural positions of different actors are constituted in relation to one another.

Such polysemy is mainly the result of both animal mobility and the extent to which dogs are seen as bearing agency. In contrast to material objects that can be static, animals act, initiate interactions, express feelings of their own, and form attachments. Hence, the emotional and interactional feedback provided by animals is what renders them social actors on a different level from the one that has been discussed for material objects. The variety of attitudes toward street dogs in the field was associated with the extent to which such animals were understood and reproduced, either as subjects or as objects. Indeed, in many cases it was animal agency that defined street dogs as “boundary objects” and “strategically deployable shifters.” Such choices—and often, such debates—about the character of street dogs as subjects or objects were centered

on whether or not they were understood as persons. In a way similar to Keane's (2006) idea of bundling of qualities, namely the way in which different properties of objects are discovered and prioritized by humans, street dogs seemed to gather an interesting combination of attributes. On the one hand, they were reproduced as persons based on their interactional capacities; on the other hand, they were treated as parasites on the basis of their external characteristics.

The way in which the notion of "boundary objects" explains both the plasticity of objects and the level of robustness that is maintained across different sites is helpful in our understanding of how various representations of street dogs and other dogs, such as objects and subjects or wild and docile shared something in common: assumptions about their nature, instincts, behavioral patterns, and mental capacities. As Star and Griesemer (1989) put it, "The creation and management of boundary objects is key in developing and maintaining coherence across intersecting social worlds" (1989:393). Thus, while street dogs are not strictly defined as objects, their character of transcending boundaries at the same time they are constantly defined as "dogs" enlightens our understanding of qualia selection and of the variety of discourses they are subject to.

In the case of Bucharest, while most of the actors in the field agreed about the animality of dogs (street and otherwise), individual uses of the category were associated with the fragmentation of their meaning. Indeed, as this dissertation has shown, street dogs are only a subcategory of dogs, living their lives in ways quite different to the lives lived by watchdogs, hunting dogs, and pets. Their definition as parasites, which came from subsequent definitions of their uselessness, was associated with sets of characteristics that rendered them as a subgroup. In the same way that street dogs were defined as a deviant subgroup of dogs, the former working class was also seen as deviating from norms whose purpose was to make Bucharest into an

orderly city. As discussed in Chapter Three, in such ways, this group of Romania's human population became a boundary entity itself as it chose different practices than the ones chosen by the state or by other advocates of animal rights, such as NGO representatives and international adoption coordinators.

Going back to Urciuoli's (2005) notion of "strategically deployable shifters," it seems that indeed, choices about whether street dogs deserve to be treated as subjects or objects are based on everyday choices that are informed by the actors' structural positions. While the notion of linguistic shifters, those terms that take their meaning from indexical systems of signification to which they belong, has been known for a while (Jakobson 1971; Parmentier 1997; Silverstein 1976), Urciuoli's notion stresses how the differently embedded connotations of a term provide speakers and actors with some control over the indexical relations that are structured through its use. In Bucharest, certain citizens indeed appear to have some control over the definition of dogs as parasites or persons that they provide. However, such definitions also work toward defining humans and indexing their qualities and values, too.

Actors who define dogs as dangerous or friendly, tamed or wild, and sweet or dirty use the definitions that are informed by their own socioeconomic embeddedness in the country's historical, economic, and sociopolitical context. Then, through an almost reflective system, they are defined by others on the basis of the dogs' definitions they had provided and advocated for. Animal lovers treat street dogs with compassion that has been informed by their own exclusion from the socioeconomic system that occurred after the collapse of the socialist welfare state in 1989, and they are then seen as backward citizens, a view based on their own definition of dogs as persons. Middle-class citizens, in turn, define street dogs as parasites from their own structural position of wishing for the socioeconomic and infrastructural development of the country, and

are then defined as heartless and empty themselves as a result. Thus, street dogs take their meaning not only from indexical relations they belong to but also became nodes for the construction of new indexical associations.

This ambiguity surrounding indexical associations of dogs, however, is only indicative of the semiotic processes that take place in the field. Throughout, this dissertation has shown how the subjectification and objectification of dogs is not only embedded in indexical systems of signification but also related to symbolic and iconic functions. In similar ways in which they index human qualities, street dogs also become symbols of the face of post-socialism in urban centers and enter marginal zones of signification when seen as lacking iconic resemblances to legitimate categories of purebred dogs. Street dogs were understood both through their physical qualities and facial characteristics as they became qualia of the post-socialist era. At the same time, they were seen as being of similar value to other materialities that were considered parasitic in the urban environment. In addition, they were seen as uncovering human qualities, from being compassionate to being dirty, from being wretched to being mentally ill. Thus, street dogs are understood through their boundary-ness once again, alternating roles between signs and signifiers. They mediated between human relations, and as such mediators they provided understandings of both humans and materials. They were judged based on their own qualities, and they became indicative of both urban and post-socialist qualities. Lastly, they were seen as understanding human qualities, which, especially in the case of Roma citizens and other marginal populations, was just a reinforcement of previously assumed marginal qualities.

The semiotic processes that have been discussed in this dissertation thus have implications about the ways in which value is being produced. Recognizing dogs as either subjects or objects has proved to be a constant process of valuation and devaluation. Making

social judgments on the basis of human attitudes toward dogs but also of animal behaviors toward humans, as discussed in Chapter Three, for example, is exactly this: methods for describing otherness based on physical qualities and personal values.

And while making an argument about the production of personal values seems challenging because of the lack of tangible corporal qualia, it seems that behaviors toward street dogs were indexing ethos, morality, kindness, and meanness. The discourses of responsibility and compassion, for example, became characteristic of people who either did or did not have a good soul. Such representations were not only associated with individual actors but in many cases also became indicative of groups of people. This dissertation has attempted to show how processes of valuation and devaluation are central to the production of social class by providing representations of otherness.

Such representations are also common in processes of marginalization, as discussed in Chapter Four. Indeed, one of the most interesting things street dogs can teach us is that they are not the only species to be understood as either objects or subjects. The idea of boundary beings and the idea of alternating between an object's and a subject's qualities can be extended in order to understand processes of human racialization and marginalization. Even more interestingly, descriptions of marginal human populations can also be strategically chosen. Making beggars visible or invisible, for example, is an everyday choice that is based on pre-assumptions about each actor's role—especially of the marginal as belonging to systems outside legitimate economic or social exchange. However, choices about the devaluation of marginal humans did not seem to initiate judgments about the ones who provided them, as was the case with street dogs. While citizens who appeared as animal lovers or animal haters were associated with having contrasting moralities and ethos, discourses about marginal populations almost homogenously

depicted them as outcasts, and exceptions to such discourses were rare.

Speaking of the valuation and devaluation of human populations, one can justifiably wonder whether the processes of Europeanization, civilizing, and development discussed in this dissertation in different historical contexts are also based on semiotic processes. Indeed, both during the inter-war era and in contemporary times, street dogs functioned as urban qualities that indicated the qualities of the whole country as being backward. While the discourse of civilization has endured for more than a century, it seems that understandings about underdevelopment have resulted from comparisons to Western European cities such as Paris on a similarly qualitative basis. While animal-lovers also used the symbolism of Europe to advocate for humanitarianism and compassion as a civilized value, Bucharest has been considered an “uncivilized village” in comparison to its Western counterparts since the 1930s. Such considerations were based on aesthetic standards that derived from the existence of functioning sidewalks, for example, but not dogs. Similarly, during the socialist era, Bucharest was intended to prove the superiority of the regime through its orderly and aesthetically well-conceived urban environment. Whether a gesture of Westernism or not, the discourse of civilization has taken different forms and been informed by different social, economic, and political systems. Its persistence is related to representations of infrastructures, mentalities, and practices.

The parasitic significations of street dogs were responsible for their extermination during the time of my research. They were also the reason why street dogs were seen as unwanted before and during the socialist period. As shown in Chapter Two, street dogs could compensate for their uselessness only when dead and only when valued as the source of useful materialities, such as fat, skin, or even meat; while alive, street dogs were only seen to deprive citizens of necessary resources. After the 1950s, they were similarly seen to deprive the state of successful

management and development of the newly constituted socialist central economy. When dead, street dogs were valued as participating in networks of exchange—a characteristic they lacked when they lived as parasitic entities. Archival material that uncovered the historical embeddedness of discourses and practices about street dogs has thus been extremely important in understanding the structural positioning of actors who either supported them or abhorred them. The former working class, which treated street dogs with compassion, as discussed in Chapter Three, for example, is a class of citizens that had lost their position after the collapse of the welfare state—just as had street dogs during socialism. In many cases, such citizens experienced transformations not only after the collapse of the socialist regime but also during the decades leading up to it, when the system was slowly installing its sovereignty through the transformation of urban living and the urban environment. The legitimacy of such citizens during those times as a productive workforce was replaced by their sliding into poverty and by their falling between the interstices of pre-socialism, socialism, and post-socialism.

Besides all the boundaries that street dogs were seen to transcend through their shifting roles that I have discussed thus far, it also seems that they have been characterized by some temporal coherence. Similarities in the considerations of street dogs as parasitic pose interesting questions about the character of post-socialist transformations, neo-liberal policies, and the spectrum of modernity, especially as expressed in the euthanasia debate of 2013. As I discussed in the introduction, while discourses both of compassion and of efforts to establish Bucharest as a civilized city might appear as signs of neo-liberal-era policies, a look into the past is revealing about the ways in which street dogs never seemed to fit into ideas of modernization. Similarities in state policies about the management of street dogs have been striking, especially the rationale behind public-policy making.

Street dogs and the compassionate sentimentalities showed toward them were proved weaker than rational ideologies of public health, pollution, danger, and dirt. The strength of the latter was seen to derive from causing—and producing—fear as an urban regulation and management tool. Images that circulated among dog opponents at protests in favor of dog euthanasia, for example, presented dogs as bloodthirsty beasts, almost similar to fictional apocalyptic monsters. In such images, canines, wounds, and blood were central to the portrayal of dogs as dangerous and uncontrollable. Contrasting images of dogs as victims, though, in protests against euthanasia, pictured street dogs suffering at public shelters—malnourished, poorly cared for, and even killed in inhumane ways. Once again, such depictions became indicative of the dogs' plasticity as entities and of their role as boundary entities. Street dogs transcended logic and sentiment as they transcended a socialist past and a European future.

At this point, the analysis of street dogs as a post-socialist phenomenon meets the paradoxical character of neo-liberal policies in the area. The deterioration of the urban environment, along with the parasitization of dogs and of lower classes in favor of middle- and upper-class consumerist patterns that emerged during the 1990s, are indeed indicative of the post-socialist transformations that took place after 1989. The post-socialist setting and discourse, however, is just another socioeconomic circumstance that surrounded policies about street dogs. As the durability of the civilization discourse has shown, practices and ideologies surrounding street dogs have been the same through the years, though for different socioeconomic reasons. Contemporary discourses of Bucharest as an uncivilized city are indeed linked to Western patterns of development, to attracting tourism and investments, and to pet-related consumption. Similar discourses during previous decades, however, were similarly linked to a thriving socialist economy and to the superiority of the regime over the West. Even before socialism, urban

modernization discourses were linked to killing dogs in ways that would be more effective economically, while comparisons to Western capitals were clearly expressed. Similarly, the phenomenon of advocating for dogs and discourses about animal rights can appear as indicative of the post-socialist era and the way in which ideas of civil society were seen to constitute a characteristic of post-socialism. Citizens, however, have been protecting yard dogs and fighting dogcatchers since at least the 1930s. Such elements of ethnographic and archival research underscore how we ought to take into account both the variation and the continuities in both discourse and practices surrounding street dogs, and also in the ways in which we understand and analyze the textures of post-socialist neo-liberalisms. Street dogs, through their liminality, are seen cycling once again between ideas concerning their unwanted-ness and a variety of discourses surrounding their different faces and places.

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Appendix

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Municipality of Bucharest, General, Dossier 124/1859-1861 (Primăria Municipiului București, Sanitar, Dosar 124/1859-1861)

Municipality of Bucharest, General, Dossier 124/1859-1861 (Primăria Municipiului București, General, Dosar 124/1859-1861) and Communal Gazette of the Municipality of Bucharest 1879, Year III, no. 6, Wednesday 15 (27) February 1898 (Monitorul Comunal al Primăriei Bucuresci 1879, Anul III, nr. 6, Miercuri 15 (27) Februarie 1878)

Municipality of Bucharest, Sanitary, Dossier 4/1864 (Primăria Municipiului București, Sanitar, Dosar 4/1864)

Municipality of Bucharest, Sanitary, Dossier 22/1862 (Primăria Municipiului București, Sanitar, Dosar 22/1862)

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Municipality of Bucharest, Sanitary, Dossier 24/1899 (Primăria Municipiului București, Sanitar, Dosar 24/1899)

Municipality of Bucharest, Sanitary, Dossier 4/1917 (Primăria Municipiului București, Sanitar, Dosar 4/1917)

Municipality of Bucharest, Secretariat, Dossier 1/1932, General Council meeting on April 12, 1932, National Municipal Archives of Bucharest (Primăria Municipiului București, Secretariat, Dossier 1/1932, Consiliul General al Municipiului, Ședință de la 12 Aprilie 1932, Arhivele Naționale ale Municipiului București))

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Municipality of Bucharest, Secretariat, Dossier 4/1936 (Primăria Municipiului București, Secretariat, Dosar 4/1936)

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Municipality of Bucharest, Secretariat, Dossier 3/1932 (Primăria Municipiului București, Secretariat, Dosar 3/1932)

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Municipality of Bucharest, Secretariat, Dossier 2/1932, Bucharest 12 April 1932 (Primăria Municipiului București, Secretariat, Dosar 3/1932, București 12 Aprilie 1932)

Municipality of Bucharest, Secretariat, Dossier 2/1927, Permanent Delegation of the Municipality, Session of 22 March 1927 (Primăria Municipiului București, Secretariat, Dosar 2/1927, Delegațiunea Permanentă a Municipiului-Ședință de la 22 Martie 1927)

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