

Stray Dogs and the Making of Modern Paris

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1. Introduction

In 1883 pharmacist Emile Capron called for stray dogs to be removed from Parisian streets as ‘the infinite number of these awful mutts’ spread rabies, caused numerous traffic accidents by scaring horses, and alarmed pedestrians.¹ As Capron’s remarks suggest, many

¹ Emile Capron, *Traité pratique des maladies des chiens* (Paris, 1883), 69. Commentators in nineteenth century Paris variously referred to the unaccompanied dogs who roamed the streets as *chiens errants* (stray dogs) and *chiens de rue* (street dogs). Both terms could refer to ownerless dogs who lived on the streets and owned dogs who wandered the streets by

commentators treated strays as dangerously mobile nuisances that hindered the movement, and threatened the health, of the city's productive human and nonhuman inhabitants. Strays contributed to the sense that Paris was a pathological city plagued by crime, filth, and insecurity, and elite commentators treated them as members of the city's criminal, dirty and uprooted "dangerous classes." This article traces the policing of stray dogs in Paris from the French Revolution to the outbreak of the First World War. It argues that long-standing rabies anxieties dovetailed with the emergence of the public hygiene movement, fears of rapid urbanization, vagrancy and crime, modernization projects, and the veneration of the pedigree pet dog to cast the stray dog as an unwelcome presence on the city's streets. Parisian public hygienists and authorities turned strays into a problem that they would solve to make the city safe, clean and modern. This hardening of attitudes towards strays was part of the wider Western problematization of unregulated mobility that was seen to threaten the security and well-being of the modern sedentary population.² Combating strays became a matter of social defence and medical police.

The repeated attempts to eradicate strays were part of the remaking of Parisian public space that took place on many levels, from the large-scale Haussmann-era creation of boulevards and sewers to the establishment of public urinals.³ Yet the scholarly attention paid

themselves. For simplicity's sake, I use the term 'stray dog' throughout this article to refer to both types of dogs.

² Tim Cresswell, *On the Move: Mobility in the Modern Western World* (New York, 2006), 39-42.

³ David H. Pinkney *Napoleon III and the Rebuilding of Paris* (Princeton, 1958); Andrew Israel Ross, 'Dirty Desire: The Uses and Misuses of Public Urinals in Nineteenth-Century Paris,' *Berkeley Journal of Sociology*, liii (2009).

to such topics as Parisian mass culture, consumerism, crowds and architecture has overlooked how the making of modern Paris was partly founded on the confinement and culling of stray dogs.⁴ The pound became the designated place for strays. Efforts to exterminate them in this shadowy site of slaughter were biopolitical as they sought to eradicate a supposedly dangerous population to secure the rest of the population's welfare.⁵ As the minister for general police stated in 1852, ridding the streets of strays would ensure 'public safety.' At stake was the 'security' and 'lives' of the human population, which the Second Empire had an 'imperial duty' to protect.⁶ Such efforts were not restricted to Paris. Although the specificity of individual cities needs to be borne in mind – the culling of dogs in Paris was not as drastic or as public as that in, say, Cairo⁷ – a radical biopolitical reordering of human-canine geographies has marked the history of numerous modern cities. This article outlines how this history unfolded in Paris, a city often treated as the archetypal modern city, arguing that the presence of stray dogs raised troubling questions about mobility, health, and security

⁴ Hazel Hahn, *Scenes of Parisian Modernity: Culture and Consumption in the Nineteenth Century* (New York, 2009); Vanessa Schwartz, *Spectacular Realities: Early Mass Culture in Fin-de-Siècle France* (Berkeley, 1999).

⁵ Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: Volume 1*, trans. Robert Hurley (London, 1979 [1976]), 138; Krithika Srinivasan, 'The Biopolitics of Animal Being and Welfare: Dog Control and Care in the UK and India,' *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, xxxviii (2012).

⁶ Archives de la Préfecture de police (hereafter APP) DA 44 Ministère de la police générale to Préfet de Police, 'Mesures à prendre contre les chiens errants,' 12 July 1852; APP DA 44 Ministère de la police générale to Préfet de Police, untitled letter, 12 July 1852.

⁷ Alan Mikhail, *The Animal in Ottoman Egypt* (New York, 2014), 80-1, 89-99.

in the rapidly transforming city, and seemed to expose the vulnerability of human life and the fragility and incompleteness of modernity.⁸

Anti-stray campaigns constituted a significant, if overlooked, dimension of Paris' histories of public health that so marked its emergence as a modern city. Public hygienists' desire to sanitize the city, create social order, and promote health by distancing human bodies from harmful biological entities, such as rotting matter, animals, waste and corpses, informed and legitimated anti-stray measures.⁹ Hygienic precautions should apply in the home: professor of medicine Dr Becquerel advised against owners letting their dog sleep in their bedroom.¹⁰ But public hygienists had greater powers of surveillance and action in the city's public spaces allowing them to target the stray dog. The anti-stray campaigns shared similarities with the better-studied public hygiene crusades against dirt and diseases, including a class-based moralistic tone, disgust at the city's filth, and often contested and incomplete outcomes.¹¹ But they also differed significantly. Unlike certain diseases, such as

⁸ Matthew Gandy, 'The Paris Sewers and the Rationalization of Urban Space,' *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, xxiv (1999); David Harvey, *Paris: Capital of Modernity* (London, 2003); Patrice Higonnet, *Paris: capitale du monde* (Paris, 2005); Peter Soppelsa, 'The Fragility of Modernity: Infrastructure and Everyday Life in Paris, 1871-1914,' (Univ. of Michigan Ph.D. thesis, 2009).

⁹ Ann La Berge, *Mission and Method: The Early Nineteenth-Century French Public Health Movement* (Cambridge, 1992), 42; Jonathan Strauss, *Human Remains: Medicine, Death and Desire in Nineteenth-Century Paris* (New York, 2012), 6.

¹⁰ A. Becquerel, *Traité élémentaire d'hygiène privée et publique* (Paris, 1873), 425.

¹¹ Sabine Barles, *La ville délétère: médecins et ingénieurs dans l'espace urbain XVIIIe-XIXe siècle* (Seysssel, 1999); David S. Barnes, *The Making of a Social Disease: Tuberculosis in*

tuberculosis and cholera, of which the transmission was unclear, it was evident that dogs spread rabies through biting, even if many mysteries surrounded the disease until the latter decades of the nineteenth century. Public hygienists were confident that culling stray dogs would reduce rabies cases and, unlike miasmas and microbes, these nefarious nonhuman entities were visible and killable. Moreover, public hygienists had no qualms about capturing and slaughtering what they saw as a degraded and degenerate animal population. The anti-stray campaigns were subsequently repressive and unhindered by debates over the depth and extent of state intervention. Animal protectionists partially succeeded in depicting strays as creatures worthy of some degree of concern and compassion, highlighting that strays enjoyed some support within elite circles. But animal protectionists did not prevent the toughening of attitudes against strays, nor their slaughter. Significantly, their interventions on behalf of strays helped to legitimate more humane, yet lethally efficient, ways of killing dogs.¹²

Attitudes towards strays hardened even though the number of human deaths from rabies was low. Even in 1878, a year that Parisian authorities considered to be particularly marked by rabies cases, “only” 24 humans died, a tiny number compared to cholera deaths in 1832 and

Nineteenth-Century France (Berkeley, 1995); William Coleman, *Death is a Social Disease:*

Public Health and Political Economy in Early Industrial France (Madison, 1982).

¹² Animal protectionists’ concerns echoed campaigns against culling in other cities Jesse S.

Palsetia, ‘Mad Dogs and Parsis: The Bombay Dog Riots of 1832,’ *Journal of the Royal*

Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland, xi (2001); Catherine Pinguet, *Les Chiens*

d’Istanbul: des rapports entre l’homme et l’animal de l’antiquité à nos jours (Saint-Pourçain-

sur-Sioule, 2008); Alan M. Beck, *The Ecology of Stray Dogs: A Story of Free-Ranging*

Urban Animals (Baltimore, 1973), 4-5.

1849.¹³ Rather than the quantity of rabies fatalities, it was the horrific quality of the manner of death that stoked anxieties about stray dogs.

Even if concerns about rabies played a crucial role, fears of strays cannot be reduced to that disease alone. They were also rooted in broader cultural attitudes and tensions, as well as revulsion at strays' physical presence on the streets. Within the emerging field of animal history, studies have shown how stray dogs, as members of a highly domesticated species who have supposedly turned their back on human companionship, unsettle the categories of 'wild' and 'domestic.' They act as sources and symbols of urban tensions, with modernisers representing them as evidence of retrograde and undesirable patterns of urban life.¹⁴ Much of this research suggests that anti-stray attitudes and campaigns have their origins in social tensions related to class and race, as well as fears of breakdowns in social order. Policing strays serves as a conscious or unconscious way for urban elites to reassert their control over

¹³ Camille Leblanc, *Statistique des maladies contagieuses observées dans le département de la Seine pendant les années 1876, 1878 et 1879* (Paris, 1880), 9. 18,000 Parisians died during the Cholera epidemic of 1832 and almost 20,000 in 1849. Catherin Kudlick, *Cholera in Post-Revolutionary Paris: A Cultural History* (Berkeley, 1996), 1-2.

¹⁴ Sophie Bobbé, 'Entre domestique et sauvage: le cas du chien errant. Une liminalité bien dérangeante,' *Ruralia*, v (1999); Benjamin Brady, 'The Politics of the Pound: Controlling Loose Dogs in Nineteenth-Century New York City,' *Jefferson Journal of Science and Culture*, ii (2012); Jessica Wang, 'Dogs and the Making of the American State: Voluntary Association, State Power, and the Politics of Animal Control in New York City, 1850-1920,' *Journal of American History*, xcvi 98 (2012).

public space and to re-affirm social, class and colonial boundaries.¹⁵ Whilst recognizing the cultural roots of anti-stray attitudes and outlining how fears of vagrancy and dirt were projected onto strays, this article argues that stray dogs were taken so seriously in nineteenth century Paris for material, as well as cultural, reasons. Anxieties about urban life and class insecurities intertwined with disgust at strays' supposedly dirty, immoral and unimpeded physicality. These feelings sprang, in part, from encounters with actual dogs on the streets. Within animal history there can be a tendency to treat animals as either cultural symbols or material entities.¹⁶ This article instead endeavours to pay attention to the simultaneously and interlinked imaginative and material history of Parisian strays.

The image of strays as diseased, dirty and dangerous beasts endured throughout the long nineteenth century. Their history therefore cuts across the numerous political, cultural, medical and social upheavals of the period, including the famous histories of revolutions, Haussmannization and the "Pasteurian revolution." The management of strays, however, did

¹⁵ Jesse Arseneault, 'On Canicide and Concern: Species Sovereignty in Western Accounts of Rwanda's Genocide,' *ESC*, xxxix (2013); Kirsten McKenzie, 'Dogs and the Public Sphere: The Ordering of Social Space in the Early Nineteenth-Century Cape Town,' in Lance van Sittert and Sandra Swart (eds), *Canis africanis: A Dog History of Southern Africa* (Leiden, 2008); Jeffrey C. Sanders, 'Animal Trouble and Urban Anxiety: Human-Animal Interaction in Post-Earth Day Seattle,' *Environmental History*, xvi (2011); Lance van Sittert, 'Class and Canicide in Little Bess: The 1893 Port Elizabeth Rabies Epidemic,' *South African Historical Journal* xlviii (2003).

¹⁶ Within French animal history, compare Kathleen Kete, *The Beast in the Boudoir: Petkeeping in Nineteenth Century Paris* (Berkeley, 1994) and Eric Baratay, *Le Point de vue animal: une autre version de l'histoire* (Paris, 2012).

evolve. Hardening cultural attitudes towards vagrancy, fuelled by fears of national degeneration, led to an escalation of anti-stray measures. But the continued and highly visible presence of dogs roaming the streets remained all too apparent, much to the chagrin of doctors, veterinarians and the police. These entwined cultural and material factors informed the intensification of the authorities' taking of nonhuman life to preserve human life. As such, anti-stray campaigns were perhaps the most interventionist public hygiene project in modern Paris.

After discussing how public hygienists and the police constructed strays as dangerous and dirty, this article tracks the evolution of anti-stray measures, a process often marked by fear and failure until the deployment of more effective means of impoundment and slaughter in the *fin-de-siècle* period. It ends with the outbreak of World War One, which saw an increase in rabies cases, underscoring how the city's authorities had not succeeded in safeguarding the Parisians from the perceived risks of hazardous strays.

II. Creating the dangerous stray

The rise of the public hygienist movement combined with elite fears of the “dangerous classes” to position stray dogs as threats to social order and public health in the early nineteenth century. This perspective combined longstanding fears of rabid and uncontrollable dogs with growing concerns about dirt, overcrowding, disease and mortality

sparked by the expanding cities of the late eighteenth century.¹⁷ Amidst political, social, military and religious upheavals of the Revolutionary period, writers and naturalists argued that some caged animals should be granted greater liberty. But these arguments did not extend to stray dogs. Nor did revolutionaries' deployment of animals to promote freedom mean that stray dogs became symbols of liberty.¹⁸ Instead, authorities extended existing laws, such as a sentence issued by the Châtelet de Paris on 20 April 1725 banning 'merchants, artisans and others from letting their dogs loose on the streets at day or night,'¹⁹ to constrain the movement of stray dogs in the name of public safety. On 20 January 1792 the Paris Commune decreed that the city's police should kill any dog found on the street after 10pm.²⁰ Officially-sanctioned lethal measures could now be deployed against strays as part of the

¹⁷ Jolanta N. Komornicka, 'Man as Rabid Beast: Criminals into Animals in Late Medieval France,' *French History*, xxviii (2014); La Berge, *Mission and Method*, 17-18; Alain Corbin, *The Foul and the Fragrant: Odour and the Social Imagination* (London, 1996 [1982]).

¹⁸ Pierre Serna, 'The Republican Menagerie: Animal Politics in the French Revolution,' *French History*, xxviii (2014), 189; Eric Baratay, 'La Promotion de l'animal sensible: une révolution dans la révolution,' *Revue historique*, dclxi (2012), 143-8.

¹⁹ It was reissued on 21 May 1784. Damien Baldin, *Histoire des animaux domestiques, XIX^e - XX^e siècle* (Paris, 2014), 228.

²⁰ *Instruction sur la police des chiens: application des règlements de police dans les campagnes, dans les villes, à Paris et dans les communes du ressort de la Préfecture de police* (Paris, 1883), 5-6; Bibliothèque historique de Paris, Fonds Jules Cousin 10073, Municipalité de Paris, 'Arrêté concernant les chiens qui feront abandonnés dans Paris,' 20 Jan. 1792.

Revolutionary principle that government should guarantee the individual's right to health, in this case freedom from the frightening symptoms and certain death of rabies.²¹

As the authority charged with monitoring and managing risk within the urban environment, as well as combating uprooted outsiders, Paris's police force continued to spearhead anti-stray measures in Napoleonic France.²² A police ordinance of 3 May 1813 reinforced Napoleon's attempt to create orderly and hygienic food markets so as to better provision the potentially mutinous Parisian population. It stated that merchants and other market workers must attach their dogs to their carts. All other dogs must be 'locked up, muzzled or kept on a lead' or destroyed.²³

Alongside police regulations, elite commentators linked stray dogs with social disorder. Alexandre Roger, an army officer, Knight of the Empire and member of Napoleon's Legion of Honour, bemoaned that over 80,000 'useless dogs and cats' currently infested Paris. The problem apparently lay with the city's human underclass – the '*canaille*' (a term that has its roots in the Italian word for a pack of dogs [*canaglia*] that meant 'rabble' or 'riff raff') – who thoughtlessly bred the animals. Dogs offended Roger most because they spread rabies, a disease that indiscriminately affected rich and poor: no-one was safe. Unlike

²¹ La Berge, *Mission and Method*, 18.

²² Jean-Baptiste Fressoz, *L'apocalypse joyeuse: une histoire du risque technologique* (Paris, 2012), 114-15; Howard G. Brown, 'From Organic Society to Security State: The War on Brigandage in France, 1797-1802,' *The Journal of Modern History*, lxxix (1997), 665.

²³ Colin Jones, *Paris: Biography of a City* (London, 2004), 290; Bibliothèque de l'Ecole vétérinaire d'Alfort (hereafter BEVA), Préfecture de Police, 'Ordonnance concernant les chiens errants,' 3 May 1813.

tuberculosis, social status did not reduce the risk of rabies infection.²⁴ The sheer number of stray dogs swarming through the capital's 'poorest areas' constituted a threat to 'public and private security.' Recognizing that it was not feasible to eradicate dogs from French territory, he suggested that police approval be a condition of pet-ownership and that public charity be denied to anyone who kept animals.²⁵ According to Roger, the human poor and stray dogs formed a mobile, ever-expanding and uncontrollable human-canine underclass. Subsuming a whole host of social problems – disease, overcrowding, poverty and social breakdown – into the *canaille*, he incorporated dogs within the 'dangerous classes' that the city's elite treated as a threat to the social order of Paris.²⁶ Removing strays from the city's streets would thereby help reinforce social boundaries in the post-revolutionary city.²⁷ Roger's text is saturated with fear and disgust at the supposedly teeming, filthy and pathological mass of rootless and uncivilized beings, and the desire to insulate the respectable and productive

²⁴ Barnes, *Making of a Social Disease*.

²⁵ Alexandre Roger, *Les chiens, les chats, la vaccine et la canaille, philippique* (Paris, 1813), 7-9, 15-16, 19, 24. On 'canaille,' see Centre national de ressources textuelles et lexicales, Ortolang website, www.cnrtl.fr/lexicographie/canaille, accessed 19 August 2014.

²⁶ Roger foreshadowed Antoine-Honoré Frégier's influential *Des Classes dangereuses de la population des grandes villes* (Paris, 1840) and Louis Chevalier's influential, yet contested, *Labouring Classes and Dangerous Classes in Paris during the first half of the Nineteenth Century*, trans. Frank Jellinek (London, 1958).

²⁷ Barnes, *Making of a Social Disease*, chapter 1; Denise Z. Davidson, 'Making Society "Legible": People-Watching in Paris after the Revolution,' *French Historical Studies*, xxviii (2005); Victoria E. Thompson, 'Telling "Spatial Stories": Urban Space and Bourgeois Identity in Early Nineteenth-Century Paris,' *The Journal of Modern History*, lxxv (2003).

elements of society from them. He was particularly venomous, but he set the tone for repeated calls to control and eliminate stray dogs. The slippage between undesirable dogs and humans is also laid bare: dogs were imbued with the dubious moral qualities of the urban poor, while the latter were animalized. This too became a common trope of anti-stray narratives.

Roger feared the cross-class contagion embodied in the stray dog. But his intervention also exposes anxieties about dogs' tangible presence in the city. Anti-stray attitudes and measures cannot be solely explained by Parisian class tensions, as they were a response to dogs' hazardous and filthy physicality. Roger's hatred of the *canaille* and street dogs can undoubtedly be attributed to him losing a close friend and fellow officer to rabies. The encounter between canine teeth and human flesh constituted a transgressive 'zoonotic threat' that might turn the human victim, of whatever social standing, into a rabid bestial animal.²⁸ In response to the threat posed by dog bites, doctors advised Parisians on how to treat a bite from a rabid dog. The city's Conseil de Salubrité (Health Council), which was under the direct control of the police prefect and advised him on public health issues, issued official and detailed recommendations on the required measures to take if bitten by a rabid dog, which accompanied re-issues of the 3 May 1813 police ordinance throughout the 1820s. Rabies anxieties also explain the timing of anti-stray police ordinances. Although they applied all year round, the police issued them during the summer in line with the belief that hot weather triggered the disease.²⁹ Advice issued to teachers on how to improve their hygiene in schools

²⁸ Nicole Shukin, 'Transfections of Animal Touch, Techniques of Biosecurity,' *Social Semiotics*, xxi (2011), 484.

²⁹ BEVA, Préfecture de Police, 'Ordonnance concernant les chiens errants,' 30 July 1823; APP DB 229 Préfecture de Police, 'Avis,' 29 Aug. 1828. The Conseil de Salubrité was

portrayed stray and rabid dogs as abject creatures: their corpses ‘gave off the most infected odour’ and anyone who touched one should wash their hands with vinegary water. The palpable foulness of rabid dogs threatened public hygiene.³⁰

Public hygiene texts and police regulations advocated that individuals should treat *any* stray dog as potentially rabid. The wise pedestrian would inform themselves on the physical characteristics of canine rabies – dribbling, incessant growling, tail held between rear legs, convulsions, and hydrophobia – and know how to act accordingly. But knowledge was still no guarantee of safety so police ordinances ordered the use of muzzles and leads, technologies intended to constrain canine mobility and biting.³¹ However, such measures had little impact: even the police admitted in 1830 that a ‘large number of [unmuzzled] dogs roam[ed] the public highway.’³²

Gabriel Delessert, Police Prefect from 1836 to 1848, attempted to reinvigorate police action on everyday public health matters following years of tackling political unrest and strikes, as well as the cholera epidemic of 1832.³³ He encouraged those charged with

founded in 1802 to enable the police prefect to monitor and regulate urban pollution and other public health matters. Fressoz, *Apocalypse joyeuse*, 158; La Berge, *Mission and Method*, 18-26.

³⁰ *Petite hygiène des écoles, ou avis sur les moyens les plus propres à conserver la santé* (Paris, 1834), vi, 54.

³¹ APP DB 229 Préfecture de Police, ‘Ordonnance concernant les chiens errants,’ 30 Apr. 1829.

³² APP DB 229 Préfecture de Police, ‘Ordonnance concernant les chiens errants,’ 7 June 1830.

³³ La Berge, *Mission and Method*, 120.

enforcing anti-rabies ordinances – principally municipal policemen, police commissioners, gendarmes, public health officials and market inspectors – to ensure their ‘strict execution.’ In particular, he sought to tackle owners’ ‘lack of concern’: if necessary, more needed to be brought before the courts.³⁴ Once again, however, police action was ineffective, exposing Delessert to criticism about the unmuzzled and collarless dogs who ‘constantly expos[ed]’ the public to danger.³⁵

But health was not the only concern. With bourgeois wealth and success during the liberal July Monarchy (1830-1848) linked to the free of movement individuals and commodities around the capital, stray dogs joined prostitutes, manual labourers, beggars and hawkers as unwelcome and threatening obstacles to bourgeois mobility. Moreover, wayward mobility had become especially alarming after the 1830 revolution and increasingly associated ‘with violence and disorder.’³⁶ These fears fixated on bulldogs. In 1840 Delessert ordered his men to destroy all bulldogs and related breeds. He considered them particularly dangerous because of their aggression and reported protection of the numerous criminals who roamed the nocturnal streets.³⁷ The ordinance of 27 May 1845 brought together measures against stray dogs and bulldogs, codifying the association between strays, danger, and criminality. It continued the ban on bulldogs on the public highway and stipulated that *all*

³⁴ APP DB 229, Letter, 10 June 1837.

³⁵ APP DB 229 Préfet de Police, ‘Chiens,’ 8 Aug. 1837. See also APP DA 44 Préfecture de Police, ‘Rapport,’ 22 June 1843.

³⁶ Thompson, “‘Spatial Stories,’” 538-42.

³⁷ APP DB 229 Préfet de Police, ‘Instruction concernant les chiens, instruction des boules dogues,’ 19 Aug. 1840.

other dogs on the street – whether leashed or not – must wear a muzzle and collar or face impoundment and death.³⁸

The confinement and culling of strays took place in the municipal pound, which was located initially at 55 quai de la Vallée before moving to 31 rue Guénégaud on the Left Bank in 1813. Identified in a law of 6 October 1791 as the place for animals ‘found on the public highway,’ the pound (*fourrière*) was where the police received, held and killed stray dogs and other wayward animals.³⁹ As on the street, regulations restricted the movement of dogs within the pound: they were to be ‘solidly’ chained up to prevent them ‘fleeing or causing disorder.’⁴⁰ Extensive police instructions regulated the pound’s organization and based a monetary value on the impounded dogs who could be sold if unclaimed within eight days.⁴¹ As well as attempting to reduce police expenditure, these regulations were designed to facilitate the efficient processing of dogs by returning them to their well-heeled owners or

³⁸ APP DB 229 Préfecture de Police, ‘Ordonnance concernant les chiens et les chiens bouledogues,’ 27 May 1845; APP DA 44 Préfecture de Police, ‘Rapport,’ 17 May 1845. Although the police portrayed the muzzling of all dogs on the street as a new measure, it actually reinstated article 3 of the 30 April 1829 ordinance.

³⁹ Baldin, *Histoire*, 232.

⁴⁰ APP DB 226 Préfecture de Police, ‘Arrêté relatif à la mise en fourrière des animaux, voitures et autres objets, saisis ou abandonnés sur la voie publique,’ 28 Feb. 1839. The Police prefecture’s Service des Voitures managed the pound, which also housed abandoned vehicles.

⁴¹ The pound’s chief inspector could decide to sell them earlier if the cost of their food looked set to outweigh their value. APP DB 226 Préfecture de Police, ‘Arrêté relatif à la mise en fourrière des animaux saisis ou abandonnés sur la voie publique,’ 25 Mar. 1831.

killing unclaimed or ownerless dogs. The treatment of dogs in the pound provoked some outcry in the 1820s. One canophile imagined a dog called Grognard making a speech at a police tribunal against the police's 'canicide orders.' In particular, the 'unjust and unfounded' muzzling of stray dogs betrayed centuries of 'friendship' between dogs and humans.⁴² At a time when bourgeois writers celebrated the quasi-spiritual bond between humans and dogs and lauded the latter's admirable sense of fidelity, Grognard's plight was intended to appeal to bourgeois sensibilities.⁴³ Canophiles also inserted the authorities' treatment of strays into the city's violent history. Evoking Paris's recent revolutionary past, one commentator bemoaned the 'massacres' at rue Guénégaud, suggesting that the dogs had become the latest victims of arbitrary and ruthless state-condoned violence.⁴⁴

These isolated voices failed to prevent stray dogs' exposure to violence in the pound and elsewhere. Private *écorcheurs* (dog renderers) made strays part of Paris' 'blood and guts' economy. The Dusaussois rendering plant at Montfaucon had a dedicated room for processing dogs (and cats). Individual *écorcheurs* would also pay rag and bone collectors and dog catchers to bring them stray dogs. After hanging the dogs they peeled away their skins, removed the fat, and cut off their paws to sell to glue makers. According to leading public hygienist Alexandre-Jean-Baptiste Parent-Duchâtelet, this commercial killing of strays was more effective than the pound with renderers overtaking the police as the main killers of strays (they reportedly dispatched 10,000-12,000 a year in the mid-1830s). Thousands of

⁴² *Plaidoyer prononcé par un chien de procureur en faveur des chiens de Paris accusés d'avoir erré sans être muselés* (Paris, 1825), 7-8.

⁴³ Kete, *Beast*, 22-38.

⁴⁴ *Lettre d'un chien de Paris à un de ses amis de province sur les massacres de la rue Guénégaud* (Paris, 1825).

dogs became lifeless commodities in accordance with public hygienist norms of improving the cleanliness and boosting the economy.⁴⁵

The early decades of the nineteenth century saw the capital's authorities extend *ancien régime* and revolutionary-era anti-stray measures. The city's authorities, backed by elite commentators, such as Roger, came to treat stray dogs as a dangerously mobile population in need of control and culling in secretive sites of slaughter. The policing of the modern city, which entailed ensuring the health, prosperity and security of the population and covered such diverse areas as the cleanliness of streets, the regulation of markets, and the safety of transport networks, as well as maintaining order, now meant removing stray dogs from the streets.⁴⁶ Yet anti-stray measures were far from effective, meaning that debates intensified over their meaning and management in mid-century Paris.

⁴⁵ Alexandre-Jean-Baptiste Parent-Duchâtelet, *Hygiène publique ou mémoire sur les questions les plus importantes de l'hygiène appliqués aux professions et aux travaux d'utilité publique*, vol. 2 (Paris, 1836), 242, 347-8; Peter Atkins, 'The Urban Blood and Guts Economy,' in Peter Atkins (eds), *Animal Cities: Beastly Urban Histories* (Farnham, 2012); Sabine Barles, 'Undesirable Nature: Animals, Resources and Urban Nuisance,' in Atkins, *Animal Cities*; Sabine Barles, *L'invention des déchets urbains: France 1790-1970* (Seyssels, 2005).

⁴⁶ Michel Foucault, "'Omnes et singulatim: Towards a Critique of Political Reason,' in Michel Foucault, *Power*, ed. James D. Faubion (New York, 2000), 320-3; Fressoz, *Apocalypse Joyeuse*, 115-6, 149.

III Taxes and “tue-chien”

In the 1850s the French state deployed new financial measures to tackle strays. In line with the assumption that it was poorer Parisians who lacked the ability to control the movement and breeding of their dogs, legislators revived eighteenth century proposals for a dog tax to discourage the poor from keeping dogs. Finally becoming law in 1855, the tax was intended to decrease the number of dogs from three million to one and a half million. Dog owners now had to declare their dog annually at the local town hall and pay tax according to whether they owned a luxury or working dog. However, the class-based categorization of dog ownership that informed the law floundered when confronted with the complex and charged character of human-canine relations. Disagreement over the classification of dogs as luxury or useful, opposition from bourgeois dog owners, and widespread tax avoidance undermined the dog tax: the number of taxed dogs in France actually increased from 2,240,000 in 1872 to 2,690,000 in 1896. In Paris, dog owners declared 75,286 dogs in 1856 and 131,395 in 1892.⁴⁷ Taking into account both ownerless and owned undeclared dogs, the actual number would have been far higher.

Given the tax’s deficiencies, policing remained the main means of containing stray dogs’ mobility. The 27 May 1845 police ordinance formed the basis for anti-stray legislation

⁴⁷ Kete, *Beast*, 41-49, 53-4; Bibliothèque municipale, *Code-formulaire du possesseur de chiens et d’animaux domestiques nuisibles ou incommodes* (Grenoble, 1855), 1; Christian Estève, ‘La “question” canine en France au milieu du XIXe siècle,’ in Paul Bacot *et al.*(eds), *L’animal en politique* (Paris, 2003).

until 1878 and police prefects repeatedly re-issued it.⁴⁸ But it was largely ineffectual. Parisians seemed unaware of, or indifferent to, its stipulations, or believed, erroneously, that they only applied in hot weather.⁴⁹ This ignorance did go unnoticed and concerned Parisians called on the government to take action. One wrote to the Minister of the Interior in March 1861 to complain that dog owners' flagrant disregard of the ordinance allowed stray dogs to run amok, scaring horses and spreading rabies.⁵⁰ Under pressure from central and local government, as well as concerned citizens, police prefects in the 1850s and 1860s encouraged their men to issue more warnings for infractions of the 1845 ordinance. Yet the number of dogs on the streets increased, as did the 'accidents' they caused.⁵¹ The situation was worse in certain areas. In 1868, the police commissioner of the industrial and working class Goutte d'or neighbourhood (18th arrondissement) reported that the ordinance had 'fallen into complete abeyance.' Stray dogs posed a risk to 'public safety' and, presumably referring to

⁴⁸ See, for instance, APP DB 229 Préfet de Police, 'Ordonnance concernant les chiens et les boule-dogues,' 1 May 1872; APP DB 229 Préfet de Police, 'Ordonnance concernant les chiens et les boule-dogues,' 19 June 1876.

⁴⁹ APP DB 229 Préfecture de Police, 'Rapport,' 20 Apr. 1872; APP DA 44 Préfecture de police, 'Avis au public,' 8 May 1862.

⁵⁰ APP DA 44 Hippolyte Miller to Ministre de l'intérieur, 20 Mar. 1861. See also APP DA 44 Ministère de l'Intérieur, Cabinet du Ministère to Préfet de Police, 30 June 1866; APP DA 44 Monsieur Wormser to Préfet de Police, 20 June 1870.

⁵¹ APP DB 229 Préfecture de Police, 'Note pour M. le chef de la police municipale, 14 June 1859; APP DB 229 Préfecture de Police, 'Avis au Public,' 16 July 1866; APP DB 229 Préfecture de Police, 'Avis au Public,' 10 June 1866.

public canine population, produced a ‘spectacle offensive to the decency of witnesses.’⁵²

Public safety and respectability were at stake.

The physical difficulty of impounding dogs compounded the problem. Police commissioners showed a marked reluctance to take strays to the pound, which might be explained by an unwillingness to approach a possibly rabid dog or to risk a confrontation with dog-loving members of the public.⁵³ With a sense of duty seemingly insufficient motivation for his men, Delessert introduced a financial incentive in 1842: policemen would receive 1.5 francs for every individual dog taken to the pound or rendered and 2 francs for two dogs. However, this scheme experienced teething problems as policemen working in areas that teemed with stray dogs seized the opportunity to augment their meagre salaries, thereby creating a considerable financial burden on the police prefecture’s budget. As a result, the payment was reduced in those neighbourhoods, and, eventually, throughout Paris to 50 cents per dog or 1 franc for multiple ones, with 1.5 francs for bulldogs.⁵⁴ But whatever their rate, the bounties placed on stray dogs failed to make much headway in reducing the city’s stray population.

⁵² APP DA 44 Commissariat de police du quartier de la Goutte d’or, ‘Rapport,’ 8 Mar. 1868.

⁵³ APP DB226 Préfet de Police to Commissaires de la Police, 30 Apr. 1841; APP DB 229 Préfet de Police to Commissaires de la Police, 25 June 1841; APP DB 229 Préfet de Police, ‘Circulaire,’ 10 June 1842.

⁵⁴ APP DB 229 Préfet de Police, ‘Circulaire,’ 10 June 1842; Préfet de Police, ‘Salaire pour la conduite des chiens à la fourrière,’ 31 Oct. 1842; APP DB 226 Préfecture de Police, ‘Exécution de l’ordre de police concernant les chiens et les boule-dogues,’ 4 July 1853.

With French authorities seeking to eradicate violence from public space through such measures as the 1850 Grammont law,⁵⁵ confinement and slaughter within the relatively secluded confines of the municipal dog pound remained the main means of eliminating strays. Police commissioners were charged with taking bulldogs and valueless stray dogs to an annex pound at 11 boulevard de l'Hôpital, conveniently located near the rendering plant within La Salpêtrière complex. These dogs were to be killed immediately, whilst dogs thought to have some value were to be taken to the main pound at rue Guénégaud. The police authorities tried to hide the lethal character of 11 boulevard de l'Hôpital, reminding policemen not to give this address to owners hoping to reclaim their dogs.⁵⁶ This system remained in place until 1851 when the prefecture opened a new pound at 13 rue de Pontoise (5th arrondissement) in a former Bernardine convent.⁵⁷ No reasons for the secretive nature of this slaughterhouse are explicitly outlined in police documents. But police authorities may have felt that the killing site might draw criticism from the emerging animal protection movement and offend bourgeois sensibilities at a time when the living should be shielded from the dead.⁵⁸ It may also have made it even harder for the police to remove dogs from the streets if canophile Parisian were aware of their fate. Whatever its rationale, 11 boulevard de

⁵⁵ The Grammont law prohibited public violence and cruelty towards domestic animals.

Maurice Agulhon, 'Le Sang des bêtes: le problème de la protection des animaux en France au XIX^{ème} siècle,' *Romantisme*, xxxi(1981).

⁵⁶ APP DB 229 'Chiens,' [n.d.].

⁵⁷ APP DB 229 Préfet de Police, 'Instruction concernant les chiens, instruction des boules dogues,' 19 Aug.1840; APP DB 229 Préfecture de Police, 'Exécution de l'ordre de police concernant les chiens et les boules-dogues,' 9 June 1852.

⁵⁸ Strauss, *Human Remains*.

l'Hôpital represented a lethal and darker counterpoint to the more celebrated sites of Parisian modernity, such as the arcades.⁵⁹

The differentiation between valuable and valueless dogs based on subjective human judgement continued in the pound. Dogs presumed to be pets were kept in better conditions than those considered ownerless: the former had eight days to be claimed whilst the latter only had three. The commodification of financially worthless dogs also continued. In addition to employing their own renderer, the police now signed contracts with private companies to slaughter dogs in a way that would, in theory, avoid 'all senseless cruelty' so as not to 'bring trouble to the pound or disturb its neighbours' (as well as allowing renderers to make a profit from canine corpses).⁶⁰ Of the 3,473 dogs impounded in 1862, 42 were sold, 313 were claimed by their owners, and 2,964 were killed. In addition, strays became experimental material with 154 handed over to vivisectionists.⁶¹ As one observer in 1873 noted, the Paris Commune had neglected to write 'Liberté, égalité, fraternité' above the pound's entrance: distinctions between canine 'patricians' and 'plebeians' remained.⁶²

The better organization and increased influence of animal protectionists in the mid-nineteenth century marked the entrance of new actors in the history of Parisian stray dogs, and potential obstacles to police policies (even if Delessert supported some of their wider objectives). Animal protectionists, who came from mainly bourgeois backgrounds, cast the pound as a merciless site of incarceration and cruelty. Refuting the Cartesian notion that

⁵⁹ Walter Benjamin, 'Paris: Capital of the Nineteenth Century,' *Perspecta*, xxii12 (1969).

⁶⁰ Institut Pasteur, Paris, LP.G1 29 Préfecture de police, 'Cahier des charges pour le service de l'abatage des chiens à la fourrière,' 31 Mar. 1877.

⁶¹ Baldin, *Histoire*, 232-7.

⁶² O.S., 'La fourrière de Paris,' *Revue britannique*, v (1873), 352.

animals were senseless machines, animal protectionists promoted the view that dogs, like other animals, experienced suffering and distress. One Société Protectrice des Animaux (SPA or Animal Protection Society, founded in 1845) member lamented that dogs were kept like ‘prisoner[s].’⁶³ But if prison should, in theory, discipline and reform human prisoners before their reintegration into society, death was all that awaited ownerless dogs in the pound. The number of dogs entering the pound meant cramped conditions, with an average of 8 to 10 dogs to a cage. On busy days up to 30 dogs were held in the same cage leading to suffocations.⁶⁴ Animal protectionists responded to canine impoundment in different ways. The more radical protectionists, who deplored the suffering and death of any animal, opened up private refuges. The larger ones were financed and run by rich bourgeois women, such as Fanny Bernard, daughter of the noted vivisectionist Claude Bernard, whilst less affluent women, such as offal seller Mme Graye, opened their homes to strays.⁶⁵ More moderate SPA members called for reform of the pound, including the SPA vice-president, public hygienist and philanthropist Dr Henry Blatin who argued that the methods of slaughter were ‘repugnant to our civilization.’ Without actually specifying how, he urged that stray dogs be killed in the ‘least cruel and most prompt manner.’ Echoing public hygienists’ calls for hygienic and ordered human prisons, Blatin stressed that the pound should be hygienic. Killing strays was permissible, but it needed to be regulated, hygienic and cause the least distress possible to the

⁶³ ‘Chien poursuivi comme enragé: la fourrière,’ *Bulletin de la Société protectrice des animaux*, vol. 9, 1863, 463; Eric Pierre, ‘La Souffrance des animaux dans les discours des protecteurs français au XIX^e siècle,’ *Etudes rurales*, cxlvii-cxlviii (1998).

⁶⁴ Baldin, *Histoire*, 232-7; ‘Rapport sur la fourrière au nom d’une commission composée de MM. de Lavalette, Couturier de Vienne, Oscar Honoré, Delbruck et Lelion-Damiens,’ *Bulletin de la Société protectrice des animaux*, vol. 10, 1864, 106.

⁶⁵ Kete, *Beast*, 17.

dogs.⁶⁶ Despite divergences amongst animal protectionists, their concern for impounded dogs shows that reduction of stray dogs to killable beasts was not universally accepted, even amongst the bourgeoisie.

Violence against stray dogs also took place on Parisian streets. In 1842 Delessert encouraged his police commissioners to distribute “bols colchiques” in those places ‘most frequented’ by strays. This poison, sometimes known as “tue-chien,” derived from autumn crocus (*Colchicum autumnale*) plants and was prepared for the police by a Parisian pharmacist.⁶⁷ The police viewed the poisoning of dogs as a measured response to the city’s stray problem yet one to be conducted with ‘discernment,’ presumably so as not to provoke public outcry.⁶⁸ It was a secretive act and not mentioned in the various publicly-displayed police ordinances issued throughout the nineteenth century. Nonetheless, the poisoning attracted some attention. Dijon-based veterinarian H. Laligant welcomed the poisoning of strays who he asserted spread rabies, pestered bitches in heat, knocked over children, caused road accidents and bit passers-by.⁶⁹ However, poisoning failed to reduce the number of

⁶⁶ Henry Blatin, ‘De la rage chez le chien et des mesures préservatrices,’ *Bulletin de la Société protectrice des animaux*, vol. 8, 1862, 166-7; Pierre, ‘Souffrance des animaux’; Coleman, *Death*, 95-123.

⁶⁷ APP DB226 Préfecture de police, ‘Instructions concernant la destruction des chiens errans [sic],’ 5 Dec.1842; E. A. Duchesne, *Répertoire des plantes utiles et des plantes vénéneuses du globe* (Paris, 1836), 34; APP DB 226 Préfecture de police, ‘Exécution de l’ordonnance de police concernant les chiens,’ 29 July 1838.

⁶⁸ APP DB 229 Préfecture de police, ‘Envoi des ordonnance de police concernant es chiens et les boules-dogues: instructions,’ 7 July 1849.

⁶⁹ H. Laligant, *De la rage chez le chien et de sa police sanitaire* (Dijon, 1874), 27, 30.

strays, which the police themselves recognized. Moreover, according to one observer, rabid dogs, having lost their appetite, ignored the poisoned meat and strays found it unappealing compared with the other morsels available on the street. More worryingly, poison endangered infants, ‘useful animals,’ and rag-pickers.⁷⁰

At times, the police resorted to more violent action than poisoning. In June 1870, after stray dogs reportedly attacked members of the public, the police shot one displaying rabies symptoms in front of hundreds of children in the Ranelagh garden in the wealthy 16th arrondissement. Having become accustomed to treating parks as familial sites of leisure and an extension of the home, Parisians did not expect to be exposed to lethal violence in them.⁷¹ The killing of dogs in parks and streets created an alternative geography of animal death in nineteenth century Paris. As slaughterhouses were moved out of the city centre, the poisoning and shooting of strays maintained the killing of animals in central Paris as public security concerns overrode fears of public violence.⁷² Poisoning and shooting also highlighted the perilous and boundary-blurring status of stray dogs who, having apparently rejected human companionship, could be treated like vermin and wild animals: it is telling that farmers and others used “bols colchiques” to kill wolves and foxes in the French countryside.

IV Debating Stray Mobility

⁷⁰ APP DA 44 Préfecture de Police, ‘Rapport,’ 22 June 1843; APP DA 44 Paul Glassacki to Ministère de l’intérieur, 4 May 1853.

⁷¹ DA 44 Mairie de Passy, 16e arrondissement, to Préfet de Police, 16 June 1870; Richard S. Hopkins, ‘*Sauvons le Luxembourg: Urban Greenspace as Private Domain and Public Battleground, 1865-1867,*’ *Journal of Urban History*, xxxviii (2011).

⁷² Agulhon, ‘Le Sang des bêtes.’

At first glance, Napoleon III's and Georges-Eugène Haussmann's mid-century project of urban renewal, which was intended to cleanse and rationalize Parisian public space to facilitate the easy movement of goods and bourgeois individuals around Paris, might have been expected to reinforce the notion that strays were creatures out of place on Parisian boulevards, streets and parks.⁷³ Significantly, however, some bourgeois observers launched a defence of canine mobility in the 1860s. Disagreement over the disease etiologies and anxieties concerning bourgeois sexuality fed their arguments. The elite condemnation of strays was not total.

Some canophiles and animal protectionists turned stray dogs into agents, rather than enemies, of public health. As concerns about harmful miasmas combined with a growing intolerance towards dirt and offensive smells, stray dogs helped remove decaying and potentially harmful organic matter from the streets. Writing in 1867, Eugène Gayot, a member of the French central imperial society for agriculture, argued that dogs' powerful digestive system did more for 'public cleanliness' than the numerous hygiene regulations issued by the capital's authorities. Dogs ate a variety of mess and debris off the streets, including infected carcasses covered in flies that no other creature would touch. Less likely to be cooped up in apartments than their bourgeois counterparts, the dogs of the poor were the most effective street cleaners, removing numerous 'household wastes (*immondices*)' from the street that would otherwise ferment and rot in the sun with all the 'dangerous consequences'

⁷³ Harvey, *Paris*; David Jordan, *Transforming Paris: The Life and Labors of Baron Haussmann* (Chicago, 1996).

that entailed.⁷⁴ Gayot praised stray dogs in other ways, noting that they had kept their ‘vigour’ (*sève*) and had not succumbed to ‘degeneration’ or ‘debasement’ despite by-passing the expertise of nineteenth century dog breeders. Furthermore, stray dogs formed bonds with human inhabitants and acted as ‘vigilant guardian[s], sturdy companion[s], [and] faithful and loyal friend[s].’ Not only did stray dogs share some of the qualities of the faithful bourgeois pet dog, but they provided proof that dogs were intelligent, even without training. However, working from the assumption that dogs consumed food that could otherwise feed humans, Gayot condemned the number of ‘useless dogs’ in France, which he put at 600,000-1,000,000, and recommended that many ownerless dogs be killed.⁷⁵ Although Gayot did not treat stray dogs as intrinsically dangerous, degenerate or dirty, he did not fully endorse their presence on the streets.

Gayot was not alone as influential members of the staunchly aristocratic and bourgeois milieu of animal protection and canophile societies defended stray dogs. Before the elaboration and eventual acceptance of germ theory, the suggestion that rabies could arise spontaneously in some dogs and then be transmitted through bites was a legitimate theory.⁷⁶ For advocates of this view, a pressing question concerned the types of dogs that were most likely to develop rabies. Some believers in spontaneous rabies questioned the whole premise

⁷⁴ Eugène Gayot, *Le Chien* (Paris, 1867), 432-3.

⁷⁵ *ibid.* 329-33, 429-3. Although Jean-Michel Chevet and Cormac Ó Gráda have questioned the severity of subsistence crises in nineteenth century France, fears of food shortages and malnutrition were seemingly on Gayot’s mind. ‘Revisiting “Subsistence Crises”: The Characteristics of Demographic Crises in France in the First Half of the 19th Century,’ *Food and Foodways* xii (2004).

⁷⁶ Becquerel, *Traité élémentaire*, 425.

that strays dogs were the main threat. Writer, lawyer and SPA member Amable-Félix Couturier de Vienne asserted that rabies was less common in ‘vulgar and roaming’ dogs than overweight, overly-protected and chaste pet dogs.⁷⁷ Stray mobility, it seemed, guarded against rabies. The freedom apparently enjoyed by Ottoman dogs informed French thinking on their own stray dogs. French writers displayed a marked fascination and respect for the dogs of Istanbul who guarded their neighbourhoods from human intruders and helpfully ate debris off the streets.⁷⁸ Their freedom, it seemed, prevented rabies. Author and assistant administrator of the Salon art exhibition Jules Maret-Leriche highlighted how ‘dogs are more numerous than disciples of the Koran’ in Istanbul where they ‘live in an almost savage state’ without any ‘constraints’ on their freedom. Yet despite the city’s ‘torrid heat,’ few of its dogs were rabid. The muzzling and other constraints inflicted on Parisian dogs, however, created the conditions for rabies to develop.⁷⁹ Drawing on medical reports from Egypt and Turkey, Blatin similarly stressed that dogs who were free to follow their instincts were less susceptible to rabies. ‘Liberty’ was an effective rabies prophylactic. The ‘masterless and vagabond dogs’ of the Middle East seemed healthier than French pet dogs, despite the care

⁷⁷ Amable-Félix Couturier de Vienne, ‘La Fourrière,’ *Bulletin de la Société protectrice des animaux*, vol. 9 (1863), 447.

⁷⁸ ‘Les chiens de Constantinople,’ *Magasin pittoresque* (1844), article located in APP DB230; Gaston des Godins de Souhesmes, *Les chiens de Constantinople* (Paris, 1890); Ian Coller, ‘East of Enlightenment: Regulating Cosmopolitanism between Istanbul and Paris in the Eighteenth Century,’ *Journal of World History* xxi (2010).

⁷⁹ Maret-Leriche, *A bas la muselière: pétition de messieurs les chiens et leurs maîtres adressée à M. le Préfet de Police* (Paris, 1861), 4.

that pet-keeping experts insisted dog owners accord their animals.⁸⁰ According to this perspective, rabies could be combated best through less repression of dogs.

This defence of stray mobility fed into wider debates on freedom and liberty in modern France. The question of spontaneous rabies was as politicalized as it was sexualized, providing an outlet for expressions of bourgeois sexual, political and cultural anxieties and desires.⁸¹ The celebration of the stray's freedom offered a way to critique what some saw as the cosseted world of bourgeois domesticity that stifled male sexuality, as well as the repressive political atmosphere of Second Empire. As a Republican mobilizing the image of the freedom-loving stray to attack what he saw as the cruel and harmful muzzling of dogs, Blatin's veneration of canine liberty echoed and reinforced Republican calls for greater human freedom under the Second Empire. For others, the muzzling and restraining of dogs was an attack on the French value of *liberté* that stood in stark contrast to Prussian authoritarianism. According to veterinarian and SPA member M.L. Prangé, dogs – like humans – were born to live 'free and without constraint' and did not deserve to be coerced 'à la prussienne' (a pointed reference to the muzzling of dogs in Berlin).⁸² For SPA member Eugène Meunier, meanwhile, muzzling evoked the worst excesses of France's Revolutionary

⁸⁰ Henry Blatin, *De la Rage chez le chien et des mesures préservatrices* (Paris, 1863), 27-29.

See also Blatin, 'De la Rage,' 166; Dr Belloli, 'La Muselière des chiens,' *Bulletin de la Société protectrice des animaux*, vol. 8, 1862, 314; H. A., 'La Mort d'un préjugé,' *La Réaction*, 27 July 1873; Eugène Meunier, *Plaintes d'un muselé traduits par son maître* (Paris, 1862).

⁸¹ Kete, *Beast*, 97-114.

⁸² M. L. Prangé, 'De la Muselière appliquée au chien,' *Bulletin de la Société protectrice des animaux*, vol. 8, 1862, 354-5, 365.

period. Suggesting that unwarranted rabies fears had unleashed a ‘terror’ against French dogs, he argued that the police’s enforcement of muzzling orders was actually a ploy to increase the risk of rabies so as to justify their ‘frenzy of extermination’ against Parisian dogs.⁸³

Other believers in spontaneous rabies, however, felt that the most ‘vagabond’ dogs – strays – were most likely to develop rabies. One veterinarian in an 1875 report to the police prefect argued that the existence of spontaneous rabies militated in favour of even tougher measures against ‘parasite’ stray dogs. He recommended the castration of dogs and the neutering of bitches as their sexual organs created ‘agitation, violent desires, dissatisfaction, irritation, excessive anger, violence and sorrow.’⁸⁴ In a similar vein, veterinarian, animal protectionist and public hygienist M. J. Bourrell pointed to the high number of rabies cases amongst free-roaming dogs in Algeria and his own observations of dogs encountered on Parisian streets, which led him to assert that female terriers, the ‘most vagabond’ kind of female dog, were proportionally most likely to succumb to rabies than other bitches.⁸⁵ Members of the Health Council were also sceptical that muzzles caused spontaneous rabies, whilst veterinarians, such as M. Weber, a member of the 7th arrondissement’s Hygiene Commission, stated that rabies was most prevalent amongst stray dogs who should be ‘eliminated’ by way of the pound.⁸⁶

⁸³ Eugène Meunier, *La Liberté pour le chien: plaidoyer historique, philosophique et physiologique dédié aux amis de la race canine* (Paris, 1863), 22, 24, 27-8.

⁸⁴ APP DA 45 ‘Rapport sur la rage,’ Aug. 1875.

⁸⁵ M. J. Bourrell, *Traité complet de la rage chez le chien et chez le chat: moyen de s’en préserver* (Paris, 1874), 57-8, 82.

⁸⁶ APP DA 44 Conseil d’Hygiène et de Salubrité du département de la Seine, ‘Police des chiens,’ 12 Aug. 1859; APP DA 45 M. Weber, ‘Travail sur la Rage,’ 14 Apr. 1870.

Canophobes unsurprisingly joined the call for a tougher stance against stray dogs in Paris and elsewhere. Echoing Roger's 1813 plea for the complete eradication of dogs, Nicolas Fétu, writing in 1866, lamented the disorder created by strays in his home city of Dijon. Whether barking, fighting, stealing food, blocking the way, biting, spreading rabies or creating the 'disgusting spectacle' of copulation, dogs, having once served a useful function in helping pave the way for civilization, had become decadent and a symbol of 'debasement' in modern France.⁸⁷ Diseased, dirty and undisciplined, strays had no place in the modern city and had become material evidence of national degeneration.

The view that repression was the way to deal with stray dogs in the hygienic post-Haussmann city won out. So too did the notion that stray dogs and pedigree pet dogs were fundamentally different and should be treated accordingly. Strays became the antithesis of the pampered and clean pet dog thereby challenging the bourgeois veneration of the domestic sphere.⁸⁸ A reader of *Le Petit Journal* distinguished between dogs loose on the streets who had owners and those who had 'no home nor food' and who constituted a 'real danger.' Echoing medical debates over the visual identification of cretinism and other degenerate humans, it was possible to identify 'at first glance' those dogs who 'lived in a permanent

⁸⁷ Nicolas Fétu, *Requête à mes concitoyens pour l'extinction de la race canine à Dijon* (Dijon, 1866), 7-10, 27-9. On degeneration, see Robert A. Nye, *Crime, Madness and Politics in Modern France: The Medical Concept of National Decline* (Princeton, 1984).

⁸⁸ Kete, *Beast*; Sharon Marcus, *Apartment Stories: City and Home in Nineteenth-Century Paris and London* (Berkeley, 1999).

bohemian state' and so remove them quickly from the street.⁸⁹ Some observers saw strays as a direct threat to pet dogs. Without human contact they became 'quarrelsome' and 'aggressive,' setting themselves on pet dogs who, having become more 'docile' in human company, fared poorly in street brawls with their wilder counterparts.⁹⁰ Hereditary theories informed the splitting of stray and pedigree pet dogs, with the former's lack of rational breeding constituting an affront to the perfection of dog breeds under the careful guidance of French dog breeders. Having supposedly rejected human companionship and control, stray dogs challenged the nineteenth century virtues of classification, domestication and loyalty. For A.-G. Beaumarié, writing in 1874, stray dogs had 'none of the moral qualities' of pedigree dogs. The stray dog was a 'degraded being' and the 'pariah of its species,' subject to all the 'vices' and 'turpitude' that came with the lack of human contact. As a 'satellite violently separated from its centre of attraction [humankind] and evolution,' its 'raison d'être' had disappeared. It was no longer a representative of its species, just as the human 'vagabond' no longer 'represented humanity.'⁹¹ His judgement of them was scathing and he compared them to the pariah dogs that inhabited Indian settlements, thereby stressing their otherness, backwardness and deserved exclusion from the modern European city.

⁸⁹ 'Un Lecteur assidu,' *Le Petit Journal*, 24 Mar. 1870. See also A Toussnel, 'Variétés: plaintes d'un muséle,' *L'opinion nationale*, 25 Aug. 1862; Daniel Pick, *Faces of Degeneration: A European Disorder c.1848-1918* (Cambridge, 1989), 51-2.

⁹⁰ H. Laligant, *De la Rage chez le chien et de sa police sanitaire* (Dijon, 1874), 30.

⁹¹ A.-G. Beaumarié, *Le Chien: étude* (Paris, 1874), 14-15. Writers, such as Louis Bourdeau, treated domestication as evidence of human superiority over animals. *Conquête du monde animal* (Paris, 1885).

The splitting of dogs into strays and pedigrees echoed and reinforced the widespread narrative of degeneration in which doctors, psychiatrists and others divided French society into civilized, productive and healthy individuals and the dirty, degenerate and disturbing “dangerous classes” whose mobility, alienation and immorality threatened the social order.⁹² As mobile, disruptive, degenerate and semi-wild beasts on the streets at a time when the bourgeoisie celebrated pedigree pet dogs as loyal and useful household members, strays had deviated from the dog’s main purpose in life: accompanying and serving humans. As a matter of social defence, they were cemented as killable and increasingly exposed to violence.

V The “canicide” of vagabond dogs

Summer 1878 marked something of a turning point as the violence against strays intensified due to an increase in reported rabies cases. According to police reports, actual numbers were low. In Paris, 5 individuals were ‘victims of rabies’ in 1877 whilst 12 contracted the disease in the first half of 1878. The police also recorded 441 cases of rabies amongst Paris’ dogs in 1878. However, these cases galvanized the authorities. Recognizing that existing anti-stray regulations were ‘dead letters’ due to the non-compliance of owners, and with police still blaming the majority of rabies cases on strays, the minister for agriculture and commerce Pierre Teisserenc de Bort stressed the importance of ‘employing every effort to get rid of this population of vagabond and stray dogs and to prevent it from reforming.’ He proposed that any dog found on the street without a collar indicating the name

⁹² Pick, *Faces*, 52-4.

and address of the owner should be destroyed. In addition, any dog or cat found to have bitten another animal or human should be immediately killed ‘without mercy.’⁹³

Once again, the intervention of concerned citizens provided an impetus for action. Having received numerous letters from Parisians concerned about the number of stray dogs, police prefect Albert Gigot swiftly responded to Teisserenc de Bort’s request with a new ordinance on 6 August 1878. Replacing the 1845 ordinance, it declared that any dog found on the street without a collar or any roaming dog of which the ‘owner is unknown in the locality will be seized and killed without delay.’⁹⁴ Henceforth, pet dogs that strayed from their owner, and all ownerless dogs, could be killed. Unlike the 1845 ordinance, a muzzle was no longer enough to protect a stray dog.⁹⁵ The regulations were accompanied by, in the words of the Paris police prefecture’s chief veterinarian Camille Leblanc, a ‘hecatomb’ of stray dogs. The police seized 3,383 dogs in July 1878 and 1,334 in August 1878 of which 4,500 were killed. Leblanc reported that the number of reported rabies cases in animals (mainly dogs) had subsequently fallen from 613 in 1878 to 285 in 1879, whilst the number of human deaths had fallen from 24 to 12.⁹⁶

⁹³ APP DB 229 Ministre de l’agriculture et commerce to Préfets, ‘Chiens: mesures à prendre contre la rage,’ 19 July 1878; APP DA 44 Préfecture de Police, ‘Personnes victims de la rage,’ July 1878; *Journal officiel de la république française*, 4 July 1879, 6091.

⁹⁴ APP DB 229 Préfet de Police, ‘Ordonnance concernant les chiens,’ 6 Aug. 1878. The letters from concerned Parisians are collected in APP DA 44.

⁹⁵ APP DB 229 Préfecture de Police, ‘Mesures de police concernant les chiens,’ Paris 24 Mar. 1883, 34.

⁹⁶ Camille Leblanc, *Statistique des maladies contagieuses observées dans le département de la Seine pendant les années 1876, 1878 et 1879*, 9, 14; Camille Leblanc, *Statistique des*

Despite this apparent success, officials still lamented the number of stray dogs roaming Parisian streets. In 1879 police prefect Louis Andrieux reported that dogs ‘roam in complete liberty, with or without their master’ as policemen failed to issue warnings to negligent masters.⁹⁷ Moreover, a further upsurge in rabies cases in early 1881 alarmed health officials, leading to two further nation-wide regulations. The law of 21 July 1881 ordered the immediate killing of dogs and cats suspected of having rabies. Suspicion, rather than proof, of rabies, was all the law required.⁹⁸ The decree of 22 June 1882 then stated that any ‘dog found without a collar on the highways should be seized and impounded.’ Those without a collar and whose owner was unknown in the ‘locality’ should be ‘killed without delay.’ Those with a collar or whose owner was known were to be killed or handed over to scientific establishments if unclaimed within three days. The decree also allowed authorities, ‘particularly in cities,’ to ban all unleashed dogs from the street for at least six weeks following a rabies case, whilst any owner who allowed a ‘dangerous or rabid’ dog to ‘wander’ (*divaguer*) was subject to a 6-10 franc fine.⁹⁹ These anti-stray measures applied in

maladies contagieuses observées dans le département de la Seine pendant les années 1880 et 1881 (Paris, 1882), 6; *Journal officiel de la République française*, 4 July 1879, 6081.

⁹⁷ APP DB 229 Préfet de Police, ‘Mesures préventives contre la rage,’ 5 July 1879.

⁹⁸ Leblanc, *Statistique des maladies... 1880 et 1881*, 6; Conseil d’hygiène publique et de salubrité du département de la Seine (hereafter CHPSDS), *Rapport sur les maladies contagieuses des animaux observés en 1887 dans le département de la Seine* (Paris, 1888), 3.

⁹⁹ *Instruction sur la police des chiens suivie de la loi du 2 juillet 1850 relative aux mauvais traitements exercés envers les animaux domestiques*, 3rd edition (Paris, 1895), 5-7; *Instruction sur la police des chiens suivie de la loi du 2 juillet 1850 relative aux mauvais traitements exercés envers les animaux domestiques*, 3rd edn (Paris, 1911), 5. The decree was revised on 2 December 1902 and 6 October 1914.

the city and the countryside, a geographical scope later reinforced by article 16 of the Rural Code of June 1898 which ordered mayors to ‘take all appropriate measures to prevent the wandering (*divagation*) of dogs.’¹⁰⁰

These new regulations were accompanied by a breakthrough in treatment. Having pioneered research into germ theory from the 1860s, Pasteur turned to rabies in 1880 and in May 1884, to much fanfare, he announced that he had created a reliable vaccine. After the inoculation of nine year old Joseph Meister in 1884 and a young shepherd, Jean-Baptiste Jupille, in 1885, *L’Illustration* declared that Pasteur had ‘definitively triumphed against this evil,’ even if other observers were more sceptical.¹⁰¹ Although not without risk, Pasteur’s procedure replaced the medically approved, yet painful and ineffectual, method of cauterizing the bite wound, as well as a variety of “quack” remedies.¹⁰² Relief therefore greeted the

¹⁰⁰ *Bulletin des lois de la République française*, no. 1992, Lois sur le Code rural du 21 juin 1898, www.ghzh.fr/index.php/ressources-documentaires/category/8-xixe-siecle, accessed 12 Sept. 2014. This code applied in Paris where the police prefect took on the ‘functions of the mayor.’ APP DB 226 Emile Massard, ‘Proposition relative à la répression des mauvais traitements infligés aux animaux et à la modification du règlement de la fourrière,’ 6 May 1910, 12.

¹⁰¹ ‘Nos gravures,’ *L’Illustration*, 7 Nov. 1885. See also ‘Les travaux scientifiques de M. Pasteur,’ *Le journal illustré*, 30 Mar. 1884; Neil Pemberton and Michael Worboys, *Rabies in Britain: Dogs, Disease and Culture, 1830-2000* (Basingstoke, 2013), 104-7; David S. Barnes, *The Great Stink of Paris and the Nineteenth-Century Struggle against Filth and Germs* (Baltimore, 2006), 36-46.

¹⁰² P. Guichard, *Moyens (mis à la portée de tout le monde) de se préserver de la rage après avoir été mordu par un chien ou tout autre animal atteint de cette maladie* (Tillac, 1864).

opening of the Pasteur Institute in 1888, of which one of its most-celebrated missions was, in the words of Pasteur, to act as a ‘dispensary for the treatment of rabies.’¹⁰³

However, rabies anxieties and attitudes towards stray dogs did not disappear. Animal protectionists noted that Pasteur’s treatment had not lessened fears of rabies nor the concomitant cruelty towards dogs. Instead 1886 – ‘the year of rabies’ – had seen ‘suspicion and terror’ of dogs spread.¹⁰⁴ Furthermore, rabies continued to trouble bourgeois men who still associated it with sexual repression and stifling domesticity. Extending the spontaneous rabies theory into post-germ theory France, writer Charles Diguët asserted in 1890 that ‘vagabond’ dogs were less likely to contract rabies than apartment dogs (‘these slaves of our surveillance’) because they were not subject to sexual abstinence (*continence*).¹⁰⁵ Nor did Pasteur’s rabies treatment transform public health policies, which continued to treat stray dogs as problematic beasts on the streets.¹⁰⁶ Overall, Pasteur’s rabies treatment did not mark a milestone in the history of stray dogs in Paris, providing further evidence of the ambiguous influence of the Pasteurian “revolution” and the continuation of existing public health

¹⁰³ Quoted in Christophe Perrey, ‘Les Figures de sacré à l’Institut Pasteur,’ *L’Homme*, clxxv-clxxvi (2005), 35.

¹⁰⁴ Louis Moynier, *Lettres d’un chien errant sur la protection des animaux* (Paris, 1888), 41, 47-8.

¹⁰⁵ Charles Diguët, *La Vie rustique 1888-1889* (Paris, 1890), 47-8. See also Moynier, *Lettres*, 138.

¹⁰⁶ Musée Pasteur, Institut Pasteur, Préfecture de Police, ‘Avis: mise en fourrière des chiens errants,’ 14 Apr.1888.

attitudes, policies and practices after the general acceptance of germ theory.¹⁰⁷ The rabies vaccine's impact was also weakened as it did not offer an absolute safeguard against rabies, and reports of Pasteur's patients dying after receiving his treatment were heavily scrutinized by the press.¹⁰⁸ Moreover, the associations of stray dogs with disorder and danger overrode developments in the treatment of rabies, just as the physical presence of strays on the streets continued to generate unease into the twentieth century. In July 1907, minister for agriculture Joseph Ruau identified ownerless stray dogs as 'the principle propagators' of rabies and ordered their 'capture and destruction.'¹⁰⁹ Strays continued to underscore the perceived vulnerability of everyday life in the modern city, despite the celebrated breakthroughs of Pasteurian science.

The continual pathologization of strays echoed and extended wider condemnations of human vagabondage and rootlessness. Stray dogs and human vagrants had of course been condemned before the *fin-de-siècle*, but rhetoric and measures hardened against them during this period. Declining prices and other economic woes in France's agriculture sector in the 1880s led desperate rural families to seek a better life in cities, while widespread urban unemployment increased begging.¹¹⁰ Numerous press reports of roaming and rootless Apache

¹⁰⁷ Ilana Löwy, 'Cultures de bactériologie en France, 1880-1900: la paillasse et la politique,' *Gesnerus* lxxvii (2010), 190-1; Barnes, *Great Stink*; La Berge, *Mission and Method*, 316.

¹⁰⁸ Pemberton and Worboys, *Rabies in Britain*, 102-32.

¹⁰⁹ Quoted in *Instruction sur la police des chiens* (1911), 17. Musée Pasteur, Préfecture de Police, 'Avis: mise en fourrière des chiens errants,' 14 Apr.1888.

¹¹⁰ Nye, *Crime, Madness and Politics*, 56-7, 173-77; John Merriman, *Police Stories: Building the French State, 1815-1850* (New York, 2006), 118-40; Timothy B. Smith, 'Assistance and

and other criminal gangs terrorizing Paris heightened official and public fears of dangerously mobile agents.¹¹¹ Some observers treated stray dogs as yet another manifestation of unwelcome *fin-de-siècle* vagabondage. For Alfred Barbou, they were ‘true bohemians’ who knew no ‘restraint’ and who refused any ‘yoke.’ Their ‘deplorable behaviour’ included begging food from cafes and ‘nocturnal revelling.’ He compared stray dogs – ‘the irregulars’ – to those men who lived ‘outside of society and only displayed a limited respect of the law.’ Some of these dogs had become ‘savage’ whilst others ‘gave into their passions’ or became ‘show offs, travelling performers (*saltimbanques*) and fighters.’ As if to prove their interchangeability, Barbou suggested that vagabond dogs learned their cunningness and ‘finesse for evading the law’ from their human counterparts.¹¹² However, according to some reports, human vagabonds could be hostile to stray dogs. Animal protectionist and editor of *L’Ami des bêtes* Adrienne Neyrat lamented how bands of cruel and poor children roamed Parisian streets terrorizing stray dogs, whilst some newspapers suggested that *gens sans aveu* tracked down stray dogs at night to claim a reward from the municipal pound.¹¹³ Such reports suggested that human vagabonds were worse than canine ones, presumably to elicit some sympathy for the plight of stray dogs. But on the whole, *fin-de-siècle* narratives positioned stray dogs as full members of France’s degenerate and incorrigible vagabond population,

Repression: Rural Exodus, Vagabondage and Social Crisis in France, 1880-1914,’ *Journal of Social History*, xxxii (1999).

¹¹¹ Dominique Kalifa, *L’encre et le sang: récits de crimes et société à la Belle Epoque* (Paris, 1995), 149-61.

¹¹² Alfred Barbou, *Le Chien: son histoire, ses exploits, ses aventures* (Paris, 1883), 215-16, 256.

¹¹³ Adrienne Neyrat, ‘La Fourrière,’ *L’Ami des bêtes*, Dec. 1899, 115; Adrienne Neyrat, ‘Nouvelles et informations,’ *L’Ami des bêtes*, Sept. 1900, 98.

against which the rest of society needed to defend itself. But if human vagrants could expect imprisonment, the withdrawal of public assistance, deportation to French colonies (under the law of 1885) and expulsion from major cities, strays were exposed to impoundment and death. When it came to the state repression of mobility, species mattered.

The condemnation of human and nonhuman vagabondage and the Third Republic's promotion of "social defence" legitimated the most lethal phase of anti-stray campaigns. Although police veterinarians lamented the lack of a dedicated dog catching service,¹¹⁴ the police succeeded in capturing and impounding thousands of dogs. In 1884 they impounded 4,348 stray dogs, killing 3,498, sending 729 to vivisectionists, and returning 121 to their owners.¹¹⁵ 1885, 1891 and 1893 saw slight increases in the number of dogs impounded, with the majority of dogs killed or given to vivisectionists. However, the number of slaughtered dogs in which rabies was actually confirmed was small: 14 in 1891 and 23 in 1893. The police 'sacrificed,' in the language of official annual reports, thousands of dogs for being stray rather than for rabies.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁴ APP DB232 CHPSDS, *Rapport sur les maladies contagieuses des animaux observées en 1887 dans le département de la Seine* (Paris, 1888), 5.

¹¹⁵ APP DB 232 CHPSDS, *Rapport sur les maladies contagieuses des animaux observées en 1884 dans le département de la Seine* (Paris, 1885), 5.

¹¹⁶ APP DB 232 CHPSDS, *Rapport sur les maladies contagieuses des animaux visées par la loi du 21 juillet 1881 et par le décret du 28 juillet 1888 observées en 1891 dans le département de la Seine* (Paris, 1892), 5; APP DB 232 CHPSDS, *Rapport sur les maladies contagieuses des animaux observées en 1893 dans le département de la Seine* (Paris, 1894), 33.

1892 was the most lethal year for Paris' strays, with 26,502 impounded following an upsurge in rabies cases and a subsequent prefectural order of 30 May 1892. M. A. Alexandre, chief veterinarian of the Seine *département* and head of its Epizootics Service, argued that stray dogs' 'dangerous' character and the increase of rabies cases justified the high level of impoundment in 1892, even if the slaughter of dogs was 'far from having produced sufficiently useful results,' with 76 cases of canine rabies recorded in November and December.¹¹⁷ Nonetheless the police continued to impound annually thousands of strays, emboldened by the 1898 rural code and increased rabies cases, including 12,893 strays in 1900 and 16,298 in 1901.¹¹⁸

This slaughter of stray dogs did not go unnoticed. Alexandre reported that the 1892 'holocaust' of stray dogs had been effective in reducing rabies cases but had provoked criticism. With rabies cases increasing again in 1894, he suggested rounding up strays in rabies-infected areas rather than a more controversial city-wide cull that the press was likely to describe as a 'massacre.'¹¹⁹ Unsurprisingly, animal protectionists led the attack on the

¹¹⁷ APP DB 232 CHPSDS, *Rapport sur les maladies contagieuses des animaux observées en 1887 dans le département de la Seine* (Paris, 1888), 6; APP DB 232 CHPSDS, *Rapport sur les maladies contagieuses des animaux observées en 1892 dans le département de la Seine* (Paris, 1893), 87, 90.

¹¹⁸ The figure had returned to 5,880 by 1910. Baldin, *Histoire*, 239; Pierre Rabaine, 'La Fourrière de Paris,' *Cahiers français d'information*, no. 168, 15 Nov. 1950, 5; 'A la Fourrière,' *Le Matin*, 18 July 1903.

¹¹⁹ APP DB 232 CHPSDS, *Rapport sur les maladies contagieuses des animaux observées en 1894 dans le département de la Seine* (Paris, 1895), 41; APP DB 232 CHPSDS, *Rapport sur les maladies contagieuses des animaux observées en 1893 dans le département de la Seine*

police. Neyrat denounced the ‘round ups’ (*rafles*).¹²⁰ On visiting the pound in August 1899 on the invitation of police prefect Louis Lépine, Neyrat described it as a ‘foyer of infection,’ labelling it ‘eminently dangerous for public health’ because of the ‘putrid emanations’ of ‘infectious miasmas and pathogenic microbes’ that it spewed out.¹²¹ The pound was a physical affront to animal protectionists’ beliefs in public hygiene and their objective of reducing unnecessary and cruel violence towards animals.

Refuges were a possible solution and new and larger ones opened up. The SPA, after a long period of heated internal debate, established its own short-lived refuge at Arcueil (1885-1888) and the *New York Herald* publisher James Gordon-Bennett created one at Gennevilliers in 1901. Here, dogs could be sheltered, rehomed or killed in purportedly more humane conditions. However, a new wave of more radical animal protectionists viewed the death of any animal as intolerable and immoral. They expanded the network of private refuges in Paris and its suburbs in which stray dogs would not be killed. Alarmed by the semi-clandestine nature of these refuges, the police issued an ordinance on 26 July 1913 that sought to regulate them in the interests of hygiene and order.¹²²

(Paris, 1894), 33. *Le Petit Journal* used the term ‘massacre,’ quoted in ‘Le Cynoctone,’ *L’Assistance aux animaux*, Mar. 1903, 8.

¹²⁰ Adrienne Neyrat, ‘Nouvelles et informations,’ *L’Ami des bêtes*, Sept. 1900, 98.

¹²¹ Adrienne Neyrat, ‘A la Fourrière,’ *L’Ami des bêtes*, Sept. 1899, 80; Adrienne Neyrat, ‘Résultats acquis à la fourrière,’ *L’Ami des bêtes*, Aug. 1899, 66-7.

¹²² The SPA took over the Gennevilliers refuge in 1917. Baldin, *Histoire*, 161-2. See also APP DB 232 Conseil d’hygiène publique, Séance du 26 juin 1903, ‘Fourrière de chiens’; Charles Chenivresse, ‘Le Refuge pour chiens,’ *L’Ami des chiens*, July 1899, 2; Pierre,

The refuges could not accommodate all of Paris' strays, meaning that the pound remained the main site of canine confinement and animal protectionists sought to ameliorate its conditions. Their reforming zeal focussed on improving the food and accommodation of its canine 'prisoners' and implementing a more humane system of slaughter. The police had abandoned hanging stray dogs in the 1880s in favour of asphyxiation with *gaz d'éclairage* (gas used for lighting), a technique borrowed from British pounds.¹²³ Animal protectionists labelled this method of asphyxiation inhumane. Neyrat observed up to eighty panicked dogs crammed into an iron cage 'tearing into each other' as they were delivered to their 'last prison': the gas chamber. Given the number of dogs and the killing machine's deficiencies, it could take up to ten minutes for the dogs to die. Some traumatized dogs even emerged alive only to be finished off by the renderer's hammer. Neyrat's hopes for a more 'modern machine' that conformed with 'scientific progress' were met when the Assistance aux animaux organisation donated a 'Cynoctone' to the pound in 1902. Following the recommendations of Pasteur and public hygienist Professor Nocard, this British-inspired machine asphyxiated condemned dogs with carbonic acid. Eye-witness reports described how the agitated dogs gnawed and scratched the bars of their cage as they were lowered into the oxygen-less chamber only to become still and seeming to 'sleep from weariness' until

'Souffrance des animaux,' 90-6; APP DB 230 Préfecture de Police 'Ordonnance concernant les refuges de chiens et de chats dans le département de la Seine,' 26 July 1913.

¹²³ A. Cartaz, 'L'Exécution des chiens,' *La Nature*, no. 625, 25 May 1885, 385-86. Staff in other French pounds drowned dogs or killed them with hammers and clubs. Baldin, *Histoire*, 251; Eric Baratay, 'Chacun jette son chien: de la fin d'une vie au XIX^e siècle,' *Romantisme*, cliii (2011), 157.

‘nothing moved.’¹²⁴ The Cynoctone was more palatable to the pound’s personnel who no longer had to listen to the agonizing and drawn out sounds of dying dogs. Furthermore, the new method of slaughter enabled the police to continue the commodification of strays by selling dead dogs to glove makers (in addition to selling live dogs to scientific establishments).¹²⁵

The Cynoctone was intended to make slaughter in the pound more efficient, humane and modern. It predated new methods of slaughter in Paris’ abattoirs and constituted a quasi-industrial form of killing that seemingly rendered death discreet, bloodless, efficient and hygienic, with public hygienists praising the deodorizing and disinfecting qualities of gas.¹²⁶ Viewed from the present day, the depictions of the Cynoctone as an efficient slaughter machine are chilling given the use of gas and modern technology to kill humans during the

¹²⁴ Neyrat, ‘Fourrière,’ 78-9; Baldin, *Histoire des animaux domestiques*, 251; ‘Cynoctone,’ 2-6, 11; APP DB 226 E. Nocard, ‘Modifications à apporter à la fourrière,’ Conseil d’hygiène publique séance du 9 novembre 1900, 518-20.

¹²⁵ According to Massard, police agents wore gloves made from the skins of stray dogs. Massard, ‘Proposition,’ 15. From 1909 the pound collected the corpses of dead dogs from the streets and sold them to a renderer. APP DB 226 ‘Rapport [illegible], budget de 1914,’ 18, 19.

¹²⁶ Pre-World War One plans to relocate the municipal pound to rue Danzig next to the Vaugirard abattoirs underscored the similarities between abattoirs and the pound. Baldin, *Histoire*, 252. On slaughtering animals, see Damien Baldin, ‘De l’Horreur du sang à l’insoutenable souffrance animale: élaboration sociale des régimes de sensibilité à la mise à mort des animaux (19^e-20^e siècles),’ *Vingtième Siècle*, cxxiii (2014); Paula Young Lee (ed.), *Meat, Modernity, and the Rise of the Slaughterhouse* (Durham, NH, 2008).

Holocaust. A case might be made that dog pounds sit alongside slaughterhouses as sites that paved the way for the mechanized and industrial slaughter of humans in the twentieth century.¹²⁷ However, such an argument would not only be ethically and historically dubious,¹²⁸ but it would also obscure how the Cynoctone was treated at the time as a humane, necessary and progressive way of eliminating unwanted *nonhuman* life.

By aligning the pound with animal protectionists' preference for efficient, hygienic and humane animal slaughter, the Cynoctone legitimized the pound as a site of slaughter that was necessary to secure the city for the rest of the population. The new technology seemed to herald a new step in the campaigns against Parisian stray dogs. According to some press reports, it enabled headway to be made in eliminating wayward canines.¹²⁹ However, it did not offer a comprehensive technological solution, with Nocard describing the continued existence of rabies after the Cynoctone's introduction as 'shameful' for a 'leading country' like France.¹³⁰ National pride, as well as public health, was at stake.

Alongside new methods of slaughter, the police introduced innovative methods of impoundment. The introduction of horse-drawn (1904) and motorized (1912) vehicles to

¹²⁷ Daniel Pick carefully makes a link between slaughterhouses and the mechanised killing of the twentieth century in *War Machine: The Rationalisation of Slaughter in the Modern Age* (New Haven, 1993), 178-88. Charles Patterson draws more direct comparisons between the contemporary meat industry and the Holocaust in *Eternal Treblinka: Our Treatment of Animals and the Holocaust* (New York, 2002).

¹²⁸ Joanna Bourke, *What it Means to Be Human: Reflections from 1791 to the Present* (Berkeley, 2011), 182-9.

¹²⁹ 'La Rage à Paris,' *Le Journal*, 21 May 1903.

¹³⁰ Quoted in Docteur Ox, 'Chiens errants,' *Le Matin*, 11 Apr. 1902.

collect captured strays from the capital's numerous police posts was intended to make impoundment 'more rapid and less onerous.' The use of the *panier à salade* (the colloquial term for a police van) helped the police to impound and kill thousands of dogs throughout the *belle époque*, a slaughter that some dubbed a 'canicide.'¹³¹ The new vehicles apparently allowed the police to make some progress in removing stray dogs from Parisian streets and reducing the number of rabies cases. However, the claim of *Le Monde illustré* in 1912 that Paris had been 'as good as liberated' from rabies due to the police's crackdown on stray dogs proved premature.¹³² Mobilization for war in August and September 1914 resulted in 'the abandonment of a large quantity of stray dogs' and an increase in rabies cases, which, according to the police prefect, constituted a 'danger' that needed to be combatted.¹³³ Despite

¹³¹ APP DB 226 APP Préfet de Police, 'Circulaire no. 13: transport en fourrière par voitures spéciales, des animaux vivants, des cadavres d'animaux et des objets matériels'; APP DB 226 Préfet de Police, 'Circulaire no. 16: transport à la fourrière par voitures automobiles des chiens vivants, des objets et cadavres de chiens, chats et autres petits animaux,' 1 Aug. 1912, 187, 247; G. Cerbelaud, 'La rage à Paris et dans le département de la Seine,' *Le Monde illustré*, 20 July 1912, 54. The term 'canicide' was used in Massard, 'Proposition relative à la répression,' 13; and 'Les Toutous,' *La Presse*, 1 May 1903.

¹³² G. Cerbelaud, 'La Rage à Paris et dans le département de la Seine,' *Le Monde illustré*, 20 July 1912, 54.

¹³³ APP DB 229 Le Préfet de police à messieurs les maires des communes du département de la Seine, 'Circulaire no. 20,' 26 Sept. 1914. The SPA struggled to keep up with the number of dogs entering its refuges and killed hundreds of abandoned dogs. 'Procès-verbaux des réunions du conseil d'administration: séance du 9 octobre 1914,' *Bulletin de la Société protectrice des animaux*, vol. 10, 1914, 545-5.

the police issuing new anti-stray orders and the army recruiting impounded dogs for front line service, the number of rabies cases increased during the war. 411 cases were reported in 1918 (as opposed to 4-5 cases annually before 1914), leading the police to warn the public that ‘the danger [from rabies] is serious’ and urging individuals to avoid stray dogs.¹³⁴ The varied efforts to secure the city from the threat of stray dog bites and mobility had unravelled. As with human vagabonds,¹³⁵ the police’s control over stray dogs was far from total. Despite introducing tougher legislation and new technologies the police had not contained canine mobility.

Conclusion

Throughout the long nineteenth century, changing political and cultural contexts influenced attitudes towards stray dogs: at the beginning of the century they became part of Paris ‘dangerous classes,’ before becoming associated with human vagabondage at the *fin-de-siècle*. The 1860s debate on spontaneous rabies shows that positive narratives of stray mobility were possible, even if negative ones ultimately dominated. But the narrative of

¹³⁴ Figures from APP 229 Préfecture de Police, ‘Muselez vos chiens et tenez-les en laisse,’ 15 Jan. 1919. See also APP DB 229 Préfecture de Police, ‘Arrêté concernant la circulation des chiens dans le département de la Seine, 2 Sept. 1916; APP DB 229 Préfecture de Police, ‘Avis,’ 7 June 1916; APP DB 229 Préfecture de Police, ‘Arrêté concernant la circulation des chiens dans le département de la Seine,’ 15 Jan. 1919; C. Bressou, ‘Les Chiens de guerre,’ *Recueil de Médecine vétérinaire* 104/9 (Sept. 1928), 551.

¹³⁵ Merriman, *Police Stories*, 140.

strays as dirty and disorderly remained remarkably consistent, as did measures deployed against them, even if they evolved and intensified as the century unfolded. As strays became increasingly treated as vectors of rabies and agents of urban disorder, the repressive and violent character of their management culminated in the mechanization of their slaughter.

But as tempting as it might be to portray the stray dog in Paris (and elsewhere) as ‘a unique kind of powerless being-outside-the-law whose life is marked by bareness and non-concern,’ the authorities’ ability to control and kill strays was never total, as shown by the continual presence of stray dogs on the streets, repeated calls for more action, and the police’s frequent sense of frustration.¹³⁶ In addition, animal protectionists and some canophiles refused the portrayal of stray dogs as animals who could be killed without qualm, a discursive and practical intervention that acted as a further obstacle to the total slaughter of strays.

Despite the efforts of public health and police officials to neutralize the risk of rabies, Parisians remained vulnerable to the dreaded bite of a rabid stray dog. Alongside the river Seine flood of 1910 and the influenza epidemic of 1918-1919, stray dogs demonstrated that human defences against potentially harmful nonhumans were fallible.¹³⁷ The feelings of insecurity generated by stray dogs contributed to a wider sense that Parisian modernity was fragile and disorientating, and campaigns against them lasted well into the twentieth century

¹³⁶ Arseneault, ‘Canicide and Concern,’ 138; Gandy, ‘Paris Sewers’; Sharon Marcus, ‘Haussmannization as Anti-Modernity: The Apartment House in Parisian Urban Discourse, 1850-1880,’ *Journal of Urban History* xxvii(2001).

¹³⁷ Jeffrey H. Jackson, *Paris Under Water: How the City of Light Survived the Great Flood of 1910* (New York, 2010); Françoise Bouron, ‘La grippe espagnole (1918-1919) dans les journaux français,’ *Guerres mondiales et conflits contemporains* ccxxxiii (2009)

until they were eventually superseded by anti-excrement policies in the 1980s as dog mess became treated as the main canine threat to human health.¹³⁸ The simultaneously cultural and material history of stray dogs underscores the intimate and intricate, as well as highly political and problematic, enmeshment of human and nonhuman life in Parisian public space. The city's much-discussed modernity and public hygiene movements, as well as its re-imagination and reconfiguration throughout the nineteenth century, rested on multiple and problematic engagements with the city's stray dogs.

¹³⁸ Soppelsa, 'Fragility of Modernity'; Mairie de Paris, *½ million d'autres parisiens* [n.d.].