In the Mind of the Dog:

Anthropomorphism and Othering in Uno Modin's Zorro, the Police Dog

Ann-Sofie Persson
Linköping University, The Department of Culture and Society, Sweden, ann-sofie.persson@liu.se

Abstract
In this article, the main focus is on the use of narrative and stylistic strategies contributing to anthropomorphism and othering in the depiction of the dog in Uno Modin's *Zorro, the Police Dog* (1953). The analysis shows that both crude and critical anthropomorphism are used when describing Zorro. The dog is assigned philosophical thinking and trans-species affinity that goes beyond the plausible, but he is also described as involved in companionship with his human handler. Othering is also used, portraying the dog as superior to the human at certain instances and diametrically different and wild at other. When the instinct of the dog is at the center, the divide between nature and culture is accentuated, leaving no room for what Haraway terms natureculture or companion species. The narrative is read through an ecocritical lens with support of animal studies and posthumanist perspectives and the article shows how internal focalization on the canine contribute to a normalizing of stereotypical depictions of other species and the white human explorer's other, embodied by members of the Roma community or by Native Americans.

Keywords
Anthropomorphism, Othering, Posthumanism, Ecocriticism, Wahlström's bokförlag, Zorro, the Police Dog, Uno Modin, Stereotypes

INTRODUCTION

The dog is often called man's best friend and through fictional depictions throughout the history of literature, endeavors are made to show on what grounds this friendship is built. Dogs seem to hold a particular place in human hearts, due to their kind and faithful nature, but can also seem threatening and wild when their behavior mirrors their ancestor, the wolf. In children's literature, where children and animals traditionally are represented as closer to each other than to the human adult, the dog often bears a resemblance to the child, being mischievous and challenging adult authority (Nikolajeva 2010). In this article, the depiction of the dog in Uno Modin's *Zorro, the Police Dog* is investigated against the backdrop of the narrative device of internal focalization, where the reader follows the canine gaze and thought process. Zorro does not speak human language, but the content and the functioning of his thoughts are explained through language. The explanatory aspects often introduce figurative language and stylistic figures such as similes and metaphors. Because the intended reader is a child or an adolescent, the descriptions seem to align with aspects known to the young mind.

Aim, research questions and outline

Throughout the narrative, efforts are made to depict the mind of the dog and the interaction between the dog and his handler Rolf Langer, using alternatively Langer and Zorro as focalizers. At the same time, the narrative reproduces stereotypical conceptions of the other through a proliferation of problematic images relative to ethnicity or socioeconomic status. The aim of the study is to uncover the underlying world view of the narrative through the analysis of the representation of the interior life of the dog. In the article, the following questions will be addressed:

- In what ways do the literary techniques used to shape the image of the dog's interior life contribute to upholding the divide between nature and culture?
- What function do anthropomorphism and othering serve in the narrative?
- How does the process of othering interconnect to focalization through the dog's mind and instincts?

The outline of the article is as follows: After a presentation of the background of the book studied, its author and the series in which it was published, the theoretical underpinnings of the study, as well as an overview of previous research in the domain that has informed the analysis, will be introduced. The analysis follows these introductory parts. First, the analysis will concentrate on the ways in which the interior life of the dog is explained from a human point of view. Then, the instances of internal focalization on the dog will be studied. Finally, the focus will shift to analyzing how the dog's instinct participates in constructing stereotypical representations of the other. The results of the

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analysis will then be discussed in a concluding section.

B Wahlström´s animal books and the writer Uno Modin

The material selected for this study, *Zorro, the Police Dog*, belongs to a particular series of books focused on animals, published by the well-known publisher of children's literature in Sweden, B. Wahlströms bokförlag. Their general series for young readers was first published in 1914 and is still ongoing. Beginning with adventure stories, primarily geared toward boys, in 1919 they created a new series, aimed at a female reading audience. In 1923–24, they introduced the characteristic green or red book spines to indicate the target readers' gender and to uphold a distinction between books for boys (green) and girls (red) respectively. Marika Andræ notes that literature for youth (boys and girls) equals the green covers, i.e. books for boys, whereas the red covers were marketed as books for girls. She links this to feminist theories about the male as norm and the clear separation between genders (Andræ 2001, p. 33). Marketed as cheap books corresponding to the demands from a young audience, the series was popular among young readers and has had a major impact on the Swedish book market (Andræ 2001, p. 13).

Between 1930 and 1966, B. Wahlström's published a series of 121 books on animals for young readers, called 'Djurböcker för ungdom' [Animal books for youth]. They were later named 'De bästa djurböckerna' [The best animal books] and subsequently 'Wahlströms djurböcker' [Wahlström's animal books] (Andræ 2001, p. 255, note 8; Boëthius 2024, p. 92–95). Since the spines of the books are red, which would indicate that the expected readership was female, it is notable that the stories in fact have a lot in common with adventure stories, a genre directed towards a male audience, and the covers also say that the intended audience are youth (see Andræ 2001, p. 33, note 12).

In the books, there were illustrations in black and white and sometimes photographs. Both translations and stories originally written in Swedish occur (Boëthius 2024, p. 92–93). The stories are sometimes set in faraway, exotic countries, sometimes in Sweden. The goal of the series was surely commercial as well as educational and meant to entertain young readers. Belonging to a particular series, the stories follow a somewhat predictable and stereotypical pattern. Usually, the title of the book is constituted by the name of the animal in question, often followed by a qualification or an indication pertaining to the contents of the story. In focus was often the survival of a wild animal (Boëthius 2024, p. 92–95).

One of the most prolific writers of the series was Uno Modin (1905–1969), author of adventure and detective stories in literature for both a male and female young audience. Under the pseudonym Tony Wickers, Modin wrote the detective stories about Puck Larson, a young woman using her skills as a sleuth to solve mysteries (Druker & Warnqvist 2024, p. 377). Modin's stories in the series, published between 1949 and 1965, treat mainly horses and dogs, but also a selection of wild animals. Active as an author in the aftermath of World War II and into the era of decolonization, Modin and his writings align with common conceptions of his time, remaining however highly interesting as a very productive writer in this specific genre in a Swedish context.

Presentation of the corpus

Uno Modin wrote two books on the German shepherd Zorro: *Zorro, berättelse för ungdom om en schäferhun*d (1950) [*Zorro, Story for Young Readers about a German Shepherd* and *Zorro som polishund* (1953) [*Zorro, the Police Dog*] (All translations from Modin's work are mine). The initial story about Zorro depicts his first year in life, marked by separations and ill treatment and focusing on the dog's interaction with other animals, on injuries sustained in fights with other dogs and wild animals, and on the memory function that helps Zorro to stay oriented towards people instead of turning irreversibly wild. The book ends with Zorro meeting a master that he can trust. The two of them are described as marginalized in relation to society, human and more than human. This book was disregarded because it mostly depicts Zorro in the woods, living as a semi-wild dog, marginalized from human society, and for this study it was of the foremost importance that the animal was the focalizer in the story and that it interacted with both humans and non-humans.

In the second book, *Zorro som polishund* [*Zorro, the Police Dog*], the loosely knit companionship is broken because Zorro's master is incarcerated, and Zorro is taken into training to be a police dog. Since it centers explicitly on Zorro's training and on interspecies interaction, the book was selected for this study. Throughout the story, the reader follows Zorro's development from a semi-tame companion of a railroad worker to a member of the police force. Zorro is depicted in his working environment, either training in the presence of other dogs and handlers, sometimes participating in tracking competitions, or in real-life situations on patrol, performing his duties within the police force. This includes using his sense of smell to follow the traces of criminals, intimidating them through growling and barking, and blocking their movements until a police officer can arrest them. Zorro's training constitutes the main ingredient of the narrative, as well as his relationship with the policeman and handler Rolf Langer and his family.

ECOCRITICAL, POSTCOLONIAL, POSTHUMAN AND ANIMAL STUDIES FRAMEWORKS

The theoretical framework within which this study is set combines ideas from ecocriticism, postcolonialism, posthumanism and animal studies. While ecocriticism as well as animal studies offer perspectives on the anthropomorphism used in the portrayal of animals (Garrard 2012), postcolonial theory (Loomba 2015) can help problematize racial or

social stereotypes, and posthuman perspectives inform the analysis of what Haraway termed *companion species* (Haraway 2003; Haraway 2008).

Ecocriticism (2012) by Greg Garrard devotes an entire chapter to literary depictions of animals and his typology of ways of representing animals provides a useful framework for this study, because of its comprehensive and detailed nature, as outlined below. It distinguishes between strategies of likeness, drawing on metonymy, and otherness, relying on metaphor. Two central techniques from the typology that inform this analysis are anthropomorphism and allomorphism (Garrard 2012, p. 154). Garrard explains anthropomorphism as 'a pejorative term implying sentimental projection of human emotions onto animals' but acknowledges simultaneously that 'the skeptical attack on sentimental views of animals risks making it impossible to describe animal behaviour at all' (Garrard 2012, p. 154–155). Consequently, he proposes to 'distinguish between kinds of anthropomorphism', the main ones being 'crude' and 'critical' (Garrard 2012, p. 154). Critical anthropomorphism implies using 'language and concepts of human behaviour' with much care and empathy (Garrard 2012, p. 157). The animal is thus described 'along axes that seem plausible' for the species in question (Garrard 2012, p. 158). Crude anthropomorphism, on the contrary, conveys the animal as something that it most probably is not, ascribing it human thoughts, feelings and behavior that it does not have, for example speaking human language. Both versions of anthropomorphism work from the assumption that there are similitudes between human and non-human animals and that establishing this likeness could facilitate understanding.

This aligns with Zoe Jaques posthuman position pointing to the up-holding of differences between species as something to be discussed, possibly making the boundaries between human and non-human 'more fluid' (Jaques 2015, p. 3). Along the same lines, Amy Ratelle suggests that anthropomorphizing is not necessarily a way for humans to assign attributes to animals that correspond to our cultural conceptions. Instead, she proposes that it can be a result of interspecies connection and communication (2015, p. 1. For a discussion on anthropomorphism in picture books, see Hübben, 2017). Allomorphism, contrary to anthropomorphism, suggests a clear difference between human and non-human, because 'allo' means 'other', according to Garrard. It indicates a positive othering and is used to express 'the wondrous strangeness of animals' and 'often involves an overtly sacred language' (Garrard 2012, p. 167). Garrard explains: 'Even if animals are represented as different to humans, that difference can be construed [...] as a kind of superiority' (Garrard 2012, p. 154). Texts containing these kinds of representations are part of what Garrard calls 'allomorphic literature' (Garrard 2012, p. 167).

In *The Companion Species Manifesto*, Donna Haraway describes dogs as 'a species in obligatory, constitutive, historical, protean relationship with human beings' (Haraway 2003, p. 10–11). This relationship between dog and human creates what she terms 'companion species', stating: 'There cannot be just one companion species; there have to be at least two to make one. It is in the syntax; it is in the flesh' (Haraway 2003, p. 11). Thus, dog and human constitute companion species together, in a rich, long and ever-changing entanglement. She talks about companion species as 'a four-part composition, in which co-constitution, finitude, impurity, historicity, and complexity are what is' (Haraway 2003, p. 15). Dogs and humans 'are bonded in significant otherness' (Haraway 2003, p. 15). In a similar fashion as companion species are co-constitutive, Haraway uses the term 'natureculture' in order to go beyond the binary of nature and culture and indicate that they cannot be separated into 'polar opposites' or seen as 'universal categories' (Haraway 2003, p. 8). In her words, 'culture and nature imploded' (Haraway 2003, p. 17) to describe this process. These concepts are used to analyze the relationship between the dog and his handler. A feminist care perspective has also been used to articulate the interspecies communication between canine and human (Donovan 2017).

Postcolonial theory informs this study greatly by offering models of stereotypical depiction of ethnic others, of othering from a Eurocentric perspective, based on colonial thinking where an ethnic white European origine grants a higher value than that of for instance representatives of the Roma community or Native Americans that appear in the story of *Zorro, the Police Dog*. In *Colonialism/Postcolonialism* (2015), Ania Loomba discusses how European colonialism used practices of othering, constructing groups of people as different and inferior, to justify imperialism and colonialism. In her work, she exposes how colonial discourse gives attributes like 'laziness, aggression, violence, greed, sexual promiscuity and deviance, female masculinity and male effeminacy, bestiality, primitivism, innocence and irrationality' to different others. The attributions are not arbitrary, but 'travel writing of the period' can be read as 'early ethnographies that simultaneously note, blur and produce the specific features of different non-European peoples' (Loomba 2015, p. 115). According to Loomba, the inhabitants of the Americas were for example construed as 'savage', while other others were constructed as 'barbarous infidels' (Loomba 2015, p. 115). This study relies on Loomba's systematic division of ethnic categories linked to power.

PREVIOUS RESEARCH

The previous research used in this study is quite heterogenous, going from sources contextualizing the story studied within the history of publishing to studies discussing the position of animals in children's literature.

When it comes to frameworks of publishing, Andræ's study of B. Wahlström's series for young readers, *Rött eller grönt? Flicka blir kvinna och pojke blir man i B. Wahlströms ungdomsböcker 1914–1944* [Red or green? Girl becomes woman and boy becomes

man in B. Wahlström's books for youth 1914–1944], has proven useful, even though it is not focused on animal stories. It adds to the reflection on the connection between the stories of Zorro and the adventure genre as well as to place the publications of Wahlström's in its historical setting. The short text in *Den svenska barn- och ungdomslitteraturens historia. Från tidigt 1900-tal till tidigt 2000-tal* (Warnqvist & Westin 2024), entitled "Berättelser om djur – fakta och fiktion" [Stories about animals – fact and fiction], written by Ulf Boëthius (Boëthius 2024, p. 92–96), has also provided context for the series and some of its writers.

The research on animals in children's literature is extensive, and only a selection will be mentioned here. Kathleen R. Johnson distinguishes three main ways to depict animals in children's books. The first category holds animals who act and speak as humans. In the second, the animals display animal behavior but express themselves verbally in human language. It is the third group that corresponds best to the stories of Zorro, since it is the category where the depiction of animals corresponds to the way they truly are (Johnson 2000, p. 19). However, because Zorro does not speak human language, but his inner world is expressed through the narrative by focalizing through both a human subjectivity and the dog's, the depiction could be argued to fall in between categories. Although Zorro is not a speaking animal, one could argue that Cosslett's statement that behind the ideas expressed by the animal, in Zorro's case through internal focalization on him, hides an adult aiming for a better understanding of the animal's perspective and thus greater empathy with other species (Cosslett 2006, p. 64–65, 74–85). This is true in the case of Zorro, because Modin does try to untangle the intricate ways in which the mind of the dog can be interpreted, but only to a certain extent, to be subsequently discussed. Research on children's literature with a posthuman perspective (Jaques 2015) offers a more equal view of the relation between species and serves as a node where animal studies perspectives intersect with children's literature.

ANALYSIS

In this section, the analysis is organized in three categories. In the first, the focus is on the inner life of the dog from a human point of view. The second delves into the narrative illusion of sensing through the dog's subjectivity. The third and final category explores the dog's instinct and the stereotypical depiction of the other.

The inner life of the dog from a human point of view

The story of Zorro is told by an omniscient narrator, using shifting focalizers, both human and non-human. Although Zorro is focalized throughout the story, the dog's behavior is reflected upon and discussed among the human characters, who can also function as focalizers. The most common human focalizer is the police officer Rolf Langer, Zorro's handler. Incidentally, he corresponds well to the image of the typical hero of an adventure story as defined by Andræ (2001, p. 238–239) – he represents civilization, leadership, courage and strength. From his point of view, the dog is portrayed as a potentially dangerous animal, descending from the wolf. He explains to a journalist how he imagines the battle between the training to which the dogs are submitted, and their ever so much stronger instincts, contributing to the othering of the dog:

> in such situations the most well-behaved dog could become dangerous. The herd instinct and the sex drive cooperate and could in one second disable all discipline and training. Everything they had brought of "civilization" was at that point like a toy embankment against a spring flood [...] A thousand years were swept away, and the animal was a beast. (Modin 1953, p. 70)

The metaphorical language used accentuates the opposition between civilization and nature – the dog is placed on a spectrum going from disciplined and trained to a wild and uncontrollable beast. The simile highlights both the size and the quality of the training – it is like a toy embankment – and the instinct of the dog, pictured as violent and free-flowing waters. The indication of how long dogs have been domesticated by humans – a thousand years – is contrasted with the split second it takes for the dog to forget and follow an instinct. Haraway's concept of *natureculture*, suggesting a collapse of the dichotomy established in the narrative, would allow for a reflection on the dog's behavior more aligned with a posthumanist philosophy, and where the idea of domestication would be problematized.

This conception of a flood of water overflowing an embankment contrasts with another metaphor used to help Langer envision the process of training Zorro to be an obedient dog: 'His original wildness couldn't be suppressed, it must instead be led in the right direction, it must be grafted with new and fruit bearing branches.' (Modin 1953, p. 26) The botanical metaphor brings out the malleable nature of the dog, fixed as a tree, ready to be operated on, and places the human as the leader, or the gardener, if you will. The relationship does not grant equal agency or power to both parts but upholds the separation between man as a representative of culture, imposing his will on Zorro, representing nature. Both flooding water and grafted trees belong to the natural environment, whereas the process of controlling nature by building dams or modifying growth is clearly associated with human actions. In addition, the grafting of a tree is an artificial, human-oriented technique intervening in the natural development of trees. This underlines both the idea that training is an artificial addition to the mind of the dog and that the human trainer places himself as the man exerting control and power.

However, police officer Langer seems interested in reflecting on his training of Zorro, perhaps because he finds it challenging to work with a dog inexperienced in interaction with humans, leaving his natural

instincts closer to the surface. For instance, Langer discusses the best way of conducting the training, more specifically concerning the best time to start the training with his training instructor, asking him the following question:

> What do you think is best, to take care of the pooch when he is nothing but a pup – when he is like a lump of dough and you just have to shape him as you like – or when he has sort of developed his own personality?' (Modin 1953, p. 32)

The simile used involves comparing the young dog to a dough – soft and malleable – and contains the underlying idea that the training should mold the dog while it is still flexible and receptive to influence. The idea of an unbaked bread leaves very little agency to the dog, except if you consider the yeast helping the loaf to rise as an active agent, but whose actions are restricted by place, temperature, and time. Zorro's handler clearly favors letting the dog mature before initiating the training. He contends that the dog probably is easier to handle with early instruction but wonders if it doesn't risk limiting the dog's capacity to develop his personality. The training instructor laughs to express his sympathy, before admitting that he prefers the dough, indicating that there is more than one way to achieve the same goal. Zorro's handler is more interested in developing a relationship than to make the dog obey compared to other handlers. Ultimately, treating the dog as a dough to be shaped to fit a certain mold is not the recommended way of training in *Zorro, the Police Dog*, since Rolf's method proves successful. Proof of this is presented when Zorro manages to track criminals thanks to his sense of smell. Considering each dog as an individual, formed by previous experiences, is largely advocated in the story, the training relying on gentle but strict methods (Modin 1953, p. 32–33).

This seems compatible with Haraway's ideas on companion species, speaking of 'the ongoing co-evolution of human cultures and dogs' (Haraway 2003, p. 29) where the dog is seen as active in the process. Zorro's handler Rolf influences Zorro through training, but also evolves in the interaction with Zorro, they adapt to each other, grappling with their differences but working towards a common goal. The thought of allowing the dog to develop a personality of its own stems from Rolf's experience with Zorro, who has a strong and wild side that can be used if there is trust between the two. Two kinds of caring are portrayed through the mind of the dog, describing Rolf in charge of 'the training, that in its components of competition and battle welded handler and dog far better together than kind words or juicy bones could accomplish' (Modin 1953, p. 36). The gentle communication and the food are connected to his previous master, Pelle Kron, but it is through the common work that a stronger bond can be built with Rolf (see Haraway 2003, p. 32–38). Zorro's handler adopts a behavior similar to that advocated by Donovan (2017), trying to communicate clearly with the dog, paying close attention to the way he responds.

Sensing through the dog's subjectivity – a narrative illusion

The lion part of the story about Zorro is focalized through its main character, the dog. That we experience the world through the consciousness of an animal is of course a narrative illusion, since the whole narrative is a human creation. However, the internal focalization on Zorro gives us an imaginary access to his thoughts, imagined and filtered through human language. This contributes both to the anthropomorphism and to the othering of the dog, constantly compared and (mis)understood through a human lens. Regardless of who is the focalizer, the narrative contains a certain number of metaphors to depict the dog's mind and the relationship between dog and handler.

For instance, both a metaphor and a simile are used when describing the training of the dog, from the animal's point of view. The dog is asked to stay, along with the other future police dogs, while the handlers walk away. The metaphorical link between the two is then illustrated, via Zorro's mind:

> The thread between him and officer Langer was stretched out further and further. […] He [Zorro] knew that he wanted to be as good as the others, that he had to be. But the training was still only like a thin and fragile membrane around his consciousness. (Modin 1953, p. 20)

The idea of a thread binding two characters (dogs, humans) together, or the dog to the trace, is used several times in the narrative. It insists on an elastic bond, and the training becomes a force that pulls in one direction, the instincts in another. Although perhaps not scientifically accurate, the metaphor helps visualize the bond between dog and human. There is a significant contrast compared to the depiction of the relationship from the human point of view. Where Zorro sees them as connected by a bond, Langer perceives his role as superior in the sense that he articulates their relation as him imposing civilization, battling against the nature of the dog. The training is described as something enclosing the mind of the dog, aiming to be firm and resistant but for now its resistance is challenged. The simile 'like a thin and fragile membrane around his consciousness' enhances the idea of something lacking the resilience to keep other voices out, both by its slimness and its delicateness. This notion of a connecting thread attaching dog to handler is reminiscent of the notion of *companion species*, to speak with Haraway, but described only from the dog's point of view. The bond existing between dog and handler points to the co-constitution of the two species and the stretching of the bond indicates the protean nature of the relationship, growing thinner because of the physical

separateness (Haraway 2003, p. 10–11). The dog wanting to be as well behaved as the other dogs, expressed in terms of need, is rather an anthropomorphism, portraying the dog as competitive, comparing himself to other dogs.

This link between man and dog is articulated as something that the dog senses. For instance, it appears as if the narrative highlights a certain sensibility proper to the dog, in a sense challenging the alleged superiority of the human. In these instances, the mixing of anthropomorphism and othering in the descriptions of the dog's consciousness is quite intricate. This can be illustrated by several examples: the first corresponds to what Garrard calls allomorphism, i.e. othering the animal while showing its superiority to the human:

> To Zorro he [Langer] hid nothing, even though he thought so himself. Who can hide anything from his dog? That animal has an intuition that would make the best of psychologists envious. The things floating in the air, that move below the surface and only reveal themselves through a certain tone of voice or a movement, of this the dog knows more than any fellow human. (Modin 1953, p. 34–35)

There is an overt comparison between dog and human, where the canine is conceived of as superior, enviable even by professionals of mental health. The anxiety filling Zorro's handler at this point comes across as something amorph but tangible and concrete to the dog, as if abstract feelings could hide beneath the surface of the skin. They translate as bodily manifestations, through sound or the positioning of limbs. This representation of emotions is reminiscent of the ideas expressed in Sara Ahmed's work on affect, not as something that somebody has but rather as circulating between objects (Ahmed 2013). Zorro seems to orient himself towards the emotional affliction of Langer. The worries of Zorro's handler influence their relationship in intricate ways, they function as companion species, 'bonded in significant otherness' (Haraway 2003, p. 15).

However, the narrative explains how the dog's understanding of the mental well-being of a person is less adapted to finding the reason behind it:

> The German shepherd knew *how* it was. He sensed and listened to all the changing moods. In some cases, his instinct told him more than human insights could uncover. But he was condemned to not ever knowing quite *why*. Between cause and effect there was a field of gray, impenetrable fog. (Modin 1953, p. 95)

This could be read as a case of allomorphism, because the instinct of the dog, translated into sensing and listening, outwits human reasoning. However, there is a difference between knowing how a person feels and understanding why they do so. This is described metaphorically as a fogginess, turning the mind of the dog into a landscape, accentuating how the dog's mind is attributed natural aspects, distinct from cultural assets. Paying attention to this disparity, the psychological portrayal of the dog appears to align with critical anthropomorphism in that it puts forth interpretations of canine behavior that seem to adhere to common beliefs that are emphatic and carefully articulated (Garrard 2012, p. 157).

In contrast, the narrative also makes use of what Garrard calls crude anthropomorphism, when the dog is made out to be more pure or innocent than one would suppose:

> He [Zorro] would lie in the headwind and observe the long-legged awesome creatures [the moose] and somewhere in his foggy mind (that is how dogs dream awake), he felt a strange connection with the gray giants. They were like his friends, because he had met them before in a different life when he almost lived on the same level as them. (Modin 1953, p. 115–116)

Besides depicting the dog as merely observing the wild animals, without chasing them or attacking them, the narrative constructs the image of a trans-species affinity, based on the fact that Zorro, for a period of time when he was a young dog, lived like a wild animal in the forest. Zorro's memory function is described, referring back to a previous period in his life, using the metaphor of the fogginess once more, likening it to dreaming awake. In this instance, the anthropomorphism seems to align more with the crude than with the critical version, since it assigns almost an existential-philosophical dimension to Zorros mind; he expresses awe, trans-species kinship and something like friendship with regards to a non-human other. The distinction between Zorro, the predator, and the moose, the prey, is the fact that Zorro has lived among humans, whereas the moose has always lived in the woods. This, of course, is an expression of the anthropocentrism that underpins the entire narrative. In this short passage, Zorro establishes a hierarchy, placing himself higher because of his experience with humans. This goes against the posthumanist thought that human and non-human animals should be considered as equals, and that hierarchies should be abandoned. The notion of hierarchies between animals also exists when it comes to people, and Zorro is instrumental in establishing these hierarchies thanks to his senses and his instincts.

The dog's instinct and stereotypical depictions of the other

In the story of Zorro, different kinds of othering take place, expressing not only human exceptionalism (Garrard 2012), but also eurocentrism, colonial discourse, and prejudice. The groups targeted more specifically are the Roma as well as native Americans. The processes of othering also seem reflected through

the narrative frame of the adventure story (see Andræ 2001, p. 158 and p. 45, note 47). What makes this particularly interesting is the fact that the prejudice against marginalized groups of people is somehow corroborated by the instincts of Zorro and thus normalized, since Zorro is the main focalizer throughout the narrative.

The description of the site where a group of Roma has settled on the outskirts of Stockholm is filtered through the eyes of the dog. The suspicious attitude expressed by Zorro's handler when previously encountering the Roma is mirrored by the behavior of the dog going back to the location on his own. At the same time, the reasons behind his own suspicious behavior are explained by the mix of unpleasant smells, as if trying to make the instincts of the dog have a stronger impact than his handler's prejudice, that become normalized by the same token. The Roma settlement is described as follows:

> a small town in itself. A strange town with miniature houses on wheels like the old times' prairie wagons in the wild west [...] he saw strange people [...] half naked children [...] They were all very peculiar. They spoke a strange language [...] Never before in his life the German shepherd had seen such people at such a close range. [...] a man swore in a crude and barbaric manner (Modin 1953, p. 62–66).

In this passage, the narrative is structured in such a way that the dog participates in the stereotypically bad portrayal of this marginalized group of people, mediated through his sight, smell and hearing. The site is described as a peculiar and disregarded town, the living quarters compared to those of other itinerant persons – the settler colonialists travelling by carriage to the west of the North American continent during the late 19th century spring to mind. Comparing with vehicles used a century ago, this underlines a certain backwardness assigned to nomadism without a definite destination signaling the end of the migratory movement. Clothing is used as a sign of culture, nakedness as a sign of unculture, augmented with derogatory remarks on language use. This aligns with Loomba's discussion about the colonizing mission of Africans being racist and 'obsessed with [...] nakedness' (Loomba 2015, p. 119). The multiplicity of negatively connotated words and the repetition of variations of the term *strange* is overwhelming in this short passage. The qualification of the swearing as barbaric places the construction of the Roma as 'barbarous infidels' rather than 'savage', the two organizing principles of the construction of the other as inferior in early colonial discourse (Loomba 2015, p. 115). This could be seen as a case of crude anthropomorphism since Zorro is unlikely to make such derogatory comments on human language use but is nevertheless used as a focalizer, reproducing as it were the human western imperial gaze.

Native Americans are in the Western world commonly used as cultural icons, often framed as content of the adventure story with a Western explorer as the male protagonist. In the story about Zorro, they are objectified as something the children of Rolf Langer, Zorro's handler, would play act as:

> The twins had seen older boys run around in colorful Indian outfits. Now they were playing Indians themselves. Zorro became a horse and they rode across the prairie of the living room yelling war cries that sounded more like chicken. (Modin 1953, p. 36)

The opening sentence of the passage expresses the nature of the transmission of cultural knowledge – children imitate their elders without questioning the content. The supposed savage character of the native Americans (Loomba 2015, p. 115), one of the reasons for the othering, is clearly underlined through the use of 'war cries', but this proves incompatible with the western children, whose vocal strengths can only muster the squeaking of a domesticated bird of prey. This difference accentuates the othering in progress. When it comes to Zorro, he gets to play another species. The predator becomes prey when the dog takes the role of the horse, insisting rather on his convenient size for the children than on his classification as a carnivore with predatory behavior. In a sense, within a racist logic, the children also act as not a different species perhaps, but as a different race. This was actually a line of inquiry pursued in the 19th century colonial setting, however refuted by the mixing of races that took place as a result of the encounter between explorer and native (Loomba 2015, p. 124). Following Loomba's reasoning, the children dressing up in 'colorful Indian outfits' (Modin 1953, p. 36) is a way of appropriating which implies to express power – the children are so to speak 'impersonating their "other"' (Loomba 2015, p. 118). As Zorro plays along with the children's othering, even incarnating another species and accepting to serve as a horse, he normalizes the colonial attitude displayed. The narrator explains that this new environment, living in the family home of the police officer Langer, confused Zorro at first, used to the old railway worker and his nomadic existence, but that the dog in this context felt a more nuanced attachment to the different family members and that he was adjusting (Modin 1953, p. 36–37).

Another characteristic commonly associated with native Americans is their imagined innocence, displayed in their initial meetings with white men, as illustrated at a point in the narrative where Zorro, on an island in the archipelago, is depicted as enduring the presence of a cat 'because it [the cat] seemed never to have met a dog and greeted him with the same innocence as the Indians greeted Columbus' (Modin 1953, p. 114). Placing the encounter between the white man and the native American in a comparison with the meeting between a dog and a cat underscores the sameness on the level of predator behavior, but a

significant difference in demeanor and aggressiveness. Cats in general seem less likely to lash out against dogs than the opposite. The othering of the native Americans is made in parallel with the depiction of the cat as a bit stupid from the dog's perspective. Loomba builds on the notion of 'originary moment' to convey how the encounter between what she calls New World natives and Columbus establishes the natives, their culture and practices, as more or less nonexistent before this meeting takes place. They are so to speak born through this encounter and thus marked by primitivism (Loomba 2015, p. 116, quoting Greenblatt 1991, p. 52–53). The pacific nature of the cat is equated with the innocence of the natives in their meeting with Columbus. At the same time this encounter between Zorro and the cat, without any preconceived notions of hostility on the part of the cat, representing the natives, reaches a completely different outcome than in the Americas – Zorro accepts the cat instead of chasing it. The focalization on Zorro poses him as the explorer, who, although he could easily take advantage of his strength to destroy the other, chooses to bear with the cat's presence. Through the narrative strategies, the reader is invited to share Zorro's view of the world, without taking into account the skills available to the cat, such as climbing up a tree or using its' sharp claws to avoid the often greater force of the dog. Zorro's perspective on the cat is put to work in constructing the native American as a less intelligent other. At the same time, the underlying idea is that this innocence was equal to stupidity, which in turn indirectly depicts the Western explorer as cunning and backstabbing, the savagery equally distributed in the world. Zorro, however, seems less prone to violence than his human counterpart, the white man discovering those who were in no need of being discovered, since he decides not to attack the feline.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The depiction of the dog's mind follows two separate tracks – in some instances it is depicted as similar to the human mind, using anthropomorphism, in others the separation appears clearly through the othering of the dog. Modin employs both crude and critical anthropomorphism, ultimately creating a predominantly realistic and emphatic image of the dog, with his own mind but engaged in interspecies interaction. The instances of othering of the dog also works along two separate lines. Sometimes the dog is described as fundamentally different from humans, in a positive way, being for example more sensitive to the moods of a person even if they are trying to hide their feelings. This is a case of allomorphism, stressing the reasons behind the strong bond of friendship which often characterizes human-dog interaction. At yet other moments, the dog is depicted as diametrically opposed to humans, following his instinct rather than respecting the authority of his handler. In these instances, the figurative language used accentuates the division between culture and nature, between training and instinct. One could argue that the othering of the dog can be divided into two separate kinds, like anthropomorphism can be either crude or critical. The divide between two kinds of othering, however, seems to organize itself according to the dichotomy between nature and culture, depending on the dog's relationship with humans – it is either better equipped than humans or closer to nature, instinct and wildness. As a domesticated animal, the dog's behavior seems to be interpreted either as close to human beings or closer to nature, i.e. that which is not human.

Posthumanist thoughts on the blurring of boundaries between human and animal, culture and nature seem distant from the depiction of Zorro. He is always on the verge of reverting into wildness, whereas his handler always seems governed by reason. Trust between dog and handler seems to be the only incentive for the dog to adapt to humans. The idea of Haraway, imagining the domestication of the dog as 'an unending dance of distributed and heterogeneous agencies' (2003, p. 27), seems remote in Modin's narrative, even though Langer does seem more inclined to listen to his dog than other handlers. In short, the function of the anthropomorphism is to make the dog understandable to the reader, but in its crude version, it seems to contribute to an exaggerated portrayal of the dog as prone to philosophical questioning and trans-species reflection. The othering is used to show in what ways the dog differs from humans, either by exposing knowledge often unavailable to humans, or by accentuating the instincts leading the dog away from human influence, creating a tug of war between instinct and training, contributing to the maintaining of the dichotomy nature/culture.

The hierarchy established between dog and handler concords with the world view transmitted in the story of Zorro, which is built on the division not only of species, but also of representatives of different ethnic groups. The focalization on Zorro and the depiction of his instincts contribute to the establishment of these hierarchies, where white westerners are at the top and other groups are marginalized, portrayed as less valuable. The othering of subordinate groups in society is filtered through the dog's subjectivity. This makes them appear less civilized, rather primitive and incomprehensible. The dog is used to normalize stereotypical representations of the other, since he is the main focalizer throughout the story. The story of Zorro thus aligns with ideas circulating in the society of the 1950's, contradicting norms of equality and respect for all forms of life. Despite an admirable attempt at depicting the dog from the inside, Modin ends up ascribing racist opinions to the canine mind and normalizing hierarchical thinking, putting into question the readability of the story of Zorro.

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