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## Interpellation and Affect: Activating Political Potentials Across Primate Species at Jakhoo Mandir, Shimla

**Being Hailed into a Human-Monkey World.** She was not the very first monkey I had encountered in India, but she was the first monkey who allowed me to remain close to her for any length of time. It was entirely at her own insistence: We had met on the worn asphalt footpath that winds its way up Jakhoo Hill from the city of Shimla below. The path goes up past colonial estates, houses, apartments; up through misty cedars and past vendors of snacks and sacraments; and eventually deposits a weary tourist or pilgrim on the grounds of a mandir at the hill's crest, and into the midst of monkeys.

I had already watched this monkey approach a man and a woman walking arm-in-arm. She had stopped them, like a security guard, by stepping out in front of them. When they halted, she investigated their bags, found nothing, and let them pass. So when she stood upright to reach at my satchel, I relented to her investigations. This happened in 2006, during my first trip to India. Later I would gain a measure of competence in socializing with Jakhoo's monkeys that would allow me to be much more at ease in their presence, but at this moment my interlocutor had the advantages of confidence and concrete knowledge of how to relate to *Homo sapiens* bodies. When she found that my bag's zippers were fastened shut, she went behind me and grabbed the back pockets of my jeans. I had just enough time to congratulate myself for having slipped my wallet into my bag (as if she was interested in rupees) before I realized what she was actually doing. With one hand in each of my seat pockets, she hefted herself in two steps up my back and onto my shoulders. Each of her hands held a lock of my hair and her feet grasped my shirt.

Except for the fact that she had mounted me, the monkey remained entirely nonviolent. I was enjoying the encounter, but I realized that I would need to be rid of her eventually. Rather than risk my hands and face by trying to remove her manually, I decided to try to annoy her into fleeing. I bounced around, walked up the hill, jogged up the hill, and even jumped up and down a few times. But she took it all in stride. Meanwhile, there were people passing us. I posed for photographs with tourists from Haryana.

After a few minutes I received some guidance at last: “baitho!” The order may have been meant for me or for the monkey, but I was the one who understood it and obeyed by sitting down in the middle of the path. Coming down the hill to return to his station on the roadside was a vendor. He ran up to us shaking two bags of candy prasad — snack food meant as an offering for Hanuman, the deity of the mandir. He gave the packets to the monkey, who grabbed them in a breath and leapt from my shoulders to the roadside. She was met there by an associate who in turn snatched a bag from her. I wasn’t yet able to have lengthy conversations in Hindustani, but the vendor managed to express that I owed him ten rupees. This was the standard price.

To the extent that humans are the actuators of this kind of behavior among the monkeys, the monkeys are also actuators of tolerance, fear, or adoration in the humans who participate in Jakhoo society. My assailant was empowered to extort me by her own practical experience in engaging with humans. In turn the opportunity for her to gain such experience was provided for partially by the accommodations afforded to her and her kin by the human participants in Jakhoo society. At Jakhoo, the ostensible cause of this tolerance is the presence of the Hanuman mandir at the hilltop. Hanuman, not coincidentally, is himself either a monkey or very monkey-like.<sup>1</sup> But the monkeys are not the passive recipients of human protections. Nor are they simply taking an opportunity afforded to them by religiously minded devotees of Hanuman and by the vendors and the tourist industry. Rather, the monkeys should be understood as active, agential participants in the social construction of the interspecies polity at Jakhoo. The social behaviors of Jakhoo’s humans and monkeys are the material expressions of a long association between them around the site of the “monkey temple.”

Jakhoo’s monkeys are not nearly as welcome in the streets of the surrounding city of Shimla, but their presence is more or less tolerated there as well. There is no clear boundary between the sacred zone in which monkeys are protected and the secular world in which animals must relent to human domination. Yet the pro-monkey sentiment of Shimlans is linked to the specific place of Jakhoo Hill. Jakhoo — the hill, the mandir, and by extension the town around it — is the repository of human and nonhuman agency, understood as *affective labor*. Taken as activity which shapes the world in which it occurs, but which is also an expression of that world, labor can describe the joint contributions of humans and monkeys to the construction of Jakhoo Hill, but only if it is expanded beyond a Marxist concept of labor as the outcome of human planning. *Affect*, in its most general sense, covers the nonlinguistic, irrational, and bodily aspects of communication; but affect does more than provide an addendum or commentary on the partially planned human artifices of language and architecture.

Rather, insofar as our primate bodies are both vehicles of subjective meaning and aspects of the material-semiotic landscape, affect transcends the division between selves and others, subject and object, agent and environment. Affect in this sense is the material expression of the history of social relations in a given landscape, an aspect of the landscape itself, and an activity that shapes the landscape. We could say that affect is what closes the loop between world and subject.

Affect is not the only kind of labor that shapes the landscape of Jakhoo. There is building in the traditional sense, and monkeys and humans inevitably appropriate their environment with their own personal and species-specific purposes. But understanding that Jakhoo Hill is a landscape characterized by the material interactions of primate bodies allows us to recognize the monkeys' contributions to the construction of the social space of Jakhoo. This is important because, while there is some violence between primates on Jakhoo Hill, the situation is generally one of amicability.

Importantly, positive affect between the species also grounds the extension of relatively beneficent relations into the future. But in cities and towns throughout India, large-scale attempts at monkey removal have been the preferred means of dealing with pest monkeys conceived as a "menace." In this context, translocation can often be understood as an expression of a strain of bourgeois environmentalism which has come to prominence in India over the past two decades and which seeks to expel backwards, non-modern, and aesthetically displeasing elements from Indian cities. Religious affection for monkeys is sometimes characterized as an example of the kind of backwards element that stands in the way of Indian progress. While Jakhoo Hill appears to be a relatively secure and stable polity, wholesale translocation in other urban locales like Delhi threatens to cauterize the affective feedback loop that promotes mutually amenable relations between the species. This could pose a serious threat to the future of a species whose success largely relies on association with human settlements.

**Rhesus Macaques: a "Monkey Menace?"** The monkeys at Jakhoo are mainly a kind of monkey known in English as a rhesus macaque, in Latin as *Macaca mulatta*, and in Hindustani as *bandar* or *lal bandar* — "red monkeys." Outside of South Asia, rhesus macaques are perhaps most commonly encountered as laboratory primates, and have been key animal models for research into polio, depression, maternal behavior, HIV, bioterrorism — the list goes on. In India, they are common urban animals.

The fact that monkeys live in cities can be as surprising to an American like myself as the fact that there are no native monkeys in North America can be to some Indians. How to communicate the peculiar fleshiness of a monkey-on-the-town to someone who has never lived alongside them? The niches occupied by urban monkeys might be compared to pigeons' (rock doves, *Columba livia*, kabutar), another South Asian native who has spread around the planet alongside humans. Like rhesus macaques, pigeons probably entered into their relationship with humans by way of "preadaptation" to life in cities. Before their encounter with city-builders, rock doves were specialized cliff-dwellers; over the millenia, human cities have unfolded before them not as obstacles inimical to their lives, but as sprawling galleries of nesting sites (Rose, Nagel, and Haag-Wackernagel; Haag-Wackernagel). Similarly, monkeys' handiness and aptitudes for climbing turn the vertical surfaces of buildings into escape routes and playgrounds that are much more accessible to monkeys than to the humans who built them. Like pigeons, rhesus are capable of activating potentials in the human-built environment that humans cannot access. Unlike pigeons, however, rhesus are relatively large animals — adult males are around 53 centimeters long, and weigh about 7.7 kilograms; adult females are about 47 cm long and weigh around 5.3 kg (Fooden). While there are large species who are prone to hijinks in my current Californian homeland — like coyotes, gray foxes, and raccoons — these cohabitants are nocturnal. Rhesus are diurnal like ourselves, and all the more visible – and apparently brazen – for it.

However, my first encounters with monkeys in India were not in-person. My arrival in India's human-monkey worlds was mediated before anything else by the international and Indian English language news media. I knew India's monkeys first in terms of journalistic narratives of monkey danger: in the first decade of the 21st Century, stories about conflict between humans and monkeys in India were a prominent news item there and abroad. Mostly, the monkeys were blamed for stealing food and causing minor property damage, but inconveniences sometimes gave way to deadly encounters. Though there have been other instances, the most famous recent victim of monkey violence was Delhi's deputy mayor S.S. Bajwa, who apparently fell to his death after battling monkeys on his terrace (Choudhury and Singh). If not inflicting injury, the monkeys who figured in the news were bringing down the power lines (ANI), defacing monuments (Pradhan), disrupting transportation services (e.g., TNN, "Monkey Attacks Passenger at Railway Station"), or even creating havoc at polls (DPA).

One common element of journalistic tales of monkey menace was an explanation for non-Indian audiences of how the simians were getting away with their misconduct: they were sacred to devotees of Hanuman. The sacredness of monkeys is, to say the

least, not actually a universally held belief among Indians nor even among Hindus. But Hanuman is one of the most popular gods in Hinduism and other South Asian religious traditions, and many of his numerous mandirs serve as rendezvous points for the monkeys and their allies among religious Hindus and curious tourists. Monkeys know that at these places people will come bearing edible gifts. In narratives of monkey menace, devotees of Hanuman were sometimes blamed for luring monkeys into human contact with food on the basis of a bad faith anthropomorphism (or theomorphism). Delhi primatologist (and oft-consulted public monkey expert) Iqbal Malik has complained more than once in interviews that the root problem of monkey trouble in Delhi and other cities is that “the monkeys are considered as gods. But the gods become pests in a very short span of time” (Lefkow; cf. Watson).

Naturally, the fact that the danger of human-monkey interrelation goes both ways has not been lost on journalists and their informants. A 2002 report for *The Daily Telegraph* (London) by Rahul Bedi — a prominent journalist who has contributed a number of “monkey menace” stories to newspapers around the world since at least the early Nineties — told the story of a monkey who had wandered into a temple in Timmaganipalli, Andhra Pradesh, where he was taken as an incarnation of Hanuman. Bedi quoted an animals rights activist who described the monkey as old, with both of his legs paralyzed. When he and others concerned for the monkey’s welfare tried to remove him to a hospital, villagers interfered. Eventually the monkey began to refuse to eat. Though judges ordered that he be removed from the temple for medical care, he died before any action could be taken. News of his death traveled quickly. Bedi, who is best known for his coverage of the Trilokipur Riots in the wake of Indira Gandhi’s 1983 assassination, summarized the role that monkeys play in journalistic narratives to me in a brief email exchange. He explained, “[monkey stories are] a dig at the ancient albeit irrational beliefs we as a society nurture for monkeys ... the army chief, police and all officialdom are tolerant of this menace, perpetuating these regressive beliefs that impinge destructively on many of our lives” (personal communication, 14 June 2009).<sup>2</sup>

**Bourgeois Environmentalism and Translocation.** My sample of “monkey menace” stories coincides with the rise of what anthropologist Amita Baviskar has characterized as “bourgeois environmentalism,” a kind of environmentalism that does not take into account concerns with social justice characteristic of the grass-roots efforts that motivated previous forms of Indian environmentalism (cf. Gadgil and Guha 1992; 1995), but rather focuses on calculations of security, sanitation, and beauty to fit the tastes of

upper and middle class urban Indians. The coincidence between bourgeois environmentalism and the stories of monkey menace that I read was made explicit for me by my particular subject position as a Westerner who was consuming Indian news made available on the Internet. The connection between the “monkey menace” and bourgeois environmentalism is neoliberalism: the expansion of neoliberalism in India during the late 20th and early 21st Centuries has had the effect of propagating a transnational and bourgeois vision of Indian urbanity (Dupont), while at the same time making Indian products, services, and media more widely available in the West and expanding India’s virtual presence on the World Wide Web. This is to say that the monkeys were delivered to me by the same forces that created them as a “menace” plaguing India.

One way to discipline monkeys for the sake of neoliberal bourgeois environmental aesthetics is *translocation*, the removal of unwanted organisms from the urban environment. Translocation is where the coincidence between bourgeois environmentalism and discourses of monkey danger becomes material. Translocation of monkeys is often carried out by wildlife officials or workers from conservation NGOs. It consists of capturing monkeys and then releasing them in some distant, preferably less problematic locale. Some translocation activities around rhesus and other primate species like baboons have achieved success in terms of permanently removing monkeys from one environment to another and providing those monkeys with a viable alternative home. Shirley Strum and other researchers and wildlife workers with the Institute for Primate Research in Nairobi translocated commensal olive baboons (*Papio hamadrayas anubis*) from an area near an army installation where the crop-raiding monkeys were being shot, to ranches where they would pose less of a nuisance, and reported that they did well or better than expected in their new environments (Strum). Rhesus macaques who were removed from nearby the Gurgaon Air Force Base in Haryana (near Delhi) in 1998 were reported by the scientists in charge of the translocation to be doing well two years later (Imam, Malik, and Yahya 2001).

While translocation can be practiced in such a way so as to promote the well-being of some primates, it is also fraught as a management strategy. In situations where there are dense populations of monkeys, removing one set of monkeys from a given locale may only serve to create a “vacuum effect” where other monkeys of the same species as the removed individuals may simply translocate themselves into the resource-rich zone formerly occupied by the removed monkeys. I acquired the term “vacuum effect” from conversations with primatologist Iqbal Malik and from officials with the Himachal Pradesh Wildlife Department, but the vacuum effect phenomenon probably has been

recognized by monkey managers for a long time. Rudyard Kipling's father, Lockwood, wrote about it in his 1904 *History of Beast and Man in India*. Noting that tradesmen in Shimla had come to feel that there were "too many Hanumans about," Kipling described the capture and relocation of offensive monkeys to a location out of town. The plan backfired, however, as the outcast monkeys simply followed the carts on which they had been transported right back to the city gates (Kipling, 59-60).

There can also be anthropogenic complications to translocations as well. In 1996, after receiving requests from local pandits (Hindu religious functionaries), the Chief Conservator of Forests (Wildlife) for Uttar Pradesh gave the OK for a massive translocation of rhesus macaques from the holy city of Vrindavan in Uttar Pradesh. The operation was carried out over a period of about two weeks in January of 1997 under the auspices of the World Wildlife Fund India. The team was initially driven off by a group of angry locals led by (different) local pandits. Vrindavan's rhesus macaques, the objectors held, are the descendents of Lord Krishna's childhood playmates. They considered the monkeys to be an essential feature of the Brij, a sacred region that includes Vrindavan and all the places where Krishna spent his childhood. Though later excursions met with less resistance, captured monkeys had to be released under cover of night. In the end, over 600 of the city's more than 1300 monkeys were removed to a forested area within Mathura district. As stipulated by the Mathura wildlife authorities, the monkeys' new homes were within the traditional limits of the Brij, but the release site was characterized by the authors as less than ideal on account of its proximity to villages (Imam, Yahya, and Malik 2002).

The major part of the monkey management efforts posted by the geographically overlapping governments of the National Capital Region and the municipalities of Delhi this century have involved the mass translocation of monkeys out of the city and to Ashola Bhatti Wildlife Sanctuary. The sanctuary had been established as a protected area for wildlife in 1992, but the decision to use it as a depository for macaques who had been brought under municipal control was made only in 2007, in the wake of several years of increasingly shrill rhetoric in the newspapers, complaints from wealthy residents' welfare associations,<sup>3</sup> and disputes between the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) and other Delhi government bodies about whose responsibility monkey management ought to be. Ashola had been under consideration by the Forest Department and animal advocacy groups for some time already. In August 2009, the MCD Press Officer Deep Mathur told documentarian Jav Douglas that 8,601 monkeys

had been captured and sent to the sanctuary since 2006 (personal communication, 12 July 2012). In a May 2012 interview with the *New York Times*, the MCD's chief veterinary officer, R.B.S. Tyagi, stated that 13,013 monkeys had been sent to Ashola-Bhatti (Vyawahare).

**What's at Stake: the Continued Possibility of Coexistence.** Narratives of monkey danger and the backwardness of Indians who support association with monkeys have at least two things in common with the effort to translocate monkeys from Delhi. First, they are both monolithic in scale: menace narratives, especially those delivered to international audiences, depict India's monkey problems as a national crisis, something that plagues the Indian landscape and consciousness equally. Similarly, efforts to translocate Delhi's rhesus are totalizing: the goal is to move every monkey out of Delhi and into Ashola, and to keep them there. The second commonality between translocation to Ashola and menace discourse is that they are both propositions about the shape of Indian cities to come. Journalistic tales highlighting monkey hijinks and "regressive" human beliefs posit possible urbanities which are not yet extant, but which might be organized. Monkey menace narratives are a symptom of a bourgeois environmentalism that selectively latches onto and amplifies some kinds of association — here, the association of monkeys with violent or backwards elements improper to urban landscapes — while ignoring or even obfuscating other associations, and effectively smoothing over the variety and complexity of extant relationships.

Noting that macaques who are commensal with humans may experience (alongside humans) the negative consequences of "ever-expanding human populations, increased movement of people within and between countries, and changing socio-economic conditions" (244), Nancy Priston and Matthew McLennan have argued that urban Indians' changing attitudes towards monkeys can have negative consequences for rhesus macaques and their conservation. Here, I second their recommendations that researchers and wildlife managers pay attention to the actual diversity of social relations that exist between the species, and that conservation strategies should focus on promoting tolerant attitudes and reducing negative interactions through a range of management strategies that should be tailored to specific situations of conflict.

The stakes of totalizing management strategies are made clearer by translocation efforts in Delhi, where the process is not reserved for monkeys. In the run-up to the 2010 Commonwealth Games, "mobile courts" were organized by the Delhi Social Welfare Ministry in order to confront, try, and remove beggars from the streets in short order (Special Correspondent). Jhuggi colonies — temporary housing erected by the poor —

were destroyed (Sidner). Plans were formulated to erect bamboo walls around the remaining “slum” structures (Nelson). More than 100,000 Delhi residents became homeless in the period leading up to the Games (Banerjee-Guha). Besides the hardships endured by evicted individuals, there is also at stake the very possibility of integrating disenfranchised persons. When the poor and the indigent are systematically removed from the sight of the powerful, the powerful are denying themselves the opportunity to develop or maintain the ethical capacities required to accommodate disparate, disempowered others.

What is removed from the urban environment may not be just monkeys, but the components of a world that fosters subjects who are capable of living alongside monkeys. I interpret the discourses of the monkey menace alongside large-scale translocation strategies as ways of imagining a baseline of order that is assumed to be implicit in a functioning modern polity, checking the extant situation against that ideal model for errors and paradoxes, and finally progressively improving either the categories or the material situation itself through judicial orders, law-making, and management.<sup>4</sup> Yet, actual social relations between monkeys and humans are too varied to be captured by totalizing schemes, nor by notions of backwardness, religion, and tradition. Rather than attempt to wholly rewrite the text of social relations between the species — indeed, instead of attempting to delete the text of human-monkey social relations wholesale — might authorities instead act to conserve already working components of extant situations? Religious affection for monkeys and playful secular interrelations, as they unfold at Jakhoo, constitute an archive that might be drawn upon as a resource for negotiating future human-monkey politics.

Not only does Jakhoo host an amicable cross-species polity, but it does so in the midst of a highly developed urban space, Shimla. As the state capital and as a tourist destination, Shimla is the largest urban agglomeration in the northwestern state of Himachal Pradesh, drawing in permanent and temporary residents from all over northern India and beyond. It is no mega-city, but it is urban and global, having been established as the summer capital of the British Raj in the Nineteenth Century, and nowadays drawing heavily upon tourists, both foreign and domestic, for its economic success.<sup>5</sup> The estimated resident human population of the city proper was put at about 171,000 in 2011 (“Urban Agglomerations/Cities Having Population 1 Lakh and Above”). Despite being a veritable stronghold of bourgeois environmental tastes, hundreds of monkeys live in and around the town. Jakhoo Hill is Shimla’s major tourist attraction,

and also a magnet for development money from investors. The mandir, and by extension the hill and the city, is a site of interspecies affective labor, which resonates beyond the human-monkey encounters that unfold there, and through ostensibly broader, ostensibly human, social worlds like politics, economy, religion, and governance.

Evolution and Ecology of Weed Macaques. Perhaps the most important point of common, material interest between humans and monkeys on Jakhoo and everywhere is food. Like many other urban animals, rhesus macaques' diets and environmental tolerances are flexible. Rhesus eat a wide range of food, including stems, shoots, leaves, grasses, eggs, the occasional invertebrate, soil, and fruit, but their diet varies from locale to locale and with the seasons (Fooden). Rhesus are suited for seasonal climates — their reproductive cycles may be timed to the rainy season and its vegetable bounty (Kapil; Siddiqi and Southwick), but they may also be found in cold, mountainous regions like Himachal Pradesh, and arid zones like Western Rajasthan, where human presences have negated any reliance on seasonal food surpluses. It should not be held against the monkeys if the day-to-day demands that they make are for food and space, for these constitute key political problems for rhesus and humans alike. In the language of Tom Heinsohn, rhesus engage in human ethnophoresy: their distribution is facilitated by human activity. Food, in its ecological, religious, and economic aspects, is what gathers humans and monkeys together. In terms favored by Jane Bennett, food is the problem around which an ontologically heterogeneous human and nonhuman polity coalesces (94-109). It is also through the medium of edible exchanges that monkeys effect larger and longer-standing impacts on their material-semiotic landscape.

Noting the geographical extent of human-macaque sympatry — throughout human-populated zones of South and Southeast Asia — primatologist Alison Richard has suggested that rhesus and a few other macaque species be included in an ecological taxon known as “weed macaques.” “Weeds” are monkeys who specialize in making their livings in the margins around human camps. Weed macaques are a polyphyletic group, meaning that the commensal tendencies shared by the separate species in the group are probably not inherited from a common weedy ancestor, but are more likely to be examples of convergent evolution. Each species' attraction to human-altered landscapes is an independent effect of natural selection; each species' weediness emerges post festum, after the evolutionary fact of living on the boundaries of human settlement. Following Ardith Eudey, Alison Richard et al. hypothesized that the proliferation of rhesus macaques' immediate ancestors occurred concomitantly with the retreat of glaciers from the Gangetic Plains around 18,000 years ago, a change that

would have favored plant species who preferred forest edges and broken environments (Eudey).<sup>6</sup> The researchers suggested that the spread of human agriculture in India over the past 10,000 years also would have promoted these marginal plant varieties, elevating some of them to the roles of cultivar and crop. It is these marginal, broken environments which produce the plants that rhesus prefer to feed upon, and so the ancestors of rhesus macaques, monkeys who could tolerate proximity to human-disturbed environments and flourish on the bounty of food provided by agriculturalists, would have likely enjoyed an advantage that other macaque groups, better suited to the forested Ice Age ecology that preceded the current situation, could not (Richard, Goldstein, and Dewar; cf. Coppinger for a similar tale about wolf-dog transitions). In spite of a drastic depopulation event in the mid-Twentieth Century, when macaques were harvested from India and sent overseas to serve in anti-polio research, about half of the rhesus macaques in the world still live in India, and most of these monkeys (as many as 86%)<sup>7</sup> live in or near human settlements (Southwick and Siddiqi).<sup>8</sup>

Emergent from this long, intense, food-driven history is an entire genre of interspecies landscape which positively fosters human-rhesus association: the monkey temple. Monkey temples are Hindu mandirs (often but not always dedicated to Hanuman) or Buddhist stupas. The simian residents of monkey temples often make their livings on food taken from visitors, who may or may not be willing participants in the exchange; who may or may not see in the monkeys the visage of Hanuman or an incarnation of the Buddha; and who may or may not take joy in watching chickpeas and corn disappear into the hands and cheek pouches of monkeys. Regardless of the intentions of temple patrons, the monkeys recognize and act on their advantage in such settings, and avail themselves in pushy or polite ways of the resources on offer. When I asked visitors to Jakhoo Mandir (or any of the other monkey temples I visited) why they were feeding monkeys, most assumed that I needed to be apprised of the relationship between Hanuman and the monkeys, or of the power (shakt) that Hanuman grants his devotees. Yet, how the landscape of Jakhoo is produced as a place where human dominance is not a foregone conclusion is more complicated than the intentions of its human patrons or the power of the god some of them adore.

**Human-Monkey Relations at Jakhoo.** Jakhoo's rhesus macaques are not builders in the usual sense of the term, but they do bend the living landscape to their needs, and in the process leave their mark upon it. Take the long, final stairway from the front gate of

Jakhoo to the mandir and its surrounding grounds. On the right as one steps between the stone lions and warriors who guard this lowermost entry point is a stone wall and, on top of that, a chain link fence. On the left is a railing, and beyond that a steep slope fit only for monkeys and crows. The first landing deposits visitors on a broad lawn, where, during my fieldwork, there was some plastic playground equipment. (Younger monkeys often played there as their parents and elders munched on handfuls of grass.) Lower down the stairs, on the slope, there are pines and a few examples of the deodar cedars that were so celebrated by Shimla's colonial founders. Higher up, on the right, stands now the 108-foot tall Hanuman murti that is, as ethnographer of Shimla's religions Jonathan Miles-Watson pointed out to me, far too tall to realistically fulfill such a statue's ostensible purpose of bestowing the deity's beneficent gaze (darshan) upon devotees (Cf. Miles-Watson).

Visitors nowadays will be impressed by the density of monkeys gathered at Lord Hanuman's feet, but the fact is that even before the giant murti was completed in 2010 the stairway was one of the monkeys' preferred haunts. More intimidating or well-connected individuals and groups of monkeys would occupy the stairway for a while, taking a seat just off to the side of the path, on the ground, or among the beams that support the sheet metal canopy overhead, and holding it against other monkeys. I especially came to associate this stairwell with three females who kept company with one another here, and whom I, with no sure knowledge of their connections to one another, started to call "Step Sisters." But many monkeys of different apparent ranks, sex, and age frequented the area.

Visitors carry all kinds of snacks up the hill with them, but the primary object of exchange in the stairwell and throughout the temple grounds is *prasad*. At Jakhoo Hill, this is sugar candy and dried chickpeas. In its technical religious definition, the term *prasad* refers to a gift of food or some other item to a deity, who has tasted it and returned it to the worshiper in a transformed, blessed state. Proper *prasad* is the leftovers of a divine meal, the literal radiant excess of a gift that has already been consumed, but at Jakhoo the term is applied to the candy in both its blessed and pre-blessed forms. Sold alongside votive oils and incense, these candies are ideally meant as offerings to Hanuman. The merchants of the Shimla vegetable markets also supply the mandir with bucketfuls of corn, which are distributed to the monkeys in a flat eastward portion of the hilltop — just on the other side of the lawn from the stairwell — that was sometime around 2006 named "Vanar Rajya" (roughly, "Monkey Kingdom") and designated as a space for feeding monkeys, which has been technically illegal everywhere else in Shimla since 2004.

The monkeys insist on being fed. From the parking lot and on up to the lawns of the temple complex, the terrain immediately to either side of the stairwell is, like the high exteriors of other human structures, only traversable by humans with some effort, and it presents an ideal space for the macaques' more aggressive foraging techniques. Like other monkey species in the subfamily Cercopithecinae, including baboons and vervets, macaques have cheek pouches. When they are presented with plentiful food, they tend to forage in a "retrieve-and-retreat" pattern wherein they gather as much food as they can in their hands and cheeks before retiring to denser cover to eat. At Jakhoo this technique can be observed any time a large amount of *prasad* or corn is scattered for a group of monkeys — lower-ranking monkeys tend to snatch up as much food as possible and bound away. Feeding like this minimizes exposure to predators, but is primarily useful for evading the aggression of higher-ranking troop-mates (cf. Lambert). Alternatively, higher-ranking monkeys can situate themselves, and their auras of dominance, in the midst of the food pool itself, effectively limiting their subordinates' access to it. In those cases where their food source is a walking, talking, and potentially aggressive human, the retrieve-and-retreat pattern unfolds into snatching, and this is the end to which the monkeys have re-purposed the stairs at Jakhoo.

What I call snatching is a technique whereby a monkey takes something edible from another animal — at Jakhoo, this could be a monkey, a human, or a dog — and flees to a spot where the mark can't or won't follow. Thus, the reputation of some monkeys as raiders and robbers. But some people would object to labeling monkeys in this way. In Hindustani you can say *chheenana* or *jhapatana* and it's the same as "snatching," but it's not the same as *stealing*. The difference has less to do with the specific technique the monkey deploys to forage from humans and more to do with the affective resonance of the categories being spoken. Once, when I suggested that monkeys stole, rob, or looted people (*lootana*), a teenage tout corrected me. He told me to "say snatch because loot is too harsh." That happened in Delhi, but goodwill like this is widespread: monkeys are thought of as *chatur*, which can mean "naughty" and "clever," but which can also suggest innocent mischievousness. "Chatur" is commonly applied to children or to the childhood forms of gods. Childhood images of gods like Krishna engaged in mischief as the butter thief Makhan Chor or Maruti (Hanuman's childhood name) are the very archetypes of *pyar*, a Hindustani word which can cover a range of sentiments expressed in English as love, dearness, or affection for something cute. Though their stories do

yield moral lessons, contemporary permutations of Makhan Chor and Maruti as the heroes of children's movies, mascots for all manner of consumables and durable goods, and even (in the case of Maruti) a popular model of car, suggest that the adoration and consumption of images of Makhan Chor and Maruti may have more to do with consumer aesthetics than religion or adaptive behavioral tendencies. Similarly, the tolerance that people extend to cheeky monkeys is hard to distinguish from the pleasure that monkeys' friends and devotees derive from indulging them.

Unlike the Butter Thief, who could be neither caught nor punished by his mortal caregivers, young Maruti was struck down by the thundering god Indra when he mistook the sun for a mango and tried to eat it; and when he used his divine powers to be naughty, he was cursed by the sages to forget his supernatural abilities. Likewise, monkeys are indulged and adored, but not allowed to get away with everything. At the foot of the hill and at Jakhoo's final stairway, vendors rent out rods to visitors for a cost of five rupees per stick, per day. These rods are less for walking than for tapping on the ground in front of approaching monkeys. After my initial encounters with the Jakhoo monkeys in 2006 I learned to keep my glasses in my pocket as soon as I reached the top of the hill, and to carry a stick with me if I meant to mingle with monkeys. I never hit any monkeys; they knew what the rod was about, and as long as I made an effort to avoid being surrounded on the lawn in Vanar Rajya, it was easy to remind them to restrain themselves as they solicited me for food. My wife Teresa, who accompanied me for portions of my fieldwork, didn't carry a stick and couldn't go without her glasses. The result: Her glasses were stolen three times at Jakhoo in 2009.

On the other hand, no one among the temple staff or vendors carried a stick. Some of them were not bothered by the monkeys at all, but prasad vendors and the canteen staff, who are compelled to defend foodstuffs, and the police, who are compelled to defend tourists, made better use of stones. Faced with a staff who know how to draw the line with monkeys, the macaques focus on visitors, and many of them employ a technique that goes beyond snatching into a fairly straightforward ransoming scheme. This is why the monkeys were after Teresa's glasses, though any small object that can be retrieved-and-retreated from a human might suffice. Once I watched one of the step sisters steal a sandal that a woman had left outside the mandir while she went inside to sing. She (the monkey) took the sandal, found a seat between my bench and another, and waited. For half an hour, she shifted the shoe between her hands and her mouth. When the woman returned, the monkey realized that the game was afoot and moved out of reach, onto a nearby sign. In this case, I pointed the culprit out to the mark, but usually the job of clarifying the monkeys' demands to visitors fall upon the people who

would fulfill those demands, the regular prasad vendors. In this case, one of them, a former photographer and forty year veteran of the hill, Mohan, moved in and engaged the thief with packets of candies. He retrieved the shoe with no trouble, and the woman paid him the cost of the prasad, ten rupees.

Most of the marks are unable to retrieve their stolen articles on their own. A lot can go wrong. If the visitor can't summon the courage to approach the offending monkey and directly hand the food over, other monkeys may intercept the delivery. Miscommunications can happen, and threats may ensue. There are signs posted in the entry stairwell and around the complex offering guidelines for interacting with monkeys, and many temple regulars are able to offer practical advice for the less savvy. Even other visitors, coming down the hill, routinely pass on their recent experiences and new wisdom to upward bound newcomers. But there is no explicit rhetoric on how to negotiate a ransom, except: get some prasad. For these reasons intercession from a vendor or other temple personnel is usually required. No one ever imparted to me a secret technique for successfully delivering a ransom, but people who could complete the exchanges tended to express the difference as a matter of familiarity and courage. The prasad vendors, the cafe staff, and the taxiwalas didn't explain their edge in terms of having mastered a particular technique for approaching monkeys, but they were ready to admit that the monkeys knew them, and knew that there would be consequences for unwelcome shenanigans.

**Models of Monkey Agency: Training, Synergy, Co-construction, Labor.** The frequency with which Jakhoo's monkeys mug and even extort humans leads many visitors to come to suspect that the monkeys and the vendors are in cahoots. The tenth edition of the Lonely Planet guide to India describes the situation at Jakhoo as, "a simian scam, they'll snatch spectacles off people's faces as the café owner will bribe them with food to give them up" (Singh et al., 232). When I asked a long-time resident and tour guide about the monkeys' techniques, he intimated his suspicions (echoed by a few local taxi drivers and at least one young vendor who worked the hill) that they had been trained by the late husband of one of the elderly prasad vendors, Aunty Gooly. Later, surrounded by her accompanying pack of dogs, I asked her. She laughed and denied it, saying of the monkeys and her husband, "They were just friends."

The vendors' relationships with the monkeys are not premised, as many suspect, on training. It is likely that some degree of incidental training in the form of reinforcement

has transpired between the monkeys and the various human parties who have historically been imbricated in interspecies exchanges at Jakhoo. In their instructive 2002 study of long-tailed and pig-tailed macaques (*M. fascicularis* and a nonweed species, *M. nemestrina*) who were trained to pick coconuts on plantations in Thailand, cultural anthropologist Leslie Sponsel et al. argued that synergy between biological, economic, and cultural conditions prompted an “adaptive shift” in the Thai macaques’ niches. Though the coconut-picking macaques were trained — and thus were integrated into the power relations of plantation culture through human initiative — the stage for productive associations that were both liveable and fairly novel was still set by the pre-existing cohesion of multiple, material mutualities in humans’ and macaques’ lifestyles.

Training and its implication of a superior human agency does not exhaust macaques’ capacities for action in multispecies worlds. In the 1980s, primatologist Bruce Wheatley found that eighty per cent of aggressive solicitations (jumping and climbing on visitors) by long-tailed macaques (*M. fascicularis*, another species of weed macaque) at the monkey forests of Padangtegal and Sangeh in Bali were rewarded with food, either from a frightened tourist, or from a photographer or other entrepreneur who would bribe the monkey to release the tourist (Wheatley).<sup>9</sup> Yet, Wheatley points out that the monkeys recognized farmers who were known to be violent and avoided those individuals when they came to the temple grounds, demonstrating that though the photographers may have been strengthening the monkeys’ associations between tourists and food, the monkeys were nevertheless discerning and self-directed in their depredations (*ibid*, 142).

Primatologist Agustín Fuentes has theorized human-monkey relations at Hindu temples as an in-progress domestication event. In his studies of interspecies social behavior at monkey temples in Bali, Fuentes opposed the “relatively traditional domesticatory practices” involved in training a monkey as a dancer or a coconut picker — which were “practical (functional or productive in an economic sense) process[es] intentionally directed by humans to produce the desired outcome” — to the cultural inclusion and the architectural accommodation that humans effect for monkeys in monkey temple settings (Fuentes 2007, 139). Fuentes stressed the role that “human place” has in facilitating monkeys’ “potential participation in a human initiated domesticatory practice” (*ibid.*, 133-134). Fuentes’s emphasis on “place” disrupted the notion that domestication is primarily carried out by the willful action of humans, and instead theorized domestication as an evolutionary outcome tied to the broader

environment that humans help to make available to some of their nonhuman neighbors (cf. Coppinger and Coppinger; Leach).

Fuentes later moved away from the term “domestication,” which connotes the *domos*, the place of human dominion. In a subsequent article he re-theorized monkey temple relations as a “coconstructed niche” instead of a “human *place*” (2010). Rather than situating the monkeys as organisms shifting into a space provided to them ahead of time by humans — a human *domos* or domain — he re-presented the monkeys as competent co-manipulators of the environment alongside and through human activity. Here, Fuentes is building on what some ecologists and evolutionary scientists have called “niche construction” (Laland and O’Brien; Odling-Smee, Laland, and Feldman) and others have called “ecosystems engineering” (Jones, Lawton, and Shachak 1994; 1997). Both terms refer to behaviors that produce effects in the environment to the extent that the acting organisms can potentially modulate the selective pressures that shape their own evolution. Both terms would include the goal-oriented work of humans, who coordinate their energies actively towards material goals through social exercises like politics and technology. But they would also include the unintended effects of humans and other organisms upon their host environment. Fuentes expands the concept by reminding us that the niche occupied by temple monkeys and macaques throughout South and Southeast Asia is not exhausted by ecological or adaptive perspectives, but that “cultural elements are also at play in building and reshaping the local niches of the humans and macaques” (2010).

Indeed, human culture is a medium for macaque world-building, and vice versa. Taken with Richard et al’s weed macaque hypothesis, Fuentes’s notion of niche co-construction suggests that the macaques have been shaping their environment for perhaps the entire duration of their association with humans — at least since the retreat of the glaciers from the Gangetic Plains. Moreover, this suggests that the phenomenon of the monkey temple itself emerges from the long commensal relationship, meaning that the relationship does not necessarily have its origins in human-initiated practices. To attribute a role to “cultural elements” is not to re-emphasize the preeminence of humans or human models of power at the monkey temple, but rather expands the realm of action in which humans and monkeys may effect changes in mutually sensible worlds. This contravenes the ontologies posited by menace narratives, which suppose monkeys as invaders or victims in a world set up by humans.

Fuentes, Richard, Eudey, and Wheatley suggest that natural selection has operated upon rhesus and other weed macaques, favoring adaptive capacities that not only suited them for life among humans, but also drew them into more and more intense associations with their primate fellows even as they opened new opportunities for rhesus flourishing. Through their cumulative material-semiotic effects in their environment, monkeys' activities, intentional and unintentional, have shaped the world that shapes them. The co-construction of niches in this way bears a resemblance to the circuitous nature of labor and the subject as imagined by Karl Marx when he wrote that labor is a process in which a human "opposes himself to nature as one of her own forces.... By thus acting on the external world and changing it, he at the same time changes his own nature ("Capital I" 344).

Marx situated humans as embodied organisms among other forces of nature, but he still policed the line between human and animal agency by way of a cursory human exceptionalism. He noted, for instance, that the difference between the best of bees and the most talentless architect was the human's ability to imagine or plan ahead of time what he might be building ("Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844"). Despite this, and despite the defenses of human exceptionalism countenanced by many later Marxists,<sup>10</sup> a notion of non-intentional (and thus potentially nonhuman) world-building labor was latent in Marx's work.

The material relevance of nonhumans' labor-input into an unimagined and not strictly intentional common environment — and the ramifications of this input for the shape of arriving worlds — has been demonstrated in the work of post-Marxist scholars like Timothy Mitchell. Mitchell has discussed how mosquitoes conspired with colonial mismanagement and warfare to co-construct a malaria epidemic in WWII-era Egypt. While the mosquitoes did not plot beforehand to rain disease upon a vulnerable Egyptian populace, their contribution to the conditions of both their own future and the future world of their human prey and exterminators were considerable. The partial synergy of a war-weakened economy, a nutritionally deprived and immunologically weakened human population, and the particular blindnesses of colonial forms of knowledge production made mosquitoes effective in human worlds and humans ineffective in mosquito worlds. Like the mosquitoes of Egypt, the monkeys have no state apparatus of their own, but they contribute materially to the conditions of existence which they and their commensal allies the humans share. While monkeys are calculative, recognizably political beings to the standard of any political scientist, it is the more diffuse and unintentional, mosquito-like effects of the monkeys' social activity

that has the world-building consequence of continuing positive interrelations into the future.

**Interpellation and Affect.** To describe the kind of labor through which monkeys recruit humans into the adaptive complex that constitutes their niche in human-monkey shared worlds, I deploy a notion of “interpellation.” I take the concept from the Marxist philosophy of Louis Althusser, who used the phrase to indicate how institutions of the state “hail” subjects: how they interpose official semiotics (ideology) into a subject’s rubric for self-understanding and action in the world (1971). Althusser’s notion of interpellation, however, was expressly linguistic and expressly ideological, which are two venues of social life to which monkeys do not have access.

Althusser’s famous example of a police officer calling to a citizen, “Hey you there!” illustrates the difficulty in applying an interpellative model to nonhuman animals. For Althusser, the hailed subject has been successfully produced as a subject of state power if he recognizes that the police officer’s hail was meant for him; at that point, the subject has no choice but to consider himself in relation to a social apparatus with the capacity to overpower him. Articulation of the police officer (in his capacity as a police officer) to a subject renders that person a subject to state power. But how would this work in a mixed species polity, where not all of the participants have the same capacities for linguistic and symbolic behavior?

One way in which monkeys may extend their forms of power to other primates is through the mutualities of evolutionarily related bodies. In his lecture “From Versailles to Cybernetics,” the anthropologist Gregory Bateson offered an example of hailing across species lines within the class Mammalia: “When you open the refrigerator door and the cat comes up and makes certain sounds, she is not talking about liver or milk ... What she actually says is something about the relationship between herself and you. If you translated her message into words, it would be something like, ‘dependency, dependency, dependency’” (478; cf. “Problems in Cetacean and Other Mammalian Communication” 367). Bateson remarked that the difference between the cat’s communicative technique and the human’s is that the human receives the cat’s message — a “ $\mu$ -function” expression that comments upon a relationship rather than directly indicating a specific object in the world — and then deduces from that message what specific need the cat has. But the  $\mu$ -expression also has the capacity to inflect upon future and past relationships, to set the stage for future encounters and future

commentary. Challenged by a young zoologist to answer the question, “Do Dogs Laugh?” Mary Douglas worked from a similar concept of laughter as a socially potent form of non-linguistic communication, which was an expression of “the social situation at a given moment, and also a particular contribution to that situation” (168). For Douglas a guffaw was an expression of boldness as well as a motion that has the potential to embolden the listener; a snicker is both stifled and potentially stifling of further humor. In the same way, Bateson’s cat’s meows extend and modulate the relationship of dependency into the future.

Though the theft, begging, and extortion of temple monkeys are rightly understood to be foraging techniques, they are also bodily expressions that simultaneously transmit and modulate significance. These  $\mu$ -expressions are discussions (in Bateson’s words) “of the pattern of relationships” (“From Versailles to Cybernetics” 372) and they are made possible by a “diffractive” kind of expression that is not limited by the logic of signs. That is, they are made possible by essentially political movements that “[do] not map where differences appear, but rather ... where the effects of differences appear” (Haraway 1992, 300; cf. Barad; cf. Weaver 2013). The weight of a monkey on my back was an expression of power that was made possible by the coincidence of two primates who were accustomed to relating to their conspecifics in hierarchical ways, but also by our mutual situation in a socially constructed landscape that was enacted as a relatively safe zone for interaction by the movements of the bodies who inhabit it.

Inter-species interpellation at Jakhoo, like the modulating action of laughter, is a process of *affective labor*. A relevant and widely cited notion of affective labor comes from the work of Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, particularly from their books *Empire* and *Multitude*. There, Hardt and Negri posit affect as an external or social manifestation of inner states, which may be “produced or manipulated” by “affective labor.” Locating affective labor in the emotional expressions deployed by “legal assistants, flight attendants, and fast food workers (service with a smile)” (*Multitude* 108), they cast this kind of activity as “immaterial labor” that adds value to consumer experience. This formulation of affect is useful for how it recognizes the nonlinguistic, epi-rational phenomena that inflect upon value and meaning. Such value-adding labor is characteristic of disembodied monkey discourse in the media, and of politicians’ political promises to deal with the monkey menace, but it is insufficient to describe the lasting material effects that transcend the moment of exchange. Hardt and Negri’s version of affect does not allow for it to be a constitutive part of social relations, as Douglas’s model of dog laughter might. Instead their affect continues to subordinate

nonlinguistic phenomena in the form of emotional or “immaterial labor” to the rational, calculative values of capitalism (cf. Parreñas’s 2012 critique).

Affect in the sense that I am pursuing does not just register differences, and does not simply add something extra to use value. It is capable of transforming disparate kinds of bodies and entering them into political relationships. Harlan Weaver’s 2013 analysis of Susan Stryker’s trans-critical monologue, “My Words to Victor Frankenstein Above the Village of Chamounix” (2011) elucidates how political agency is activated through affective work. In Weaver’s reading of Stryker’s performance essay, affect is not just the means by which Stryker signifies to her audience and readers her own rage at being pathologized, at being rendered monstrous as a trans person; her articulative motion goes beyond effective techniques for communication. Stryker’s diffractive movements articulate her with other agencies. They transform her subjectivity from one that is characterized by an experience of alienation from its body, to a renewed intimacy with a transfigured and embodied political subjectivity “that aligns with the power of my Being” (Stryker 91; cf. Weaver 2013, 298).

In his recent auto-ethnographic piece, “The Tracks of My Tears,” Weaver describes a similar diffractive transition in his own life, but here the transition and its attendant political resonances are effected not by the articulation of fiction and material-semiotic abjection, but by the coincidence of Weaver’s emotional transformation with the situated emotional impact of a television show, *Pit Bulls and Parolees*. When one of the show’s human protagonists got off parole and received a token of inclusion in the multispecies family fostered by a pit bull rescue center, Weaver rediscovered — or, better, remade — his capacity to cry, which had been diminished since starting testosterone treatments. The “paired salvation narrative” of the show’s human and canine protagonists resonated with-and-against Weaver’s specific experience of gender transformation, which was itself enabled by a companion pit bull-type dog: “as I edged into increasingly liminal embodiment, I realized that people did not mess with me when she was there, that my gender in many ways was facilitated by the space between us” (349). The resonance between the lives of the show’s protagonists and Weaver’s own human-animal expression allowed him to “embrace and be moved by” a politically potent kinship that could be articulated to his embodied subjectivity in such a way as to produce the material effect of tears. Weaver is enacted as, and exists as, a dogged subject.

Taken not as simply non-linguistic communication, but as a means of enacting a material, embodied politics with the potential to produce articulations across disparate bodies and political prerogatives, affect has subject-producing effects that mirror those of Althusser's linguistic model of interpellation, but evade the anthropocentric limitations of language and ideology. Monkeys are rendered capable of interpellative movements by virtue of natural selection's effects on their behaviors and bodies, yes, but they also cultivate agency over the course of practice in real-time encounters between fleshy primates.<sup>11</sup> This is the manner of the constructive powers of monkeys suggested by Fuentes in the phrase "coconstructed niche." And it is also in this respect that we may talk about affect as a kind of labor, specifically as the labor that modulates future social and ecological relation — that is, labor that literally and materially builds a world.

Another Instance of My Interpellation into Monkey Power. One of the Step Sisters demonstrated to me the difficulty of trying to play dumb to monkey power. She had accosted a group of tourists from Delhi, including men, women, and a girl. When I caught sight of them, the two parties were facing each other down on opposite sides of the stairwell. The Step Sister was on the slope side and the visiting group had drawn ranks behind one man who was holding his rented rod at the ready. The hair on the monkey's back bristled and she made open-mouth threats. Meanwhile, her child played a little higher on the steps, unconcerned. I went over to the human group to ask them where they were from. Maybe I was being too blithe. I may have moved too suddenly or scared the Step Sister's kid, who was some distance away from me; I remember the monkey child let out a squeak and, immediately, his mother jumped around and turned her threats towards me.

By the time the Step Sister had turned her attention to me, Teresa had joined me; as we had done before, we turned our backs on the distressed monkey and tried to opt out of the confrontation. By avoiding eye contact and social engagement, by presenting no challenge at all, we were attempting to make a statement of our non-involvement.<sup>12</sup> It didn't work this time. The monkey ran upon me from behind. She mouthed me on the ankle, through my jeans. I got the message and scooted up the trail, pushing Teresa along in front of me with one hand and waving my stick behind me with the other — and so much for keeping monkeys at stick-length. She didn't pursue us, but only after she had gone over the edge and down the slope some distance did Teresa and I come back down the stairs to where the tourists from Delhi were still waiting. The man who had been holding the Sister at bay asked me if I wouldn't mind escorting him and his family up the steps. I declined and they went up anyway. When I later told one of the

pandits about my run-in with the monkey, he reminded me that she could have done much worse, and suggested that she had restrained herself.

What happened to Teresa and me might have been similar to an encounter Bruce Wheatley described in *The Sacred Macaques of Bali*. While studying the monkeys of Padangtegal, he came upon a high-ranking male who had recently been injured by a farmer. Three females, who had been grooming their injured friend, started to threaten Wheatley. Wheatley was cornered by one of them in a gorge and so he “simply let her bite” him through his pants. Like the Step Sister, Wheatley’s assailant only bit him once and not hard enough to draw blood. Wheatley considered the episode a case of “redirected aggression from a farmer . . . in a symbolic sense” (Wheatley 55). Blowing off aggressive energies that cannot be otherwise released – for instance, against an armed farmer or a family of tourists – by picking on a lower ranking out-caste party is a well-known tactic among macaques and other species of cercopithecines, not to mention their more distant relatives, apes and humans. It can serve to divert intensifying violence onto a third party or to punish the relatives of aggressors (if the aggressors themselves are too powerful to be punished), and it might help to reinforce social bonds between those individuals who join the “scapegoating” (re: rhesus, cf. especially Maestriperi). It also serves to affirm the status quo by introducing or reintroducing individuals into their place in the relevant political hierarchy. By accepting his fate, Wheatley enabled the execution of a macaque political process.

By this time in the fall of 2009, some of the Jakhoo monkeys were getting to know me in a social sense. I was a human who spent a lot of time hanging out on the stairs. The young monkey who cried had already tested my tolerance by playfully and repeatedly bounding against my back on an earlier occasion, and his mother had been on hand for that. (In fact, her proximity had been the only reason I put up with the child’s behavior.) Additionally, the mother would have known me as someone who sometimes waved his stick at monkeys trying to make a living. I suspect that in being party to the social relations opened to me by my interactions with her in the past — thanks to our previous affective work — I had put myself into a position where, even if I did turn my back on her as one might “play dumb” with a police officer calling to them, I could not resist interpellation into her world of power and meaning. I, like Wheatley, became a facilitator of macaque political expression. Not only this, but for the tourists from Delhi, the incident also produced me as a plausible guardian against monkeys — in spite of having been soundly routed.

Monkeys' particular modes of integration into Jakhoo society have some attendant risks. Monkeys living on Jakhoo Hill commit the same trespasses that Delhi monkeys do, stealing food and laundry from residents and tourists residing on the lower portions of Jakhoo Hill, occasionally biting people, and even once reputedly killing a man;<sup>13</sup> and likewise, they are harassed by dogs and stone-throwing, rod-wielding humans, and they can suffer from obesity or malnutrition as they feed themselves on the inadequate staples most easily available to urban humans. Also, while their economic and religious ties means that the monkeys of Jakhoo have some effective claim to life on the hill, many of Shimla's other macaques (and a few of Jakhoo's residents) have been rendered docile state subjects through the process of sterilization. While sterilization and re-release preserves much of what works at Jakhoo, and promotes a foundation for the re-establishment of amicable multispecies worlds in the future, it also demonstrates that the vulnerability that comes along with such openings is not evenly dispersed (cf. Parreñas). Yet, uneven distributions of vulnerability are what makes possible the articulation of monkey desires – that is, the monkeys' connection with humans who are desirous of working within a space of differential vulnerability to monkeys is what allows them to enunciate efficacious political expressions.

**An Available Alternative to a Stark Political Separation between Primates.** The specialized society I have described at Jakhoo is a social zone in which the monkey and human participants are oriented toward one another in such a way as to make it possible for the monkeys to exert a measure of power over humans. This power does not rely upon language games nor upon the possession of an imagination that can be infected by ideology (not that this is absolutely outside the capacities of macaques), but upon the constructive sediment of affective relationships. For this reason, it would be incorrect to assert that that the monkeys have been trained intentionally or unintentionally by the humans of Jakhoo; nor would it be accurate to portray monkey temples as instances in a process of domestication or domination. At Jakhoo, the interpellative movements go both ways — monkeys are afforded social and material space in human worlds and humans are afforded roles in monkey worlds. The particular forms of power that monkeys ply are products of the affective labor of monkeys and humans who are predisposed for their own reasons to be amenable to one another's presences in the particular landscape of Jakhoo.

Jakhoo Mandir demonstrates the paucity of political propositions that posit monkeys as necessary outsiders to urban environments — i.e., journalistic narratives of menace, and attempts to install an absolute separation between monkeys and the city. In the

evolutionary *durée*, monkeys have been living alongside humans and encountering all the joys and terrors associated with humans for thousands of years. They may have adapted to life alongside humans through the material mechanisms of natural selection, but over historical scales, monkeys have shaped shared worlds through niche co-construction, an ongoing cultural process which can be understood as the partial materialization of human and nonhuman political-ecological agencies enacted through social and technological action as well as by means of affective labor. This means that the absolute transitivity of human power over nonhumans like monkeys is not an ontological given. It is contingent and historical, not a metaphysical fact. Finally, just as human domination is not inevitable, the assumption of a purified, transitive human power over nonhumans is also not necessary for the production of mutually liveable conditions for monkeys and humans.

Acknowledgments. Some parts of this text have been adapted from my PhD dissertation, “Menace and Management: Power in the Human-Monkey Social Worlds of Delhi and Shimla” (2013). The ethnographic elements of the narrative presented here are derived from interviews and participant observation with wildlife officials, animal welfare advocates, political activists, scientists, and temple personnel in Shimla, Aligarh, and Delhi, and especially at Jakhoo Mandir, Shimla’s famous “monkey temple” for the god Hanuman. During my three trips between 2006 and 2010, I also learned from persons who lived alongside monkeys in more informal contexts, including merchants and vendors at Jakhoo Hill and other monkey temple sites in India. Finally, I spent a lot of time with monkeys at Jakhoo and everywhere I went — mostly as an observer, but sometimes as their victim, opponent, or accomplice. The large portion of this ethnographic research was funded by a dissertation research grant from Wenner-Gren. Thanks especially to everyone who fed me, and to my readers for their insightful comments on drafts of this article: Juno Parreñas, Aja Smith, Marissa Smith, and Harlan Weaver.

#### Notes

1. Most people do not mark a distinction between monkeys and vanar, the class of supernatural beings into which Hanuman was born. While Hanuman is customarily described as “the Hindu monkey god,” there is a sentiment among some that it is insulting to refer to Hanuman as a monkey.

2. Such “regressive” beliefs need not be religious, however. Bedi’s story about “The Monkey on a Nation’s Back” described the helplessness of security at the Delhi Excise Department to keep a gang of seven monkeys from invading their offices and stealing booze. “Each monkey must have drunk hundreds of bottles by now,” Bedi quoted one official from the department’s laboratory. The dysfunction, “the monkey on a nation’s back in this tale could be government incompetence, the sort of everyday opportunism where a few bottles of booze might accidentally get stolen by — nudge, wink — “monkeys,” or actual monkeys.

3. RWAs, resident’s welfare associations; what in the United States are called HOAs, home-owners’ associations.

4. Cf. the dual world-building movements of moderns, “purification” and “translation,” as described by Bruno Latour.

5. Shimla’s tourists are mainly domestic in origin. According to the City Development Plan published by the municipal corporation in 2006, about 1.8 million tourists had visited Shimla in the previous year. 96.6% of them were Indians, and 36% came from Punjab, Haryana, and Delhi. The authors of the CDP, Infrastructure Development Limited, identified the small percentage of foreign tourists — about 3.4% — as an unexploited resource for the local tourist industry. They noted that the city had become a “bag-packing” destination with tourists of all types remaining in town, on average, for a mere one and one-third days.

6. This is something that humans and rhesus macaques have in common. The evolution of bipedality in human ancestors since the human-chimp common ancestor lived around five million or so years ago occurred in the context of the savannah mosaic environment of the Great Rift Valley in eastern Africa. The shift from a forested African landscape (populated by knuckle-walking arboreal apes) to a broken landscape of grasslands, woodlands, and wetlands (populated by bipedal hominin apes and others) was also brought about by climatic and geographic shifts comparable in scale to the recession of the glaciers from South Asia (cf. Laporte and Zihlman).

7. Southwick and Siddiqi’s estimates of the percentage of rhesus living close to human settlements was calculated through a roadside survey method. Being that roads themselves are human constructions, this method could conceivably skew the sample in favor of anthropophilic monkey populations.

8. It is possible that the drastic depopulation of Indian rhesus and the instability in their kin groups that resulted may have actually promoted an increase of monkeys in urban environments (Malik and Johnson).

9. Long-tailed or crab-eating macaques (*Macaca fascicularis*) are closely related to rhesus.

10. For instance, the Marxist humanism espoused by Erich Fromm, but also recent reactions to the affective turn in critical theory, e.g., the stance taken by Ruth Leys in her work on neuroscience and emotion.

11. Cf. the notion of “rendering capable” described by Vinciane Despret. Despret describes a form of multispecies agency where actors of different types do not begin with certain a priori capacities, but instead become capable of action in situated networks of agents and technologies. Her example is Alex the African gray parrot’s celebrated talent for speech, which was a capability that he came by only in the context of his relationship with his teacher, Irene Pepperberg. Despret emphasizes the differences between situations in which animals’ agencies are made possible, not the differences between species.

12. The specific technique of ignoring an aggressive cercopithecine monkey comes recommended by a female baboon described by Dorothy Cheney and Robert Seyfarth in *Baboon Metaphysics*, who was able to avoid a violent escalation and a test of her status in the baboon hierarchy by resolutely refusing to pay attention to the hysterical threats of an immigrant male.

13. In 2009, the story of a man who was killed by macaques on the Ridge Road in Shimla was still in circulation years after it happened. The victim was driving his scooter around the lower elevations of Jakhoo Hill when he saw an injured monkey on the roadside. He stopped his vehicle and went to help. He might have been particularly pious or courageously kind, or he may have been simply ignorant of the danger. The injured monkey’s troop-mates were near the road, possibly high on an adjacent slope or just over the edge of the inevitable cliff on the opposite side, and when they saw the good Shimlan lifting their mate, they failed to understand his purpose and attacked him. I get this story from Ajay at the Fair Deal shop, from the owners and managers of Doegar Hotel, and from the local editor of Punjab Kesari newspaper. Ajay and the

editor recall that it was covered in local newspapers, but I never managed to locate a copy.

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