

Introduction

Cosmopolitan Elegies

Naming assures a kind of longevity and survival, writes Jacques Derrida.¹ After war, the names of the lost might persist in documents, on monuments, and in memories.² The Iraq War, like every war, has resulted in the loss of so many soldiers, civilians, and (often nameless) animals.³ The nameless lost animals are often neglected or maintained in abstractions, disciplined and distant. The losses, tallied or unrecorded, are untethered from the lived moments of life and death. Who are these animal others? Who are we when we imagine their voices?

Derrida claims that “we owe ourselves to death” (*nous nous devons à la mort*).⁴ These losses in Iraq move toward us, withdrawing and escaping, appearing within the nowhere space of the poem—an elegiac space for the animal other. Perhaps we owe ourselves to these losses, to the memory of the lost, to the poetic voice of a specter. Cosmopolitans would do well to consider this voice. This voice—finding “us” within a spectral-poetic moment. Engaging this voice will likely bear little resemblance to most accounts of war. But this engagement opens us to thinking about how to live differently in and with the world. This endeavor also raises critical questions about how to write about, with, and for a multispecies world. Perhaps elegies can generate meaningful reflection on nonhuman moments of loss and our posthumanist responsibilities. In cosmopolitan elegies, we might recall the ends of worlds, our debt to the distant heart of the other, traces of unknown interiorities.

Across borders—a debt, a voice. For traditional cosmopolitans, borders and “other boundaries considered to restrict the scope of justice are irrelevant roadblocks in appreciating our responsibilities to all in the global

community.”⁵ Cosmopolitanism is about connections with and support for distant others; it is about “the interconnectivity of the world.”⁶ From this traditional perspective, justice is about the living and its scope is global and temporally oriented toward the present and future. Cosmopolitan justice attends to the limited horizons of the human. But what of justice for the mostly unknown and nameless animal dead? As Derrida reminds us, “just because the dead no longer exist does not mean that we are done with specters.”⁷ No, the specter “asks [us] to respond or to be responsible,” and there is no “demand for justice” without this responsibility to the spectral other.⁸ Yet possibilities of memories from and connection to the lost are typically not central to the intellectual project of cosmopolitanism. Moreover, there is little attention to the interiority of life becoming lost to war, and only faint concern for how the lost still might move toward us, within the elegiac space of a poem. What if we subject cosmopolitanism to these spectral-poetic demands of justice?

This book aims to generate shifts in cosmopolitan thought toward an imaginative memory of the distant and often unknown animal others lost to war, toward a poetic memory of and from the other, toward the other’s experience and time of loss. Put another way, this book seeks to articulate a multispecies cosmopolitanism that addresses the following questions: How might we encounter and connect to the loss of distant, mostly unknown animal others of war? How can we approach the interior life of animals lost to war? These queries stimulate cosmopolitanism to become something else, something more “posthumanist” and poetic, something less interested in telling us about justice and belonging and more conversant with animal ghosts.⁹ It is a spectral-weaved cosmopolitanism embodying this impossible hope.

Cosmopolitanism—a rich philosophical tradition, a varied set of aspirations for global justice, a sense of debt to distant others across boundaries and borders—is always a kind of possibility. There is a vibrancy, fluidity, and dynamism to it. Cosmopolitanism always seems to resist closure, seems to stretch alive with voices calling from pasts and futures, pressing us about the meaning(s) of distance, connection, loss. This book anchors itself to these poetic voices, the incantational voices of animals from the Iraq War—unveiled, pursuing and interrupting us—from the past and from within ourselves. “The interactions of the living must be interrupted, the veil must be torn toward the other, the other dead *in us* though other still,” writes Jacques Derrida.¹⁰ Holding on to these voices of the lost within us involves not only expanding the boundaries of thinking about war in its multispecies entanglements but also orienting our attention toward the experience of the

other, for the other (though always irreducibly other). The unknowable voice, their impossible presence, lost—*here* is a space for arrival, for interruption, for belongingness. Belongingness—a pursuit to be-with, a being-followed by and following of the poetic voice of the other. A spectral-poetic chasing of the lost, an attempt to keep company with animal ghosts.

These cosmopolitan pursuits of and by the other resonate with (and intervene in) two larger aspirations in International Relations (IR): (1) aims toward the aesthetic and sensory life of global politics, and (2) efforts toward understanding global politics as always a kind of interspecies politics.¹¹ This book is a cosmopolitan convergence of these aims, an elegiac turn within what we might call an interspecies-sensory focus on global politics. In summoning this sensory approach, Christine Sylvester suggests that “not everyone touches war in the same way but everyone can be touched by it,” and that we need to look at war in terms of what it “feels like” to those within the space of war but also to “us as individuals.”¹² As a broad conceptual starting place, I believe cosmopolitanism is suited to this reflexive and sensory task of the touch, the melancholic work of tracing the spectral other being touched by war. The task is one of self-relation and other-relation. It is an intermingled *relationing* toward the depth of distance within and between us. Within this distance is an empty space, an elegiac space for the poetic voice of the animal other. This book sets out to explore forms of connection within this space. It attempts to think of the cosmopolitan text as an elegiac space for the other, a space for listening for the poetic timbre of lost voices. This book asks how we might describe and make connection with the life and death of war rather than merely theorizing it, pre-supposing it, measuring it, or otherwise making arguments about it. It asks how to cross borders and boundaries in our own thinking, writing, feeling, and listening. In other words, it seeks to imagine a cosmopolitanism of self-reflexivity and connection to the unknown loss of life across borders, to the unknown (and always interspecies) past.¹³ While there has been separate work on interspecies politics and sensory politics, this book opens them up and into each other, seeking to grasp at the distance, hoping to sense the space and time of the animal other, lost in war, finding us in poetry.¹⁴ With this in mind, the book works to pull apart the event of war (specifically the Iraq War) in order to see and sense its interspecies moments of life and death, to connect to the loss of others, and to poetically dwell in these moments. Put somewhat differently, it sees cosmopolitanism as a kind of elegiac endeavor, as an approach to war that is attuned to the interspecies entanglements of loss, distance, and violence.¹⁵

A war is not only a singular event in the past but is also its mostly unknown experiential moments, which might be encountered in poetic terms, in poetic space. There is an ongoingness to the event of war; war is comprised of moments of living and dying, the often invisible and unmarked sensory details of experiences that can be sensed by us still in the textual space of a poem. We might therefore sense these small fragments of evidence without names. These moments are still there—audible traces in an imagined frequency, crackling underneath the buzz of the facts of war. How do animals, these singular lives often without names, experience becoming lost to war? And how do we come to know them or encounter them? While we might know the conditions of death, the experience of it is often impenetrable. Most experiences of war are unknown. Human survivors might tell stories of the lost, but animals cannot speak to us with these same kind of stories. They are mostly without names, without a voice, or without a language that we are used to engaging. The facts of these nonhuman losses are therefore often unknown and outside the gates of the human vocabulary of war. As I think of paths forward, I am reminded of Robert Lowell's musing about being "paralyzed by fact" and writing "something imagined, not recalled."¹⁶ But what if there is no recording to recall, or what if there are only pieces of facts to remember? Perhaps we must imagine. The facts of loss, the memory of it, call out to our imagination, call in for connection, call for imaginative dirge-thinking. The facts, touched, become an address to and from the animal other, a sensory account of the other's address, a relational, ghostly addressing. Poetically encountering these moments of war, the ongoingness of experiencing, is one path toward a space of and for connection with the lost animal other, a movement toward their poetic voice—the other, always other—within us.¹⁷

This Strange Time

This book explores war in terms of spectral-poetic moments. This exploration involves an animal-centric (and poetic) approach to the experience of becoming lost (becoming so-called collateral damage). By this I mean that wartime decisions and "events" are approached and assessed in terms of how they created moments of animal injury and death. It also means that I zoom in to explore the mostly unknown experience of these moments, and also the ways in which we can "be-with" these moments. For example, I examine how U.S. decisions about the occupation of Iraq resulted in a trash collection problem in Baghdad, a seemingly trivial concern on the

surface but one that created conditions for the mass killing of stray dogs. How did these street dogs experience the uncertainty of life in Baghdad? How did they experience moments of becoming lost to the violence of post-invasion life in the capital city? And how are we touched, in a ghostly way, by these experiences? *What is my responsibility to you, dog, as I write to and about you, about a war that broke you? Who was your pack? What does a coarse remembrance of your eyes, the texture of your fur, the misremembrance or nonremembrance of your experiences, your becoming “collateral damage” matter? Who am “I” with “you,” your winged bark, your quelled name?* In a poem I return to you. The time of you, then, you in me, now—spectral-poetic time. “This strange time of the dead courier.”¹⁸

Susan Howe tells us that “a poet is like an ethnographer. You open your mind and textual space to many voices, to an interplay and contradiction and complexity of voices.”¹⁹ Cosmopolitans do not all need to be poets, but poetry can open up a space to the life, loss, and voice of the other, including the animal-ghost other. The cosmopolitan text can become an offering of space for the time of the other; it can be space for the other’s time folding into us within a textual dwelling. While assessing, describing, and theorizing the conditions of wartime loss are important, so too is encountering animals’ experiences with war, their becoming lost to it. For this I take a poetic path, interrupting the description and assessment of violence with elegiac fragments of imagined animal experiences of becoming lost, digressions of “being-with” loss, fragments of voices merging. This poetic path toward the time of the other is what I call “spectral cosmopolitanism.”²⁰

Susan Howe also reminds us that poetry has “something to do with abstracting and recuperating the measure of time and memory. It’s a balance of openness and closure, momentary epiphanies, human voices—unanswered questions.”²¹ Howe’s insight here helps inform the approach I take toward the time of the other. The cosmopolitanism sketched out here is an open and ghostly invitation to be-with the unknown animal other, an invitation to the self, to you, to the others (if an invitation is possible, as Derrida might say); it is an offer to open the self to the plurality of others, always other.²² It is about being open to the memory of human *and* animal ghost voices. It is about the time of the other, an openness to absence, a searching for the fading whispers of the silenced. These nonhuman voices remind us of the multispecies experiences of war, returning to us in the poem and urging us to remember.

To search for the other within the poem is to also excavate the other (and otherness) within the self—an excavation of fragments of the other

within the spectral strata of belonging. As Derrida puts it, the memory of the spectral other, their voice and look, “are only lacunary fragments” that become “parts of us, included ‘in us’ in a memory which suddenly seems greater and older than us.”²³ This move toward the memory of the other is a responsibility marking us as “present,” as entangled, as connected reference points in space-time, continually searching. This poetic search for an unknown voice is also a moment in which a voice finds us, a finding/being found within an elegiac accounting of the moments of war. In this way we become opened to the name of the nameless other and into a sense of belongingness. Mapped by a ghost—a touch, impossible, a fragment of belongingness. Sensing the other within this opening, within this breaking of the self toward the other, we might be prompted to think war otherwise, urged to clarify the conditions of loss, and pressed to sketch out schemes of interspecies connection and protection.

Throughout this book, poetry becomes an inquiry into connections to the voice of the mostly undocumented experience of becoming lost, unspooling the event of war into its moments of animal loss. Put another way, poetic inquiry is listening to the voices of lost animals, bringing them to bear on our thinking of wartime decisions and what war “is.” Poetry releases often detached notions of *connection* and *war*, a release that wounds us with a glimpse of an animal’s experience of loss. In this sense, a poetic approach is a cautionary bulwark against an anthropocentric ontology of war. It is a mode of inquiry that complements and conditions the social scientific, a disruption of descriptive and explanatory strategies that softens the boundaries of what inquiry looks and feels like. Poetic attention to war *is* a kind of inquiry; it is a vulnerable means of wounding our way through inquiry, a look within and beyond social scientific questioning, solving, and resolving. It is a move toward belongingness, a belongingness that involves a recognition that we are in this (these) world(s) together, human and animal, living and lost. We belong to and with each other, wounded; we are always and already together, even at a distance. Poetic inquiry is a coming to terms with a debt of belonging. We owe ourselves to the other, to the other’s death. *Nous nous devons à la mort.*

There are certain ontological concerns within this multispecies and ghostly inquiry into war. Certainly, animals “exist” within the vulturine spaces of militaries using force. As Anthony Burke observes, war (as well as other global processes) reveals how humans have “unified their life and death process on a planetary scale and extended it to other species and life forms.”²⁴ War is undoubtedly inclusive of animals and their experiences—their thoughts, feelings, drives, hopes, and perspectives. And

certainly these animals and their experiences are always irreducibly other in terms of being irreducible to the self. These animals inhere alterities and multidimensionalities; they exist in multiple kinds of separations and escapes from the human grasp. Each animal also exists in terms of a plural self-thickness as well as within an interconnected web of relations to other beings and things—humans, other animals, streets, tanks, trash, and more. A single street dog lost to the violence of the Iraq War, for instance, had multiple “layers” to their sense of being, an untranslatable existence of living and dying within dense experiential moments—an ache in a paw, the heart-sinking fright in response to gunshots, the scent of a friend’s fur, the excitement of finding food scraps, the feelings of becoming lost to war. This single, singular street dog’s lived realities and sense of being were also organized within and by layers of relations (and reassembled in “our” discourse about these relations)—for instance, relations to a table providing shade for a nap, to another dog, to soldiers and battles, to the bustle of a market, to pieces of trash, to the hope of finding food.

This lost street dog also “exists” and “becomes” in a spectral-poetic way; the dog can “occupy” us through a conjuration, a haunting kind of participation in our thinking of what war “is.”

“Alone Ghosts”

Street-morgued
bark whispers
from dogmensch dreams
direct me to you

some version(s) of us

Street shepherds
together-grasped
departed-touched

Alone-ghosts
borrowing your language
this distant dog knowledge

to find you
(seeing me)
then

Then is now, there is here. Elegiac space for you, us—you in us. Traversing between ontological and epistemological concerns, the questions of how we might possibility “know” and “understand” what the lost animal experiences of war “are,” and what the status of a lost animal “is” and how we come to “be-with” the lost, become questions of poetic imagination, spectral preoccupation, and elegiac-textual space. From this perspective, the question of what war *was* is a question of what war *is* (and still is). This question is not a matter of making animals from the past more prominent; rather, it is an inquiry that aims to unstitch any clear response to this question. A fugitive inquiry—(never quite) escaping questions of privileging and deprivileging relations of “what is” and “knowing,” moving to an experience of an impossible “being-with.” Such inquiry is an opening of ourselves into the world(s) and an opening of the world(s) into our hearts; it is an infinite, impossible opening, an attempt at such an opening, if one exists, in elegies. Spectral-poetic inquiry becomes a chance for connection, a ghostly offer to think war otherwise, a cosmopolitan anticipation of belongingness. Humans and animals from past, present, and future wars are each beings in the world, in us, spectrally interconnected; they are seized by us (and seize us) in the space of the poem. What the Iraq War was and still is, for example, involves the *hauntological* flow of lives and losses across time, the pluralized versions of these lives and losses, infinitely other—in the distance but “with” and “within” us. This multispecies inquiry into war is therefore plural, relational, poetic, spectral—spectral-poetic. “That is what we would be calling here a hauntology,” writes Derrida.²⁵ “Ontology opposes it only in a movement of exorcism. Ontology is a conjuration.”²⁶ Cosmopolitan belongingness is a spectral preoccupation.²⁷

Belongingness, Cosmopolitan Islands, Spectrality

Throughout history, cosmopolitans have been interested in the idea of belonging to a world beyond the local communities and borders that we find ourselves in. This interest is not specific to cosmopolitans, but it is particularly and deeply emphasized in cosmopolitan thought.²⁸ The term “cosmopolitanism” comes from *cosmos*, the Greek word for world or universe, and *polites*, which means citizen. Diogenes, one of the founders of Cynic philosophy in the fifth century BCE, was reportedly the first to claim that he was a cosmopolitan—a citizen of the world.²⁹ Connecting

himself to and with the world (cosmos), he suggested he did not belong just to a particular political community (polis); rather, he belonged to and with the *cosmopolis* (world community). Such belongingness is rooted in the idea that all of human life is somehow connected. That is, our shared humanity is an inherently binding condition. Something shared is something dreamed, something poetic, something lost. Dreams and death bind and unbind us.

Derrida notes that Diogenes's "concern was for the *human qua human*, the human before the individual, the human prior to all moral difference differentiating the human and the individual."³⁰ Shared humanity in some respect blurs our differences, perhaps even species differences. Diogenes and the Cynics were also said to "live like dogs" as they strove to live in accordance with nature, simply and on the streets.³¹ The term "cynic" comes from the Greek *kyon*, which means "dog." Diogenes—a cosmopolitan dog, a cosmopolitan cynic. Recent politicians have stated how their enemies "died like a dog."³² But perhaps we all live and die like dogs. We live and we *experience* death. We dream and become lost.

Derrida observes that there is "the finitude that we share with animals."³³ Suffering, death, and dreams connect us and disconnect us. Both "humans" and "animals" dream and die, but each of us differently, alone and together. Each of us, singular. As for "the animal," Derrida calls into question the use of the singular "animal" to note differences among animals in regard to experiences of dreaming, consciousness, subconsciousness, and desire. For Derrida, these experiences separate animals from each other and are also something that "brings together certain animals and what is called man."³⁴ Separation and connection, multiplicities of humanities and animalities. We are dreaming of a poetic belonging at the elision of cosmopolitan islands. Animals and humans, however radically different, experience dreaming, dying, and suffering. Both can experience the welcoming of each other, as irreducibly other. As Derrida tells us, hospitality, the welcoming of the other, only happens in the face of "radical alterity."³⁵ Togetherness is always a gamble, a risk of strange, unassimilable difference. Citizen dogs and humans of the world, the living and lost, united (impossibly) in infinite otherness, in poetic togetherness.

A spectral-poetic approach to cosmopolitanism intends to draw us into moments of violence and loss, sensitizing us to possibilities of interspecies/international interconnectedness—a binding of sorts, a being with the other, impossibly, (re)attached at a distance, listening, watching, tracing outlines of the other, blurred. Spectral cosmopolitanism is a path

toward mostly forgotten moments and imagined interior lives. It is a troubled migration from the real to imagined moments, to some possibility of belonging, a path that gives shape to theory and empirics but also reroutes us around them. This is a movement toward inaccessible others, lost to political violence; it is a move toward the “island” of the other. Poetic islands.

The distant other, their life and death, is an island. Cosmopolitan belongingness is a move toward a belongingness not of the world but of islands. While cosmopolitans have a vision of a shared world, Derrida claims that “there is no world, there are only islands.”³⁶ This remark calls out how ungraspable the other, the human or animal other, always is. In orienting ourselves toward the other, we are never positioning with precision; rather, we shift toward a belongingness of difference, toward experiences shadowed by unknowing. A poetic move toward the other brings to bear this darkness of interspecies unknowing on how we read war. We are unknowable together, at a distance but belonging with each other in the nowhere space of the poem. We belong to and with the other’s experiences, finding the other becoming lost to war—the end of the other’s world.

Poetry is a way to think with these shadowy island-worlds of the lost. It is a way to reflect-feel about how to be-with others in the lost moments of war, a “being-with specters” (*être-avec les spectres*) in the words of Derrida.³⁷ The unnoticed island-world of the other comes into view, however hazy and inexact, within this poetic space. The cosmopolitan text, then, becomes this spectral-poetic space of and for island translations of mostly unseen moments of war, moments of becoming lost. This space is a path toward the lost other, toward the self, toward this dark island vulnerability of togetherness.

Again, when Derrida calls attention to animals’ experiences of vulnerability and suffering, we might keep in mind his interest in islands as a way to acknowledge our inability to tap into their experiences, even though we share many traits. In considering Jeremy Bentham’s question about “whether animals can suffer,” Derrida refers to the ability of animals to suffer as a “nonpower” or “a possibility without power.”³⁸ This nonpower is a “means of thinking [about] the finitude that we share with animals . . . to the experience of compassion, to the possibility of sharing the possibility of this nonpower, the possibility of this impossibility, the anguish of this vulnerability.”³⁹ It is obvious that animals suffer, but it is an impossibility to fully grasp their experiences of vulnerability and suf-

fering, even though it is necessary to compassionately reflect on them and build toward a politics of interspecies responsibility.⁴⁰ It is this “vulnerable suffering,” this “compassion in impotence and not from power that we must start when we want to think the animal and its relation to man.”⁴¹ Ungraspable suffering, attempting to reach islands, poetically, is a means of receiving the lost other, a way to “commemorate amnesia” and be found, to know through unknowing, to be-with.⁴² Derrida’s remarks on vulnerability are important markers for thinking with an intensity of compassion and responsibility.⁴³ We might also think of a *poetic* intensity of compassion, of a poetic dreaming of closing distance and vulnerable togetherness, a poetic thinking “about what is meant by . . . being-with, being-before, being-behind, being-after, being and following, being followed or being following, there where *I am*, in one way or another, but unimpeachably, *near* what they call the animal.”⁴⁴ Cosmopolitanism involves imagining possibilities of being-with the lost animals in times of war, dreaming of following after their moments before us, being *near* and *with* their vulnerable experiences of becoming lost. These lost animals have “been there before me who is (following) after [them]. *After* and *near* . . . and *with*.”⁴⁵ In reading the mostly nonexistent records of their experiences, I sketch elegies for spectral animal others, looking toward them and their moments of living and dying, following, perhaps falling from their memories. *Toward your poetic voice, watching the ash fall. Moving toward you, learning how to be with you, impossibly.* We are always islands.

This imaginative recording of loss, this seeking to listen to ghosts, to belong to and with them, is the kind of cosmopolitanism that I propose in this book—a spectral cosmopolitanism. The literature on cosmopolitanism is far too expansive to posit any concise summary of its goals, arguments, and ambitions. But generally speaking, cosmopolitans often think about political life in terms of arguments for and against certain types of global responsibilities and courses of actions that are intended to support the “good life” (i.e., emotional and material security, the capability to flourish, etc.) for distant others.⁴⁶ There is neither a singular “responsibility” nor a monolithic “good life,” but there is some generalized commitment to be responsible to the distant other, to support a good life for them, across any and all borders. But we might also consider a responsibility to the lost, a kind of spectral responsibility. The margins of the living and possibilities of the good life are marked by loss, the moments of animal voices unheard. These voices, I argue, become audible in an imagined poetic accounting, prompting us to listen with intention, to consider loss as something with

us, perhaps part of us. These voices, in elegiac space, ask what we could have done, what we might still do. Pragmatics, imagination, poetry, and loss sink into each other; they become interweaving threads in a spectral move to give attention to and become closer to the lost. Cosmopolitan writing and thinking becomes reaching, becomes movement toward a space for speaking to and listening to distant and lost animal others, a space that is, as Derrida puts it, an “empty place, always, in memory of the hope” that “is the very place of spectrality.”⁴⁷

“Spectrality” of course takes on different meanings throughout Derrida’s texts; it certainly is not always or exclusively about the loss of others or about a kind of space for the lost. Derrida refers, for example, to “the chance of spectrality” as a risk that undergirds the hospitable encounter, the visit from and welcome to the other who cannot be reduced to “‘real’ qualities, attributes, or properties” of “a living person.”⁴⁸ But we can, I think, productively imagine spectrality in terms of the lost whom are with and within us, and in terms of elegiac space, a nowhere space. We might also think of spectrality in relation to responsibility, as an infinite demand from and for the lost that exceeds any possible response. This spectral responsibility is a kind of ghostly justice that circles in proximity to Derrida’s “situat[ing] justice, the justice which exceeds but also requires the law, in the direction of the act of memory, of resistance to forgetting.”⁴⁹ We might still listen to the lost and be haunted by them, productively, pragmatically, poetically.

Cosmopolitanism, War, and Loss

And we might listen to the lost voices and moments of wartime violence. Such listening is missing in the cosmopolitan literature about war. The IR and political theory literatures have certainly moved beyond the stale and outdated conflation of cosmopolitanism with cosmopolitan-like rhetoric used to justify wars based on ethnocentric universalism and global imperialism.⁵⁰ However, there is relatively little cosmopolitan attention to war—that is, attention to the moments of it, the particular experiences of it, and responsibilities in relation to these moments and experiences of loss. More broadly, there is a cosmopolitan reticence on the issue of wartime death and so-called collateral damage, and the ways in which imagining the life and death of war could inform how we think about war. The relatively little work on cosmopolitanism and war focuses primarily on “just

war” theory, some of which engages questions about the loss of innocent life (but not animal life). While cosmopolitan arguments about just war point toward the transformative potential of borderless responsibilities, this work is often stuck within a reductive framework in which life and death is mostly unknown, is abstracted to the point where there is no experience of war, only theoretical claims about its justness. For example, Cécile Fabre’s cosmopolitan just war approach includes an argument that claims civilians can justifiably be directly targeted and killed if doing so would stymie “evil.” In one instance she writes that it would have been permissible for German civilians to be targeted directly during World War II, not because they were German, but if “their being German would have made it contingently more likely that the Nazis would have given in.”⁵¹ In this account, targeting civilians is worth it if it reduces the odds of an evil force remaining in power. Of course these calculations of loss can never be precise, though Fabre seems to treat them as if they could be for the purpose of theory.⁵² That said, there is some value in Fabre’s thinking, as such perspectives within cosmopolitanism can be helpful in pushing our thinking about certain tensions in decision making in war.

Still, it is difficult to reconcile targeting civilians with cosmopolitanism. But Fabre argues that targeting civilians can be a cosmopolitan, justifiable practice because “what matters when deciding whether or not to target civilians is not the latter’s membership in our community, the enemy’s, or indeed a neutral third party’s; rather, it is the degree to which the attack will succeed in forestalling that evil.”⁵³ In other words, for Fabre, if targeting civilians is not about identity or group membership itself, and is done to stop evil, it is therefore a justifiably cosmopolitan practice. She also notes how “bombing densely populated areas” can be justified because communal membership itself is not a criterion for bombing; group membership “matters only to the extent that it maximizes or minimizes just combatants’ and belligerents’ chances of winning their just war justly.”⁵⁴

In many respects, Fabre’s argumentation, while novel in certain ways, is not unique in terms of its approach to thinking about killing. It aligns well with cosmopolitans within or related to the analytic philosophy tradition. Indeed, Fabre’s work is representative of how many just war theorists conceptualize and write about killing in war. There is a valuation, a “proportionality calculus,” as Fabre writes, where some lives count more than others (or particular lives are worth losing under certain conditions). But who are these lives? How do they become decoupled from, or masked within, our theorizing of them? Disciplinary norms, the

language of abstracting death, the seemingly icy discourse of just war—there is certainly some value in all of this. But it is still striking, especially for a cosmopolitan approach, to prize theoretical precision while papering over the painful and violent experience of war. There are no moments of war, just abstractions and arguments about it. Experience is stripped away, and what remains is a lifeless/deathless, albeit potentially clarified, moral-analytic calculus—a clean view of the conditions of permissible killing. Fabre’s arguments offer some insights into wartime decision making; however, this sort of theorizing renders experience almost entirely invisible, displacing it with the precision of abstraction. There are no warm or cold bodies—just body counts and the calculus of killing. In contrast, I think of Robin May Schott’s argument that approaches to war often need less abstraction and calculation and more attention to the experience of war; such approaches might produce new narratives and discourses that provide or make way for the moments of the other.⁵⁵

Part of the cosmopolitan task of this book is thinking toward possibilities of glimpsing the experience of the lost others, thinking and writing toward a “being-with” the lost. I think poetry is a way to adapt to this impossible enterprise. Distance and distancing are always at work in theory, in thinking, and in writing; war-writing inevitably involves spatial, temporal, and conceptual gaps between us. For many, war happens in a place faraway, years ago, and mostly to people and animals we never knew. For cosmopolitans and other IR scholars, war is something to be theorized and explained, at a distance. From and with distance, we (that is, scholars) write about war to advance knowledge and understanding. In this way, war and the experience of it are controlled—conceptualized in (and on the) terms of theory and empirics. But these terms often have a distancing effect, closing us off from the other, from the past, from connection—a kind of doubling of distance. But it seems distance is precisely what cosmopolitans should be poised to push against, seeking to at least somehow fill in the blankness, to hold it, or to see in distance an opening. Perhaps within this opening we can inscribe into distance something poetic for the other. Theories of justice and war occasionally feel like celebratory flags waived at or over the dead, from a distance. Perhaps the poem—a cosmopolitan elegy—can be something else, something for the lost, something with you, always distant.

Critics might see this kind of cosmopolitanism as overly sentimental. To think of the cosmopolitan text as an elegiac space for lost animal others, it might be argued, is to engage in mawkish behavior. It might be seen as

a departure from pressing human concerns. Tobias Menely suggests that such criticisms are a crude rejection of the important affective solidarities that sentimentality seeks to create. In devaluing sentimentality, he argues that the critic's notion of sentimentality seeks to define and police the boundaries of emotional and political attachments.⁵⁶ And this devaluation "has accomplished the crucial cultural work of guarding the border of human community, a border disrupted by the cross-species sympathies."⁵⁷ War always touches and destroys nonhuman life. With poetry, our relation to this touch and destruction troubles the cool distance we often seek to produce and maintain. Poetic sympathy is not an aesthetically hollow or decorative detour around pressing issues; rather, it is a disruption of the generalizable-theoretical impulse that too often papers over the blood of the past and the meaning of it as it seeps into the present. This blood says something to you, me, and us; it says something about a shared-but-disconnected history and histories to come. It colors our uncertain futures. And blood is all too real. It is a record of displacement and removal. It is a record of the lost. Poetry is a commitment to blood.

Susan Howe's commitment to poetry revolves around the notion that "if history is a record of survivors, poetry shelters other voices."⁵⁸ This book hopes to attend to these other voices, the poetic voice of lost animals. It hopes to reorient cosmopolitanism to the unknown spectral others. So much is never known, and there is a certain violence encoded within this never-known. The islands of animal others—always missed. The meaning of war for animals often seems extralinguistic and undecodable, residing problematically in our imagination, or, even more troublesome, outside of it. This is particularly the case for temporally and spatially distant animals. Animals certainly possess languages, though philosophical traditions have deprived animals of such languages—"or more precisely" they have been deprived of the ability to respond, as Derrida notes.⁵⁹ Poetically engaging with this response is one way to connect with and understand lost animals, a way to envision them as actively responding to the world around them and us. Poetry is a record of otherness. It is a record of poetic voices of animal others, merging and moving into us, confronting our separations.

Plan of the Book

Chapter 1, "Spectral Cosmopolitanism," details the book's core ideas about cosmopolitanism, war, animals, loss, poetry, and spectral-poetic moments.

In developing these ideas, I will turn to the work of Jacques Derrida, one of the most interesting philosophers of the twentieth century.⁶⁰ Derrida's sprawling insights on human–animal relations, ethology, loss, justice, and spectrality open up intriguing possibilities for thinking about war, particularly its animal experiences and our relation to the loss of animals. As I develop a spectral cosmopolitan account of war, I focus on a particular notion of “moments” of war and the relation of “spectral-poetic moments” to an elegiac space of belongingness. This focus on spectral-poetic moments is a summons to re-feel the ways in which war unsettles time. It is an invitation into an inheritance of loss that might unsettle our sense of the timelines between us, perhaps shift our thinking of the experience of loss as a weight, a spectral debt, flickering from the past into the impossible togetherness of the present(s) and future(s).⁶¹

Chapters 2 through 4 explore different aspects of animal life and death in the Iraq War, from stray dogs to zoo animals to animals affected by the rise of ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham). These chapters discuss the context for the loss of life in Iraq and serve as space to reflect on and connect with these losses. The Iraq War, one of the most devastating wars of this generation, is approached in terms of spectral-poetic moments, as something ongoing and shifting into different modes and effects, something still with us. Interspersed with poetry for and with the lost, each chapter is an elegiac space of conjuring, of being-with the lost, of movement toward the margins of war where we might see its moments and feel the gaze of the animal ghosts of Iraq. These chapters are not “cases” used primarily to illustrate theoretical ambitions; rather, they are assembled as remembrances of moments to preserve, however messy, the weight of devastation in Iraq. Each chapter is a kind of requiem, inevitably inadequate.

Chapter 2, “Stray Hearts, Vectors: The Wandering Dogs of Iraq,” seeks a spectral-poetic connection to the lost street dogs of Iraq. During the Iraq War, the U.S. military and the city government of Baghdad “eradicated” many strays. This chapter provides an overview of reasons and decisions that led to the elimination of street dogs. These dogs, I argue, prompt us to think about how war is experienced in other-than-human moments, moments becoming spectral. They demand that we seek to understand them, their experience of war, on *their* terms—terms that are impossible, terms that demand a poetic disordering of ourselves. This chapter is an elegiac movement toward these lost dogs, a hope to learn from them and with them. Of the many things these street dogs might

tell us is something about ontological inconsistencies and war. Discussion of dogs in war typically emphasize military dogs.⁶² Such accounts, while serving as a kind of reconciliation to a beyond-human conception of war, also keep in place boundaries of belongingness by implicitly drawing on a moral difference between the military and the stray dog.⁶³ Mine-sniffing dogs and other military dogs, central to humanitarian operations, combat missions, and soldier companionship, are considered to be proper subjects of our accounts of war. Notably absent from much of the existing work is attention to the misfit dogs that serve no military purpose, the often unknown street dogs that exist amidst the violence of war and on the edge of our thinking. These lost dogs are still here, with us. This chapter invites these lost dogs to weigh on our thinking about war, a thinking that bends and breaks through a poetic exploration of these distant dogs, with us, still.

Chapter 3, “Caged Cosmopolitanism: Menagerie Moments of War,” focuses on zoo animals in Iraq. These animals remind us of posthumanist responsibilities to caged lives, responsibilities often avoided. The individual zoo lives of lions, pigs, and others reach for a spectral-poetic connection, a memory, and imaginative witnessing. They each haunt our reflections on the Iraq War and our understanding of American culpability in Iraq. Throughout the chapter I enter into a ghostly-poetic dialogue with these spectral zoo lives. This dialogue also sits in relation to the research of Alison Howell and Andrew Neal, who show how zoo looters become rhetorical devices for constructing a lawless and irrational foreign citizenry.⁶⁴ In thinking about eventual U.S. assistance to Iraqi zoos, U.S. responses to looting were often cast as heroic within orientalist-redemptive narratives. In thinking with and toward zoo lives, this chapter calls attention to how U.S. decision makers were intimately bound up with both destroying and saving life. This attention is interwoven with nonhuman perspectives, filtered through elegiac attempts at connection—modalities of searching to find you, us, in the past and future.

While chapters 2 and 3 look at the intersection of government actions and animal experiences in war, the effects of war on animals are not entirely (or directly) effected by governmental actors. Chapter 4, “Black Sheep: ISIS and the Smoke of Qayyarah,” considers how animals and their environments were affected by the actions of ISIS in Iraq. While important attention has been paid to extensive human suffering under ISIS, this chapter attends to the multispecies experiences of burned forests, destroyed chemical plants, and oil fields on fire. This chapter is a

space for these lost lives, an elegiac canvas for communion with the lost, a space to yield to their voices.

The final chapter, “(In)Conclusion(s): Spectral-Poetic Proximities,” revisits the central themes of the book in the context of Jacques Derrida’s provocations about proximity, closeness, spectrality, and war. It offers some concluding thoughts about the ways in which spectral-poetic thinking and writing orients us toward disorienting loss, toward the hearts of lost others. It discusses this thinking and writing as a futural task, thinking as movement toward the heart of the other, writing as opening elegiac space for listening to distant heart beats, the poetic voice of the animal other—within us—gone and yet to arrive, for the past and future.