Turkish Studies MA student Silvia Ilonka Wolf has participated on an annual workshop organized by the Amsterdam School for Cultural Analysis (ASCA) at the University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands. On 27 March 2015 she presented her paper ‘Beyond Nonhuman Animal Rights: a Grassroots Movement in Istanbul and its Alignment with Other Causes’. This year the theme of the ASCA workshop was ‘Politics of Attachment’. Silvia and her two co-panelists debated about nonhuman animals as political subjects. The abstract of the paper can be found here.

Abstract of ‘Beyond Nonhuman Animal Rights: a Grassroots Movement in Istanbul and its Alignment with Other Causes’:

This paper aims to shed light on the way the nonhuman animal rights movement in Istanbul aligns itself with other progressive leftist causes. This alignment manifests itself on different levels; other struggles are incorporated both intellectually and practically. Intellectually the relation between speciesism and other forms of discrimination is emphasized through the use of philosophies that theorize this relation. These philosophies are often further developed and debated. The practical dimension involves networking with other movements, campaigning for other causes and joining other movements’ protests. But discrimination against disadvantages groups is also the cause of disputes within the nonhuman animal rights movement itself. What do these debates reveal about inconsistencies within the movement? And to what extent is the nonhuman animal rights cause acknowledged in other movements? I seek to find answers to these questions through an ethnographic research. The grassroots character of the movement appears to be a major influence with regard to its radical, progressive, ethical vegan advocacy and its stimulation for further knowledge and self-improvement.