

Postcolonial Ecologies and the Gaze of Animals: Reading Some Contemporary Southern African Narratives

Wendy Woodward

Summary

This essay is located within the new field of Animal Studies, and foregrounds literary representations of animals within a historicised culture, while stressing that ecologies are inseparable from politics and culture. Three southern African writers, Mda, Vera and Couto, contradict colonial discursivities about nature in their postcolonial texts. Their representations of human-animal relationships will be discussed, to some extent, in relation to Derridean conceptualising of the animal gaze and the human response to being addressed by an animal. But because Derrida has animals as “the absolute other” the writers implicitly interrogate his theorising, for he cannot acknowledge what Adams calls “relational epistemologies”. African knowledges, as Mda and Vera represent them, construct such epistemologies for humans along with cattle, horses and “wild” animals. Couto, contradictorily, represents the repercussions of a breakdown of such epistemologies because of violence and poverty. Poland has humans responding to the literal animal gaze, as well as engaging extensively with African knowledges of cattle.

Opsomming

Hierdie artikel val binne die veld Dierestudies, en plaas literêre voorstellings van diere binne 'n gehistoriseerde kultuur, terwyl dit beklemtoon dat ekologieë onlosmaaklik van politiek en kultuur is. Drie skrywers van suidelike Afrika, Mda, Vera en Couto, weerspreek koloniale diskursiwiteit omtrent die natuur in hulle postkoloniale tekste. Hulle voorstellings van mens-dier verhoudings sal bespreek word, in 'n sekere mate, in verhouding tot die Derrideaanse konseptualisering van die dier se blik en die mens se respons daarop om deur 'n dier aangespreek te word. Maar omdat Derrida diere as die “absolute ander” daarstel, ondervra die skrywers sy teoretisering, want hy kan nie toegee vir wat Adams noem “verhoudings-epistemologieë” nie. Afrika-begrippe, soos Mda en Vera hulle voorstel, konstrueer hierdie epistemologieë vir diere tesame met beeste, perde en “wilde” diere. Couto, daarenteen, stel die reperfussies voor van 'n ineenstorting van hierdie epistemologieë as gevolg van geweld en armoede. Poland stel mense daar wat reageer op die letterlike blik van die dier, en ekstensief Afrika-begrippe van beeste aanneem .

This paper will consider representations of human-animal relationships in some recent southern African fiction. My inquiry will be located within notions of ecologies in these same postcolonial texts: Zakes Mda's *The Heart of Redness* (2000), Yvonne Vera's *Nehanda* (1993) and Mia Couto's *Voices Made Night* (1990). Mda and Vera foreground African engagements with nature and animals as well as African knowledges. Both writers represent ontologies as ecologically situated and implicitly question the dualistic episteme of Western metaphysics which categorises humans and other animals hegemonically.¹ Couto, on the other hand, reveals how poverty and hopelessness damage any potential for heterarchal relationships between humans and animals. References will also be made to Marguerite Poland's *Recessional for Grace* (2003), although the text is not, primarily, postcolonial.²

None of these writers idealises nature or human-animal interactions, taking cognizance of histories of ecological imperialisms and of nature's inseparability from politics and culture. Political and ethical ideologies as well as financial imperatives constitute and legislate nature and who has access to it. Humans, then, are very much part of a postcolonial ecology, unlike apartheid "conservation" which stressed the preservation of "wild" animals and locales at the expense of indigenous people (cf Steyn & Wessels 2000: 213). The literary texts under consideration all contradict a number of conceptualisations of nature which obtain within colonial discursivities: nature, including "wild" animals, as eternised and essentialised and situated beyond the realm of culture; nature as a resource, with its animals hunted to extinction; alternatively, nature as subjected to the scientific gaze with plants and animals studied and classified according to European systems.

Within the Humanities, research on ecologies and anthrozoological issues has burgeoned recently. Environmental history has developed from Marxist social history and has grown in South Africa since the late 1980s and within the prospect of political transformation (Carruthers [2002]2003: 4). Scholarship in this field engages variously with historicised constructions of nature, environmental politics, science, ecology, agency for the nonhuman world, and reciprocities between what Beinart calls "people and the rest of nature" (Beinart quoted in Carruthers [2002]2003: 5). The "essential element" of such disparate research is "the nexus between humanity and the environment interacting as partners in a distinctive historical context" (p. 4). While a recent collection, *South Africa's Environmental History: Cases and Comparisons*, does not include any essays on animals *per se*, Beinart has written on animals, disease and science (1997) and on the "renaturing of African animals" in film and literary texts (1999); Swart (2003), Gallant (2002) and Gordon (2003) have studied intersections between cultures and dogs.

The new, mostly North American, field of Animal Studies derives from cultural studies rather than literary criticism and engages with different media

including social practices. Jane Desmond (1999), for example, deploys theories of dance and performance in her study of staging ecotourism. For Rothfels, who has edited a collection entitled *Representing Animals* (2002), the “fundamental basis” for the volume is the connection between the representation of animals and a historicised culture (Rothfels 2002: xi). Thus the essays variously locate imaginings of animals within specific histories, consider different theories of “the animal object” or examine “cultures of animals” exemplified in fox-hunts, taxidermy, pet-cloning. What Rothfels does not acknowledge in his brief introduction, however, is that “Animal Studies” has been preceded by philosophical debates and, to some extent, debates in the popular media, in relation to animal rights philosophies, animal liberation theologies, discourses of dog and horse training (Singer 1985; Linzey & Cohn-Sherbok 1997; and Hearne 1986 respectively).

South African literary scholarship foregrounding anthrozoological and ecological engagements within texts has been slower to emerge, in spite of interventions by Martin (1993), but, as I write, an edition of the *English Academy Review* focusing on space and ecology is in preparation, and see Woodward (2001a, 2001b). In The United States, ecocriticism or “literary ecology” stresses the urgency of the “global environmental crisis” (Glotfelty 1996: xv). Glotfelty dates the start of this field as the mid 1980s, and defines ecocriticism as an “earth-centered approach” which studies “the relationship between literature and the physical environment” (1996: xviii). By her own admission, ecocriticism is not (yet) a “multi-ethnic movement” because stronger links between “the environment and issues of social justice” still need to be made (1996: xxv). The subtext is disturbing: social justice issues will only become relevant if “multi-ethnic” North Americans become involved.³

My consideration of Mda, Vera and Couto’s postcolonial representations of the environment and animals will intersect, necessarily, with the discourses of both history and cultural studies (although space does not permit a reiteration of specific regional histories). Animals in these texts tend to be large farm animals like cattle and horses – or birds, animals and insects who live in the “wild” but who are agentive within culture. Nature, then, is not a prelapsarian utopian site but a dynamic space of action and which has denizens who engage with and look back at humans.

Useful in theorising about anthrozoological issues is Jacques Derrida’s recent article, “The Animal That Therefore I Am (More to Follow)” (2002) which contradicts Cartesian philosophies of animals as unfeeling machines inferior to humans, positing human epistemologies in response to the gaze of an animal. Comically, the naked Derridean persona is embarrassed by the consciousness of his nudity because of the gaze of his small cat. While the cat is the “absolute other” (Derrida 2002: 380), she does not only embody a specular purpose, but has a point of view and a self (although she is without

“the knowledge of self” (p. 374)). Derrida’s cat, in his assessment, is not just “an exemplar of the species” but a specific “unreplaceable living being” (p. 378), yet a slippage recurs between the cat as metonymic of all animals and as a specific resident animal.

In Derrida’s re-framing of the Genesis myth the animal embodies a moral agent who brings the human to consciousness of shame and embarrassment rather than an unthinking creature who is ultimately responsible, like the Edenic serpent, for human shame. Here the animal looks back, which is what, Derrida reminds us, “philosophy perhaps forgets” (Derrida 2002: 380); literally, then, a cat can look at a philosopher which *stimulates* his questions about (human) being in the gaze of the animal. The “bottomless gaze” (p. 381) of the animal demonstrates “the naked truth of every gaze, given that that truth *allows me to see and be seen* through the eyes of the other, in the *seeing* and not just *seen* eyes of the other” (p. 381).

Derrida goes on to suggest that there are two possibilities: discourse by those “who have never been *seen* by the animal” (Derrida 2002: 382) or by those who (potentially only prophets or poets) can imagine engaging with the “address” of an animal. The Derridean (playful?) provocative claim that he knows of no such poets or prophets, implicitly suggesting that they cannot exist, is a spurious one. The philosophies of Mary Midgely (1979, 1983, 1992) or Barbara Noske (1989) for example, immediately come to mind; so does the poetry of Ted Hughes ([1957]1972); [1967]1972) or Ruth Miller (1990) as well as the literary texts considered in this paper. Still, Derrida’s consideration of the animal gaze which might (or might not) bring the human to a consciousness of being “*near* what they call the animal” (p. 380) is central to this paper.

Instead of the ontological shame that is elicited by the gaze of the Derridean cat, however, I would like to suggest further significances for this gaze which are more apposite here. In the context of my reading of recent fiction, whether the gaze is literal or metaphoric is unimportant. Instead, the central issues for the debate are whether the human acknowledges “continuity and difference” (to borrow a phrase from Plumwood (1993: 66)), with animals and what potential emerges for “relational epistemologies” (Adams: 1995: 155) between humans and animals within a postcolonial ecology.

In *Recessional for Grace*, Poland seems aware of Derridean philosophies of the gaze of the animal: she has the unnamed narrator bullied by her PhD supervisor to include Derridean analysis in her work and twice, at key moments in the narrative, a cow gazes back at humans. Firstly, when Grace returns the young *inala* cow to her original owner, saving her from slaughter:

Hugh Wilmot watches as the *inala* cow turns from them towards the byre. She hesitates a moment, alert, sensing a familiarity. She turns her head and looks back at them. By that gesture – the twist of her head, the shadow of its silhouette

dipping back and lifting across her neck – it seems that she has saluted them.
(Poland 2003: 195)

Secondly, when the unnamed narrator, in shock after hearing the news of Delekile's and his wife's death by jackal poison, brings her narrative of Godfrey and Grace to closure:

At the sound of the car, [a heifer] raises her head, looks back across her red and ochre-speckled shoulder. It seems that she is beckoning. The conformation is exact: the white face, the dark eyes, the flanks scattered with the rust of dappled spots. She is an *inala* cow. She is pale. Vivid. Poised. A little toss of the head: – *I am abundance*. And then – as suddenly – she turns.
(Poland 2003: 302)

While both these cows look back at humans, the gaze of this unnamed heifer, as well as that of the original cow constitute what Douglas Livingstone termed “frail shared seconds” (Livingstone 1991: 54) rather than any substantial relationship between animal and human.

Like these heifers, animals in the main texts under discussion are not domestic canine companions or stray scavengers from the townships like those in *Triomf* (Van Niekerk ([1994]1999) and *Disgrace* (Coetzee [1999]2000) respectively. Instead, because cattle, horses, and animals who exist independently of humans recur, relationships with them are contingent on relationships with the land. The colonial order appropriates not only the land from the indigenous inhabitants, but the ecology as well in what Crosby terms ecological imperialism. Reconnecting with the land, then, and recalling precolonial knowledges is a postcolonial strategy in Mda's and Vera's texts. Murphy points out how the recovering of identity in recent Caribbean fiction is often “dependent upon a return to a relationship with the land, its rhythms, cycles, and bounty” (Murphy 2000: 67), but that environmental issues are not currently represented by African writers without including the destructive effects of wars, corrupt governments and exploitative transnational corporations (p. 68).

While such generalisations may tend to be too categorising, any return to or dependence on the land in the texts of both Mda and Vera here is historicised rather than idealised. In *The Heart of Redness* (Mda 2000) the Khoikhoi, even more than the amaXhosa, enact spiritual affinities with the earth and the heavens, (Twin describes Quxu, the Khoikhoi woman whom he marries as the “original owner of the land” (p. 124)) but their rituals of earth worship also signify resistance to colonial epistemologies of violence and serve to inspire amaXhosa soldiers. The cattle-killing movement itself which is motivated by desires for a “regeneration of the earth” (p. 147) not only incorporates the

return of the ancestors, but the expulsion of colonists and the eradication of lung sickness, a disease affecting cattle which they brought with them (cf Diamond ([1997]1998) for a popular account of the devastating effects for both humans and animals of colonially introduced diseases).

The prophesied re-emergence of ancestors and strong cattle from submerged, damp places re-enacts local creation myths in ways that are healing and anti-dualist. It also challenges the Christian construction of the universe which, as Paula Gunn Allen maintains, is based “primarily on a sense of separation and loss” (1996: 244) from what is natural. (Even Derrida’s rewriting of the Genesis creation myth has elements of this). Ancestor worship, on the other hand, envisions ancestors as part of the earth, so that the living and the dead, matter and spirit are not severed from each other. Worshipping ancestors, as David Abram points out, is ultimately another mode of attentiveness to nonhuman nature; it signifies not so much an awe or reverence of human powers, but rather a reverence for those forms that awareness takes when it is *not* in human form, when the familiar human embodiment dies and decays to become part of the encompassing cosmos (Abram [1996]2001: 127).

Abram generalises here, but the specifics of traditional beliefs of the amaXhosa and the Shona in *Nehanda* ([1996]2001) endorse this perspective. While Carruthers cautions against an acceptance of “the oft-repeated notion that precolonial societies were idyllically living as the first ecologists in complete harmony with nature” (Carruthers [2002]2003: 12), Jordan, in his study of traditional legends from southern Africa, foregrounds how nature is constructed as an “active healing force” (Jordan 1973: 218). In *The Heart of Redness* Mda points out that King Sarhili had an ecological consciousness in the mid-nineteenth century, preserving trees and wildlife at Manyube. The ecological motivation underpinning the cattle-killing prophecy comes to fruition in the ecocentric rather than homocentric awareness of the late-twentieth-century Believers in Qolorha. Qukezwa, whom Camagu thinks of as a “wild woman” (Mda 2000: 172), seems almost a reincarnation of Quxu/Qukezwa, her Khoikhoi ancestor, in her indigenous knowledge of resident plants, animals and birds. (In order to differentiate between the two women called Qukezwa, I will refer to the first Qukezwa as Quxu/Qukezwa as she changed her Khoikhoi name to a Xhosa one.)

Ecological ethics linked with sound economics, Mda suggests, is the only way forward for the villagers of Qolorha which is eventually declared a “national heritage site” (Mda 2000: 233). Globalised capitalism in the form of the gambling city could never bring what Bhonco terms “civilisation” or economic empowerment. Camagu and Dalton’s ideas for local tourism emphasise the natural riches and beauties of Qolorha, in direct contradiction to the developments envisaged by the Unbelievers which will exploit and destroy the environment without any thought of future sustainability.⁴ When

Qukezwa teaches Camagu about harvesting the sea (p. 159), nature is never a series of resources to her or to the local women, although the latter ignorantly kill a protected black oyster catcher, their rival for oysters. To some extent Mda critiques, but gently, the commodification of the customary way of life as a marketing ploy of the village women. For Camagu, whose focalisation the reader, broadly, endorses, John Dalton's plan of a "cultural village" is "dishonest" as it depicts a fossilised concept of the past, some of which may be "imaginary" (p. 285).

In Vera's *Nehanda* traditional human connections with the earth appear to be differentiated according to gender, but the trajectory of this narrative is very different from that of *Without a Name*. In the latter text, Vera has Shona women as victims of both colonialism and violent resistance to it, without recourse to healing from the land or nature. As Samuelson argues, rape is used allegorically to signify colonial incursions (Samuelson [2002]2003: 15-24), but Mazvita feels betrayed by the land itself. When she is raped she hates not only the perpetrator but "mostly, she hated the land that pressed beneath her back as the man moved impatiently above her" (Vera 1993: 30). Thus she is sceptical, subsequently, of her lover's belief that, in spite of colonial confiscation, the land recognises his prior, ancestral claim. For him, the land "defines our unities. There is no prayer that reaches our ancestors without blessing from the land. Land is birth and death" (p. 33). Mazvita, more pragmatically, rejects this view of the land as partisan, judging the land as indifferent to her own experience of violence. For her, the land has lost its rhythms and "rituals of harvest" because of its enclosure in barbed wire and because of indigenes' own banishment to the "barren" parts of the land (p. 33).

Vera, in this text, like Couto as I will discuss below, emphasises the experience of connecting with the land as problematically historicised and constructed according to gender (cf Shaw [2002]2003). But while in *Nehanda* the eponymous heroine is assailed by the earth manifesting itself as soil or dirt when, as a young girl, she and her mother are weeding the maize fields, their experiences of the earth are embodied and nondualist: her mother weeps because "the earth is in [her] eyes" (Vera 1993: 26) and then "the earth creeps up their legs" (p. 27).

In *Nehanda* Vera generally represents precolonial ecological connections at the moment of their destruction and censorship by colonial systems of mastery. Thus the adult Nehanda as a spirit medium uses her knowledge of the land and the terrain to subvert her capture by colonial authorities. When Kaguvi, the male medium, dances the earth and the villagers' lives to drum up strength for anti-colonial resistance, he is inspired by the voice of Nehanda, now an adult medium herself. Elements of nature, themselves, are agentive:

Voices throughout the forest speak to Kaguvi with waving silvery-bottomed leaves and flaming flowers. Rocks bear the faces of his ancestors, the horizon tells him which path to take to avoid his enemies He borrows messages from the river-banks where the sharp-edged reeds wave

(Vera 1993: 72)

Aspects of the ecology are simultaneously themselves and representations of the ancestors, and this nondifferentiation is duplicated by the union of masculine and feminine.⁵

Similarly, the prophecies which inspire the cattle-killing movement, potentially emanate from the feminine and the masculine, from the young girls, Nongqawuse and Nonkosi, and their uncle Mhlakaza (although there are suggestions of exploitation). But if Mda represents women who were “the main cultivators” of the land (Mda 2000: 126), as the main instigators of the cattle-killing movement, then he shows both men and women involved in the implementations – killing cattle and destroying crops – demanded by the prophecies (cf Bradford (1996) for a gendered reading of the cattle-killing movement).

As Crais reminds us, resistance, like identity itself is polychromatic (Crais 192: 175), and people act from different aspects of their identities. What I would like to foreground here is the centrality in the cattle-killing movement of peoples’ investments in their identities as cattle-owners and the significance of their spiritually resonant relationships with their cattle. Cattle were, of course, of material significance as signifiers of wealth, for milk and hides, but less so for meat. In addition, they were also valued as fitting subjects for cultural endeavours. When King Sarhili decides to kill his cattle, his choice to begin with a prize bull has immense significance:

his best bull ... was famous in all the land. Poets had recited poems and musicians had composed songs about it. When it fell, people knew there was no turning back.

(Mda 2000: 89)

Cattle were also deployed as animate art objects. Ludwig Alberti, a soldier in the service of the Republic of Netherlands commissioned to negotiate in 1807 with the amaXhosa and Khoikhoi west of the Fish River (De Kock 1968: xi), noted in great detail how the former made artworks of their cattle’s horns, bending them “in various directions and figures in accordance with the fancy of the owner” (p. 54).

Poland, in *Recessional for Grace*, represents Nguni cattle as aestheticised not only by the Nguni themselves but by those researching “colour-pattern terminology in Zulu for indigenous cattle” (2003: 7). The narrator asks:

How can an ox – so bland, so bovine – be a stone of the forest, or a cloud made of whey, or the eggs of a lark? How can an ox be vivid and poetic: the drowsing onomatopoeia, the lift and fall and grace of tone – so exact? A love affair in metaphor.

(Poland 2003: 5)

Poland never depicts close relationships between humans and cattle, however, so that cows, in the narrator's judgment, tend to embody only "a metaphor for love" (Poland 2000: 28).

Godfrey, the social anthropologist, who not only researches colour-pattern nomenclature but attempts to breed Nguni cattle himself, is more integrative, stressing, in an article, that cattle-owners in Africa have never regarded their animals as "*simply commodities*" but as replete with "*aesthetic and spiritual dimensions*" (p. 246). Putting the arts, economics and the agricultural sciences together, he argues:

Their success as a breed, within the context of this country, their wider significance, rests not only in their present or future economic status but also in their legacy as part of an older cosmology in which they were treated with love and care: a time when love and beauty were admissible.

(Poland 2003: 246)

If Poland has her characters theorise about the significance of cattle, Jabavu, in her autobiography not only does so, but also includes representations of specific relationships between humans and cattle.

Noni Jabavu's *The Ochre People* ([1963]1982) narrates her encounter with Ndleb'ende who is directed to take the village cattle to fetch water for the laundry. She watched as he whistled to specific oxen who responded to his commands, and then waited to be inspanned. The herder is adamant that "cattle have brains" and are "clever"; they make individuated choices, and while they can be trained to respond to a specific whistle, they also decide whether to co-operate or not:

Sometimes they delay coming because they don't feel like being disturbed. But the herd turns to look at the disobedient one, so in the end he thinks: "Ag! There'll be no peace until I obey", so he pushes his way out of the crowd and comes.

(Jabavu [1963]1982: 159)

Ndleb'ende confesses to Jabavu how he and fellow "herdboys" teach cattle tricks and how they organise surreptitious races. Again, he describes the oxen as agentive and as having intentionality and a sense of self that is competitive:

Some of these chaps are absolutely mad about racing. They know which ox runs the fastest and fix their eye on him not bothering about the rest. Sometimes they try to gore the best challenger; go out of their way to eliminate him, oh, they are too good these fellows, and he chuckled.

(Jabavu [1963]1982: 161)⁶

Jabavu notes that she had not been privy to close relationships with cattle, because these animals are a customary masculine preserve, yet, she observes: “You acquire an attitude of admiration for them, because you cannot help yourself. Everyone around you has it” (Jabavu [1963]1982: 160). Taboo though it might be for girls or women to go near cattle or to milk cows (p. 160), Jabavu’s younger village self was conscious of these animals as subjects within amaXhosa culture.

Couto’s representation of a young herdboy is very different. In “The Day Mabata-bata exploded”, the existence of Azarias, the orphaned cowherd, is one of “mistreated dreams” (Couto 1990: 19), although he cares about his charges. He longs to attend school, but his solitary life is spent almost exclusively with cattle, for which he is mocked by his abusive uncle: ““*This one, judging by the way he lives mixed up with livestock, will surely marry a cow*”” (p. 19). The prize ox, Mabata-bata, is commodified by the uncle as currency for a bride price. The pitiful correlation between the instrumentalised Mabata-bata and the abused boy is dramatised in their serial deaths when they tread on mines, laid, apparently at random, by “bandits”. The magical elements of the ox’s death with his “flesh turn[ing] into red butterflies”, his bones becoming “scattered coins”, and his horns landing in a tree “imitating life in the invisibility of the wind” (p. 17) is mirrored by Azarias’s sense that in his death he is embracing ndlati “bird of lightning” (p. 22). Like the river which has “sacrificed its water’s life” both ox and boy are sacrificial objects in a context of loss, for traditional relationships between humans and cattle have been severed.

In *Recessional for Grace*, both the eponymous Grace and the red speckled heifer, who comes to be a metaphor for her, approximate sacrificial subjects: Grace, as an extramarital lover of C.J. Godfrey, is abandoned by him when he returns to his marriage; the heifer, as a nonbreeder who rejects Bitchaan Shiki the bull, is consigned, by Godfrey, to be slaughtered. Grace reverses her own object status by making decisions which remove her from the district so that she can conceal her pregnancy. But first, she rescues the young cow, returning her to Mr Xaba, her previous owner, ensuring that her life will be inviolable, at least for the foreseeable future, even though she is “flawed”:

Xaba will protect the small *inala* cow that had been born into his herd. She will not be slaughtered, she will not be sold. If she is sacrificial in the end, it will be in a *lobola* payment: an exchange between the lineage shades ... she will become

'invalamlomo', the last beast paid in a marriage transaction. What closes the mouth.

(Poland 2003: 195)

Given the continuum between humans and animals that Jabavu mentions, it may appear contradictory that these same cattle are objects of traditional amaXhosa sacrifice. However, perhaps it is precisely because cattle are so close ontologically to humans that they are deemed worthy objects of sacrifice in the place of humans. For Linzey and Cohn-Sherbok the sacrifice of animals confirms an instrumentalising perception, but they locate these animals within the Judaeo-Christian tradition (Linzey & Cohn-Sherbok 1997: 5-6). For them the “underlying theological puzzle” is how God can permit the sacrifice of creatures who have “God-given ‘life’” (p. 4).

When cattle are regarded as “a critical intersection of economics, authority and cosmology” (Crais 1992: 21), the parameters are very different. The deep connection between humans and cattle is dramatised in the Hlanga myth of creation in which both the amaXhosa and cattle emerge from a cave. According to Crais: “[t]he adoration of the ancestors thus pivoted on cattle which were associated with the origin of humanity” (p. 22). The gaze of an animal, who has been created concurrently with humans, will be a very different gaze when trained on a human from that of the Derridean cat. The latter may have preceded human creation like other animals but she/he still embodies the “absolute other”. In acknowledging ancestral spiritual connections between human and animal, the traditional amaXhosa, on the other hand, imagined being “*seen seen* by the animal” (Derrida 2002: 382).

The extended violence of the actual killing of cattle made sense spiritually in that they were the means of pleasing the ancestors. Cattle, in being beyond the human world of witchcraft embodied what humans could not. Their sacrifice “allow[ed] the beast to absorb, through its quality of innocence, the evil which polluted the homestead and thereby restore[d] its initial purity” (Peires 1989: 105). Mda also suggests, in his representation of the killing of Sarhili’s favourite bull, that the cattle who were sacrificed were not anonymous with their identities and nomenclatures erased; they never constituted what Carol Adams terms “absent referents” (Adams 1995: 17), which is the status of invisible animals in excessive meat-eating cultures like that of North America.

In Xhosa tradition, cattle, especially bulls, never approximate the animate commodities of industrial farming which negates animals as sentient beings. John Berger cites an example of the peasant who is “fond” of his pig and who, subsequently, will be pleased to salt away its flesh as an instance of necessary dualism towards animals (Berger 1980: 5). That cattle in amaXhosa views are not only agentive subjects, but an essential means to pleasing the ancestors

suggests that such dualistic attitudes did not obtain.

Traditionally, meat-eating is “associated with prosperity and hospitality” (Midgley 1983: 27), and often with virility (Adams 1990: 15) yet the superfluity of meat consumed after extended cattle-slaughtering results in gastric complaints and diarrhoea. Midgley’s analysis of the symbolism of meat-eating, which, as she points out, is “never neutral”, does not resonate with the gorging on cattle sacrificed in order to appease the ancestors. According to Midgley: “To himself, the meat-eater seems to be eating life. To the vegetarian, he seems to be eating death” (Midgley 1983: 27). Tragically, after this excess which includes the destruction of crops, the Believers begin to die of starvation. The human-animal continuum and their common materiality is underscored by the carcasses of both cattle and humans which pollute the environment.

Another aspect central to the credibility of the prophetic directives to slaughter cattle was the desire to rid cattle herds of the pollution of lungsickness. Mda has people recognise that this disease was brought to their territory by colonial settlement, specifically in 1853 by imported Friesland bulls. Indigenous knowledges, consequently, are impotent in the face of this disease. Removing cattle from possible contamination by driving them to remote places has limited success, and ultimately the disease ravages the twins’ village:

Twin-Twin wept as he watched his favourite bull die a horrible and protracted death. First it was constipated. Then it became diarrhoeic. It gasped for air, its tongue hanging out. When it died, he was relieved that the pain at last was over

....

(Mda 2000: 55)

It is Twin, however, who subsequently becomes a Believer and slaughters his cattle. His love for his cattle manifests in the relief he experiences at not having to be concerned about them. Lungsickness becomes “a distant nightmare” (Mda 2000: 122) as he and other Believers prepare for the new cattle which will arrive with the ancestors.

For the environmental historian, Alfred Crosby, European colonisers were able to settle so successfully and “to establish such demographic dominance” because they brought with them “domesticated animals, pests, pathogens and weeds” (Crosby in Griffiths 1997: 2). He argues that these aspects, some of which may have been “consciously nurtured and martialled” constitute an ecological aspect of imperialism which demands inclusion in historical studies (cf Griffiths 1997: 2). Crais notes that Grey’s policies of crowding amaXhosa into villages was perceived by them as “not only environmentally destructive but repudiating customary forms of organizing space” (Crais 1992: 209).⁷ It is unlikely that settlers in the Eastern Cape, or what was then British Kaffraria,

used lungsickness as a conscious pathogen against indigenous cattle as their cattle would have been similarly affected. What is undeniable, however, is the significance of the disease for a culture in which cattle were so central and in which the gaze of the sick and dying cattle motivated their owners to act within pathogenic constraints in ways that could be regarded as compassionate in their eradication of extended animal suffering.⁸

That these slaughtered cattle would be resurrected and new ones come from the spirit world illustrates the sacred nature of these animals within the amaXhosa worldview, but horses also exist in the Otherworld. King Sarhili is persuaded of Nongqawuse's prophecies because he has visions, not only of his recently deceased son, but of his special horse who had recently died "happily frolicking with the very horse his father rode just before he met his fate at the hands of D'Urban's headhunters" (Mda 1992: 88).

That the amaXhosa have close relationships with their horses is exemplified by Twin's regard for his "prize horse" Gxagxa which recalls Buber's notion of I-Thou in relation to animals. When the animal contracts lungsickness, Twin keeps a sleepless vigil in his stable. Because the horse cannot eat, nor can he, in spite of his wife Quxu/Quekzwa bringing him his favourite dishes and beverages. When Gxagxa finally dies after days of suffering, Twin keeps watch over the horse's decomposing carcass. While literally it is Twin who is the observer, ontologically, he is responsive to the gaze of his horse. The horror and grief attendant on this death persuade him of the verity of Nongqawuse's prophecies, that all animals and crops are contaminated and should be destroyed. Losing Gxagxa is a pivotal event for Twin, who with Quxu/Quekzwa, his wife of Khoikhoi origin, becomes a staunch Believer.

Horses, which were colonially introduced, have a "curiously limited role" in South African history, in McNeill's assessment (McNeill 2002: 245) and were used by settlers "primarily as a political instrument ... [which] helped to underwrite their power" (McNeill 2002: 246). He questions why horses were not adopted by indigenes to "revolutionise" warfare and to change the politics of a region. Mary Louise Pratt's finding that "indigenous Africans were forbidden to own horses" (Pratt [1992] 1993: 41) may suggest an answer but it is too unspecific and appears to refer to the eighteenth century. Because the social history of the horse in South Africa remains to be written, I have not been able to answer this question.⁹

In *Nehanda* Yvonne Vera implicitly takes cognizance of Pratt's claim, representing a village boy in Zimbabwe at the time of the first colonial incursions seduced by the beauty of horses, whom he has never seen before. He surveys his environment and the advent of the horses from his place in a musasa tree:

The boy watches [the horses] with growing absorption The behaviour of the tail is mesmerizing. Held in a graceful curve, it shakes delightfully at each step, occasionally flicking to one side with a wonderful, smooth elegance.

(Vera 1993: 97)

What follows on from this admiration is the trauma of witnessing the murder of the village women, including his mother and sisters, by the riders of the horses. Horses, in this context, as they were in many colonial contexts, are mere extensions of colonial military action against unarmed civilians. Because the animals are thus instrumentalised by colonial powers, horses are regarded by local people as enemies to be destroyed: in an ambush of colonial soldiers they kill seven horses and capture two.

For the amaXhosa in the Eastern Cape in the 1850s, horses do not signify colonial order, but are markers of power within their own social formation. When Twin visits his brother the “fine horses” tethered outside his brother’s homestead denote that the visitors are “men of substance” (Mda 2000: 91). In addition, whether in the mid-nineteenth or the late-twentieth century, horses represent “another” (a term Murphy proposes so that “we” and “another” replaces “self” and “other” (Murphy 2000: 88)) with whom the amaXhosa live and who are assimilated within the community. Qukezwa’s relationship with Gxagxa is seamless; she rides him without saddle or bridle and persuades Camagu to ride with her at night and then to ride naked. That Qukezwa conceives on the back of Gxagxa (although without penetration) resonates with representations of horses as emblematic of sexuality. If bodily margins suggest both power and danger as Mary Douglas (1996) has proposed then this conception breaks down such margins, reducing their symbolic import.

In *The Heart of Redness*, however, horses not only incapsulate what Elizabeth Lawrence terms “the extreme polarities of the wild and the tame” (Lawrence [1990]1994: 223) but the intersections of the spiritual and the sensual. If Sarhili locates himself as subject to the gaze of horses from the Otherworld, then Quxu/Qukezwa and Qukezwa connect with the brown and white Gxagxa and the grey Gxagxa respectively as though they are harbingers of an ecological spirituality. When the twins leave their home because of the ravaging lungsickness

Qukezwa led the way, for she knew the language of the stars. She rode reinless on Gxagxa, Twin’s brown and white horse, which seemed to know exactly where to go without being guided by her.

(Mda 2000: 56)

The narrative shifts without signalling between the two time periods, undermining the time/space episteme of colonial order: the present-day

Qukezwa riding Gxagxa and singing in split-tones is coupled with Quxu/Qukezwa mourning her husband's horse. Both play the umrubhe, "the musical instrument that sounded like the lonely voice of mountain spirits" (Mda 2000: 176). Quxu/Qukezwa sings of "the void" in their lives after the death of the horse, while simultaneously cursing the lungsickness and the colonialists who had carried the disease with them. She imagines riding with her husband behind her and their son in front through the kind of terrain that her future namesake inhabits, then:

Gxagxa continued his wicked gallop until they all disappeared in the clouds. Through the voice of the umrubhe she saw the new people riding the waves, racing back according to the prophecies, and led by none other than Gxagxa and the headless patriarch.

(Mda 200: 176)

If horses connect precolonialism and postcolonialism, as well as materiality and spirituality in this context, generally, as this representation suggests, they express themselves somatically through movement.¹⁰

In addition, if both Gxagxas are more strongly associated with their female riders, they are also connected to male patriarchs. Mda never suggests an unproblematised connection between women and nature; that would duplicate simplistic and dualist certainties (which are endorsed by radical ecological feminism). The present day Gxagxa belongs to Qukezwa's father, Zim, and is agentive on his behalf charging the mocking friends of his ex-lover who taunt Qukezwa. While Zim is dying, Gxagxa keeps "vigil" outside his home, "neighing endlessly" (Mda 2000: 304). The dynamics of this dyad reverse those of the death of the previous Gxagxa, where the man kept watch over the dying horse. In the transitional space of dying, the gaze of an "another" underscores the nondifferentiation between animal and human souls in an after-life which incorporates both. If horses exist in the Otherworld imagined by Sarhili and Quxu/Qukezwa, then, after Zim's death, his horse embodies a deep connection which transcends death:

Her father lives in this horse. [Qukezwa] wouldn't dare do anything shameful in its presence, nor utter words she would never have uttered in her father's presence. She gives it the same kind of respect she gave her father.

(Mda 2000: 316)

Horses, Mda seems to be saying, are both themselves and the spiritual connections they manifest with the dead. They are never just metaphors, nor Derridean "absolute others".

The politics of this relationship between human and horse recurs in

relationships between rural and, in Vera's text, precolonial social formations and "wild" animals, birds and insects that both Mda and Vera, as well as Couto represent. In *Nehanda* the traditional ecology is one of absolute communion between humans and nonhuman others, who are simultaneously themselves and links to the ancestors. Mr Smith, a representative of colonial mastery over the land and its inhabitants, on the other hand, takes "prisoner" any insect he encounters, subjecting it to dissection and classification. Such systematising othering does not obtain in indigenous relationships with animals, birds and insects. When the eponymous protagonist is in a shamanistic trance, Shirichena, "the bird of light" (Vera 1993: 58) ushers in prophecies and exhorts the listening people to resist colonial incursions. The spider "weaves all of time into its hungering belly" (p. 89); chameleon dances "reached into the past of our memory" (p. 101), but the most dramatic gaze of an animal is when Kaguvi, a fellow spirit medium, is watched in his jail cell by a threatening lion who embodies "his great ancestor" (p. 108).

Tragically, because Kaguvi is condemned to die by the colonial authorities, the lion can offer him no hope, and if they "send mysteries to each other" they are "mysteries that can no longer unite them" (Vera 1993: 107). Although the lion has come to his assistance in the past, this visitation is ominous for "[n]o one can walk away from the departed, free and whole" (p. 108). What is never in question is the traditional respect that these birds, animals and insects, both spirit and matter elicit. In Mia Couto's *Voices Made Night* animals and birds may similarly undermine dualistic constructions, but a sense of the danger embodied in animals is pervasive for people who have lost touch with nature. People not only fear becoming an animal spirit or *noii*, but birds themselves, like those in "The Birds of God" seem gratuitously evil, engendering madness and death. Couto, like Vera, seems to suggest that when (colonial) violence or (postcolonial) war is/has been paramount, traditional relationships with nature are occluded. Thus in *Nehanda* dead birds drop from the sky: "The wind comes and spreads black feathers across the earth. The people turn away from the smell of rotting birds" (p. 100). In Couto's "The Talking Raven's Last Warning" the poverty-stricken villagers abandon their homes at the sight of a dead raven, which they interpret as a curse.

Animals in Couto's collection tend to be subjected to violence and are mere possessions or pawns of human egos, used as signs that the gullible accept.¹¹ Paraza, in the above story, manipulates the villagers into believing that he has vomited a raven who had arrived "from the furthest frontier of life" (Couto 1990: 8) and who has privileged links with the spirit world which only he can interpret – for a large fee. The hungry Bento Mussavele in "The Whales of Quissico" is convinced that whales will beach and dispense a vast array of food with great largesse. A visitor from the cadres fails to convince him that "*the whale is an invention of the imperialists to stultify the people and make them*

always wait for food to arrive from abroad” (p. 60).

In “The Birds of God” Couto again deploys birds as having symbolic significance for poor villagers. Here, they are starving because of a drought. Ernesto Timba, a fisherman, is “impaled” by the expectant eyes of his wife and children: “Eyes like those of a dog, he was loath to admit, but the truth is that hunger makes men like animals” (Couto 1990: 23). In this dysfunctional, imbalanced milieu the material is all-important, the spiritual irrelevant. But Timba remembers his father’s encouragement: “the fisherman can’t see the fish inside the river. The fisherman believes in something he can’t see” (p. 24). When a large bird falls into his boat, it is, for him, “a sign from God” (p. 25). The bird is later joined by a mate and then chicks whom Timba cares for at the expense of his family, believing that if humans, especially when they themselves are hungry, could be kind to these “messengers from heaven” then the drought would break.

To the villagers, Timba is “stark raving mad” (Couto 1990: 26). When the birds are deliberately destroyed in a fire, he calls on God to forgive the perpetrators of this act, and offers himself as a sacrifice. The next day his body is found in the river, and cannot be separated from the water. The story is potentially ambiguous about whether it is Timba’s sacrifice and his spiritualised connections with birds which bring the approaching rain or whether it is chance. The river is “impassive ... laughing at the ignorance of men” (p. 28), but Timba seems not to be included in this “ignorance” as he is gently “carried downstream, and shown the by-ways he has only glimpsed in his dreams” (p. 28). Whatever one’s reading of this story, Timba is exceptional in *Voices Made Night* for his nurturing of “anothers”.

The more prevalent belief echoes that of the unnamed narrator of “So You Haven’t Flown Yet, Carlota Gentina?” who fears that his wife may be a *noii*, a woman who transforms into an animal at night to do witchery. His anxiety stems from a negation of embodiment and a denial of potential continuities between humans and other animals which manifests itself in abuse of both animals and women. Bartolomeu, the narrator’s brother-in-law, had proved his wife to be a *noii* for she had emitted the “howl of an animal. A hyena’s voice for sure” (Couto 1990: 42) when he had dropped a burning ember on her back. Thus the narrator suspects that his wife, like her sister, may be an “animal-woman” which implicates him:

If I had made love to her, then I had traded my human’s mouth with an animal snout. How could I excuse such a trade? ... If that son-of-a-bitch woman had deceived me, I had become an animal myself.

(Couto 1990: 43)

In order to trick her into revealing her true form he has to “surprise her with

some suffering, some deep pain” (1990: 43), and scalds her with boiling water. Although she dies silently, he still feels deceived by her; at the funeral her corpse is not “a fully deceased dead woman Rather it was a piece of silence in the form of a beast” (p. 46). Adams and Donovan point out how exploitation and abuse of animals are often justified by feminising them (Adams & Donovan 1995: 5); legitimising the abuse of women by animalising them also pertains, as Couto suggests in this story.

In *The Heart of Redness*, on the other hand, contemporary relationships between humans and birds are celebratory and replete with social comedy, partly because of the rivalry between the Believers and the Unbelievers. The latter have a predatory engagement with the environment, with birds and animals, all of which they see as resources to be exploited by humans. Young boys steal birds’ eggs and hunt with their dogs.¹² The Believers, Zim, in particular, and Qukezwa have heterarchal relationships with the endemic birds. Zim’s homestead is built under a wild fig tree inhabited by a colony of amohobohobo weaverbirds who keep him company and to whom he talks in whistles, “the language of the spirits” (Mda 2000: 135). Mda’s treatment of Zim’s relationship with these birds tends, at times, to be light and sometimes mocking of Zim who, after listening to the birds, fanatically adheres to the original customs of the Believers. Yet the relationship itself between the elderly Believer and these birds is an ecocentric and substantial one. As Zim vacillates between life and death:

Days pass. Zim refuses to die. Amahobohobo weaverbirds fill the homestead with their rolling, swirling song. They miss the man who spent most of the day sitting under their giant wild fig tree.

(Mda 2000: 305)

Not only does the connection between human and another occur again in the face of death, but the weaverbirds are agentive, conscious of missing their human companion.

Relational epistemologies between humans and birds recur. In Camagu and the pregnant Qukezwa’s joyful revelling, they clamber onto a ship wreck and laugh with uxomoyi, the giant kingfisher. Zim uses the hadeda ibis in his war against Bhonco, to take revenge for the group of adept ululators set on him by Bhonco (themselves a revenge for Zim’s demand at the concert that NoPetticoat ululate). Zim sends these “drab grey stubby-legged birds” (Mda 2000: 227) to torment Bhonco with their “rude laughter” (p. 227).¹³ Some Qolorha villagers fear that Bhonco will deploy uthekwane, the hammerhead bird, and that “innocent creatures” will be used in this battle, but they are reassured that only Zim can communicate with birds. This ecocentric awareness is evident also in the village court’s directive that isomi, the red-winged starling and a

“holy bird”, is a “living Christ on earth” (p. 250) and deserves their protection.

This consciousness that Mda represents never obtains in Couto’s stories (except in some very marginalised characters). Yet both these writers, as well as Vera in *Nehanda*, endorse an ethics and politics of mutuality between human and nonhuman animals, and are implicitly critical of the notion that human identities can be constructed outside of nature (cf Plumwood: 1993: 71). Animals, within a traditional worldview, are never subjected to the observing gaze of imperialist-driven natural history, which, as Foucault maintains, “reduces the whole area of the visible to a system of variables all of whose values can be designated ... by a perfectly clear and always finite description” (Foucault quoted in Pratt [1992]1993: 28). Nor are they represented within “the idea of nature as one of the last bastions of idealized authenticity” or as “exemplars of wildness” themselves (Desmond 1999: 148).

Will Beinart, the environmental historian, asks rather wistfully if it is possible to “write the history of wild animals – rather than simply what was done to them” (Beinart 2002: 216). Perhaps the closest we can come to this is to turn to representations of human engagements with animals which are responsive – not reactive – engagements which implicitly counter Costello’s pessimistic view that animals, who have been disempowered by humans, have “only their silence left with which to confront us (Coetzee 1999: 25). Derrida’s injunction that we look to the “poets and prophets” for “those who admit taking upon themselves the address of an animal that addresses them” (Derrida 2002: 383) has its substantiation in certain postcolonial writing in southern Africa. Both Mda and Vera represent their characters as epistemologically relational to animals; Couto, on the other hand, represents the tragedies contingent on the loss of a relational episteme. All take cognizance of the gaze of animals.

But to conclude with Mda, who may be both poet and, unfortunately, prophet: He does not proffer an idealised or utopian record of ecocentric communication with the environment and animals, nor do the amaXhosa constitute a unifaceted community who foreground postcolonial ecologies either in the nineteenth or twentieth centuries. Ultimately, any victory over globalising capitalism in the form of developers at Qolorha is only tenuous and contingent. When Camagu drives back home from East London, he notes the lack of indigenous trees and the proliferation of wattles or “enemy trees”:

He feels fortunate that he lives in Qolorha. Those who want to preserve indigenous plants and birds have won the day there. At least for now. But for how long?

(Mda 2000: 319)

Notes

1. While the reminder that humans are animals is necessary, I have chosen not to reiterate the terminology of “humans and other animals” because of its prolixity. Desmond (1999), on the other hand, prefers “humans and animals” in order to stress the dualistic constructions of these categories.
2. Although Poland’s novel is postcolonial in its writing back to colonial constructions of the land and Nguni cattle, I concur with Heyns’s sense that it is a “pre-apartheid” novel (Heyns 2003: 18). Not only is the main narrative set in the 1940s, it is also more modernist than postcolonial, more anthropocentric than ecocentric in its constructions of identities.
3. Scholars in ecocriticism generally seem, certainly if Glotfelty is representative, not to have learnt from the justified critiques of the implicit racialising of early Anglo-American feminist literary criticism as “white”.
4. The creation of a new national park in Pondoland, “an anchor project for the Wild Coast spatial development initiative” is under way, with local communities and the Minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism endorsing the development of ecological tourism (Nel 2003: 60). Contrarily, a multinational mining company is being endorsed by the Eastern Cape government (p. 61).
5. Space does not permit an extended discussion of *Nehanda* here. Maurice T. Vambe’s substantial essay ([2002]2003) considers the complexities and contradictions inherent in this text in relation to “spirit possession” and “post-colonial resistance”.
6. That racehorses, like these cattle, are conscious of competition is endorsed by George Woolf, jockey of Seabiscuit who outran the champion War Admiral in 1938: “I saw something in the Admiral’s eyes that was pitiful He looked all broken up. I don’t think he will be good for another race. Horses ... can have crushed hearts just like humans ”” (Hillenbrand 2002: 297).
7. Crais stresses the separation between spaces that were considered “wild” or “tame” and that the death of so many cattle from lungsickness “confirmed the intrusion of the bush into the social space of the homestead” (Crais 1992: 209). Mda, however, never represents such spatial differentiation between human and animal.
8. Griffiths warns that “ecological imperialism” in its extreme forms may be “a way of denying human agency – for good or ill – on the frontier” and that the question of where the “ecology end[s] and imperialism begin[s]” must never be glossed over (Griffiths 1997: 2).

9. Sandra Swart is currently working on the social history of the horse in South Africa (personal communication).
10. In Jane Smiley's representation of a race with the horse as focaliser the consciousness of movement and speed is significant, but the horse also strategises how he should run in order to win (Smiley 2000: 185-187).
11. Compare the representation of animals as possessions in the South African Constitution – hence lifeless and without rights. The European Union, on the other hand, acknowledges animals as “sentient beings”.
12. Gallant (2002) represents this latter tradition as exemplifying ancient practices in which indigenes hunt with African dogs who constitute a “land race” which has ecologically evolved in Africa, rather than a humanly engineered breed.
13. In “Kafka's Curse” Achmat Dangor has a hadeda enter Malik's house: it is a “strange and unwelcome intrusion” (Dangor 1997: 56) especially when the bird's “malevolence fill[s] the sacred prayer room” (p. 57). So ignorant are Malik and his wife Fatgiyah about this common cacophonous bird that they have to identify it in *Birds of Southern Africa*. Malik's ignorance of nature, generally, is attributable to the racialised use of land in South Africa as the narrator emphasises. In addition, as a city-dweller, “[h]e had never known birds or animals, except as markers for a fond reminiscence about an age of abundance more desired than real” (p. 73).

References

- Abram, David
[1996]2001 *The Ecology of Magic*. In: Halpern, Daniel & Frank, Dan (eds) *The Picador Nature Reader*. London: Picador, pp. 121-131.
- Adams, Carol J.
1990 *The Sexual Politics of Meat: A Feminist-Vegetarian Critical Theory*. New York: Continuum.
1995 *Neither Man nor Beast: Feminism and the Defense of Animals*. New York: Continuum.
- Adams, Carol J. & Donovan, Josephine (eds)
1995 *Animals and Women: Feminist Theoretical Explorations*. Durham & London: Duke University Press.
- Alberti, Ludwig
1968 *Account of the Tribal Life and Customs of the Xhosa in 1807*, translated by William Fehr (Dr). Cape Town: Balkema.
- Allen, Paula Gunn
1996 *The Sacred Hoop: A Contemporary Perspective*. In: Glotfelty, Cheryl & Fromm, Harold (eds) *The Ecocriticism Reader: Landmarks in Literary*

- Ecology*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, pp. 241-263.
- Beinart, William
 1997 Vets, Viruses and Environmentalism at the Cape. In: Griffiths, Tom & Robin, Libby *Ecology and Empire: Environmental History of Settler Societies*. Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal Press, pp. 87-101.
 1999 The Renaturing of Animals: Film and Literature in the 1950s and 1960s. In: Slack, Paul (ed.) *Environments and Historical Change: The Linacre Lectures 1998*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
 [2002]2003 South African Environmental History in the African Context. In: Dovers, Stephen, Edgecombe, Ruth & Guest, Bill (eds) *South Africa's Environmental History: Cases and Comparisons*. Cape Town: David Philip, pp. 215-226.
- Berger, John
 1980 *About Looking*. London: Writers & Readers.
- Bradford, Helen
 1996 Women, Gender and Colonialism: Rethinking the History of the British Cape Colony and its Frontier Zones, c. 1806-1870. *Journal of African History* 37: 351-370.
- Carruthers, Jane
 [2002]2003 Environmental History in Southern Africa: An Overview In: Dovers, Stephen, Edgecombe, Ruth, & Guest, Bill (eds) *South Africa's Environmental History: Cases and Comparisons*. Cape Town: David Philip, pp. 3-18.
- Coetzee, J.M.
 1999 *The Lives of Animals*. Amy Gutmann (ed.) and Introduction. The University Center for Human Values Series. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
 [1999]2000 *Disgrace*. London: Vintage.
- Conley, Verena Andermatt
 1997 *Ecopolitics: The Environment in Poststructuralist Thought: Feminism for Today*. Brennan, Teresa (series ed.). London & New York: Routledge.
- Couto, Mia
 1990 *Voices Made Night*, translated by David Brookshaw. Reading, Berkshire: Heinemann.
- Crais, Clifton C.
 1992 *The Making of the Colonial Order: White Supremacy and Black Resistance in the Eastern Cape, 1770-1865*. Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press.
- Crosby, Alfred W.
 1986 *Ecological Imperialism: The Biological Expansion of Europe 900-1900*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Dangor, Achmat
 1997 *Kafka's Curse: A Novella and Three Other Stories*. Cape Town: Kwela.

- Derrida, Jacques
 2002 The Animal That Therefore I Am (More to Follow), translated by David Wills. *Critical Inquiry* 28 Winter, pp. 369-418.
- Desmond, Jane
 1999 *Staging Tourism: Bodies on Display from Waikiki to Sea World*. Chicago: Chicago University Press.
 2002 Displaying Death, Animating Life: Changing Fictions of “Liveness” from Taxidermy to Animatronics. In: Rothfels, Nigel (ed.) *Representing Animals*. Bloomington Indiana University Press, pp. 159-179.
- Diamond, Jared
 [1997]1998 *Guns, Germs and Steel: A Short History of Everybody for the Last 13000 Years*. London: Vintage.
- Douglas, Mary
 1969 *Purity and Danger*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Gallant, Johan
 2002 *The Story of the African Dog*. Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal Press.
- Glotfelty, Cheryll
 1996 Introduction: Literary Studies in an Age of Environmental Crisis. In: Glotfelty, Cheryll & Fromm, Harold (eds) *The Ecocriticism Reader: Landmarks in Literary Ecology*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, xv-xxxvii.
- Gordon, Rob
 2003 Fido: Dog Tale of Colonialism in Namibia. In: Beinart, William & McGregor Joanne (eds) *Social History and African Environments*. Oxford: James Currey, pp. 240-254.
- Griffiths, Tom
 1997 Introduction. Ecology and Empire: Towards an Australian History of the World. In: Griffiths, Tom & Robin, Libby *Ecology and Empire: Environmental History of Settler Societies*. Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal Press, pp. 1-16.
- Hearne, Vicki
 1986 *Adam’s Task: Calling Animals by Name*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.
- Heyns, Michiel
 2003 Review: *Recessional for Grace*, translated by Marguerite Poland. *Sunday Independent*, June 15: 18.
- Hillenbrand, Laura
 [2001]2002 *Seabiscuit: Three Men and a Racehorse*. London: Fourth Estate.
- Hughes, Ted
 [1957]1972 *The Hawk in the Rain*. London: Faber & Faber.
 [1967]1972 *Wodwo*. London: Faber & Faber.
- Jabavu, Noni
 [1963] 1982 *The Ochre People*. Braamfontein: Ravan.

- Jordan, A.C.
 1973 *Tales from Southern Africa*, translated and retold by A.C. Jordan. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Lawrence, Elizabeth
 [1990]1994 Rodeo Horse: The Wild and the Tame. In: Willis, Ray (ed.) *Signifying Animals: Human Meaning and the Natural World*. One World Archaeology Series Ed. : P.J. Ucko. London: Routledge, pp. 222-235.
- Linzey, Andrew & Cohn-Sherbok, Dan
 1997 *After Noah: Animals and the Liberation of Theology*. London: Mowbray.
- Livingstone, Douglas
 1991 *A Littoral Zone*. Cape Town: Carrefour.
- McNeill, John
 [2002]2003 Environment and History in South America and South Africa. In: Dovers, Stephen, Edgecombe, Ruth & Guest, Bill (eds) *South Africa's Environmental History: Cases and Comparisons*. Cape Town: David Philip, pp. 240-249.
- Martin, Julia
 1993 New, with Added Ecology? Hippos, Forests and Environmental Literacy. In: Bell, Nigel & Cowper-Lewis, Meg *Literature, Nature and the Land: Ethics and Aesthetics of the Environment: Collected AUETSA Papers 1992*, pp. 75-83.
- Mda, Zakes
 2000 *The Heart of Redness*. Oxford Southern African Fiction. Oxford, New York, Cape Town: Oxford University Press.
- Midgley, Mary
 [1978]1979 *Beast and Man: The Roots of Human Nature*. Hassocks, Sussex: Harvester.
 1983 *Animals and Why They Matter*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
 1992 Towards a More Humane View of the Beasts? In: Cooper, David E. & Palmer, Joy A. (eds) *The Environment in Question: Ethics and Global Issues*. London, New York: Routledge, pp. 28-36.
- Miller, Ruth
 1990 *Ruth Miller: Poems, Prose, Plays*. Abrahams, Lionel (ed.) and Introduction. Cape Town: Carrefour.
- Murphy, Patrick D.
 2000 *Farther Afield in the Study of Nature-Oriented Literature*. Charlottesville & London: University Press of Virginia.
- Nel, Michelle
 2003 Pondoland Paradise in the Pipeline. *Earthyear* (3): 60-62.
- Noske, Barbara
 1989 *Humans and Other Animals: Beyond the Boundaries of Anthropology*. London: Pluto.
- Peires, J.B.
 1989 *The Dead Will Arise: Nongqawuse and the Great Xhosa Cattle-Killing Movement of 1856-7*. Johannesburg: Ravan.

- Pratt, Mary Louise
 [1992]1993 *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*. London: Routledge.
- Plumwood, Val
 1993 *Feminism and the Mastery of Nature: Feminism for Today*. Brennan, Teresa (series ed.). New York & London: Routledge.
- Poland, Marguerite
 2003 *Recessional for Grace*. London: Viking Penguin.
- Rothfels, Nigel
 2003 Introduction. In: Rothfels, Nigel *Representing Animals*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, pp. vi-xv.
- Samuelson, Meg
 [2002]2003 Re-membering the Body: Rape and Recovery in *Without a Name* and *Under the Tongue*. In: Muponde, Robert & Maodzwa-Taruvunga, Mandivavarira (eds) *Sign and Taboo: Perspectives on the Poetic Fiction of Yvonne Vera*. Oxford: James Currey, pp. 93-100.
- Shaw, Carolyn Martin
 [2002]2003 The Habit of Assigning Meaning: Signs of Yvonne Vera's World. In: Muponde, Robert & Maodzwa-Taruvunga, Mandivavarira (eds) *Sign and Taboo: Perspectives on the Poetic Fiction of Yvonne Vera*. Oxford: James Currey, pp. 25-36.
- Singer, Peter (ed.)
 1985 *In Defence of Animals*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Smiley, Jane
 2000 *Horse Heaven*. London: Faber & Faber.
- Steyn, Phia & Wessels, Andre
 2000 The Emergence of New Environmentalism in South Africa, 1988-1992. *South African Historical Journal* 42 (May), pp. 210-231.
- Swart, Sandra
 2003 Dogs and Dogma: A Discussion of Socio-political Construction of Southern African Dog "Breeds" as a Window into Social History. *South African and Contemporary History Seminar: UWC*. 171
- Vambe, Maurice T.
 [2002]2003 Spirit Possession and the Paradox of Post-colonial Resistance in Vera's *Nehanda*. In: Muponde, Robert & Maodzwa-Taruvunga, Mandivavarira (eds) *Sign and Taboo: Perspectives on the Poetic Fiction of Yvonne Vera*. Oxford: James Currey, pp. 127-138.
- Van Niekerk, Marlene
 [1994]1999 *Triomf*, translated by Leon de Kock. Johannesburg: Jonathan Ball; Cape Town: Quellerie.
- Vera, Yvonne
 1993 *Nehanda*. Harare: Baobab.
 1994 *Without a Name*. Harare: Baobab.

Woodward, Wendy

- 2001a Dog Stars and Dog Souls: The Lives of Dogs in *Triomf* by Marlene van Niekerk and *Disgrace* by J.M. Coetzee. *Journal of Literary Studies* 17 3/4: 90-119.
- 2001b “Dog(s) of the Heart” Encounters between Humans and Other Animals in the Poetry of Ruth Miller. *English Academy Review*, 18 December, pp. 73-86.