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Bestiaries: the Animal and the Human in Milan Kundera's *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* and J.M. Coetzee's *Disgrace*.

Daniella Cadiz Bedini/ CDZDAN001

A minor dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Arts in English in Literature and Modernity.

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COMPULSORY DECLARATION

This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. It is my own work. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in, this dissertation from the work, or works, of other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.

Signature: Daniella Cadiz Bedini Date: 11 February 2013

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Abstract

Author: Daniella Cadiz Bedini, cadiz.d@gmail.com

Supervisor: Associate Professor Carrol Clarkson, carrol.clarkson@uct.ac.za

Title: 'Bestiaries: the Human and the Animal in Milan Kundera's *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* and J.M. Coetzee's *Disgrace*'

In his book, *The Open* (2004), Giorgio Agamben suggests that the border between the human and the animal passes "first of all as a mobile border within living man". At stake in the construction of this border is a division of the human and the animal into separate and homogenous groups, and subsequently a denial of a multiplicity of life forms and experience. This relates to what Derrida (2004) has deemed "the self-interested misrecognition of what is called the Animal in general", and is something other critics working in the field of animal studies have discussed.

In this thesis I read Milan Kundera's novel *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* and J.M. Coetzee's *Disgrace* in line with Agamben's notion of the fluidity of the human-animal border. The first chapter of this dissertation, "Behaving like Animals", offers a reading of the biblical tale of *Genesis* and of the numerous sexual encounters in the novels that complicate the assumption of shame as being "proper to man". The second chapter, "Alternative lives, Alternative Deaths", challenges the idea of Driepoot's death in *Disgrace* as being 'euthanasia' and, moreover, examines the complexities of mourning the death of what Jeff McMahan has deemed "beings on the margins of life", which includes both humans and animals.

In my analysis of these novels, I have borrowed from different, seemingly disconnected, critical discourses. In some cases, this has meant 'inserting' the animal into these theories in places where the animal was not explicitly named. This has meant putting pressure on existing lines of enquiry. My multi-disciplinary

approach to theorising animals, and our relations to and with them, suggests different avenues for research in the growing field of animal studies.

Introduction

Beginnings

animal, n.

Etymology: <Anglo-Norman and Middle French *animal* (French *animal*) living creature, beast (excluding man) (12th cent. in Old French), living creature (excluding plants) (13th cent.), stupid or uncouth person (1537) and its etymon classical Latin *animal* living creature (including man), living organism (including plants), animal other than man, (applied contemptuously to a person) creature, brute, in post-classical Latin also animal nature in man (6th cent.)

animal, adj.

Of a human being, or a human attribute, faculty, etc.: having or sharing some of the features or functions of an animal; characteristic of or like (that of) an animal; physical or instinctive, rather than intellectual, moral, or spiritual. Cf. animal spirit n. Sometimes with neutral or positive sense: 'physical, natural, innate'; but more often having negative connotations: 'animal-like, bestial, carnal'.

- OED 'animal'

[...] I move from "the ends of man," that is the confines of man, to "the crossing of borders" between man and animal. Passing across borders or to the ends of man I come to surrender to the animal, to the animal in itself, to the animal in me and the animal at unease with itself...

- *The Animal that Therefore I am*, 3.

The dictionary definition of 'animal' contains more than sixty possible meanings, including composite words and metaphoric uses of the word. Sometimes the 'animal' is explained via a separation from the 'human', at other times the 'animal' is used to explain 'human' attributes or those that distinguish one 'human' from other 'humans'. These combinations are at once dependent on each other for meaning, and at the same time used to differentiate one from the other. Crucially, although the term 'animal' has changed over time, its use to describe a 'human' has overwhelmingly carried negative connotations. But since both 'animal' and 'human' need each other for co-definition, it is odd that the term 'animal' should denote negative aspects of the 'human' (but not the other way around). These disparities and problems come to the fore in the two novels in this thesis: Milan Kundera's *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* (1984) and J.M. Coetzee's *Disgrace*

(1999). Here, I will explore some of the ways in which these two texts interpret the nebulous border between the ‘human’ and the ‘animal’. For the sake of legibility I will no longer use inverted commas when speaking about these two groups. The reader can assume they are present in my thoughts, as the meaning of the term is not static but depends on, among other things, the cultural environment in which it is used. The novels are set in different time periods, and help depict this point.

There are, however, numerous points of convergence in the work of these two writers. Although both have received critical attention (Coetzee more than Kundera), no one has yet begun a conversation about the main dog characters in each novel: Karenin and Driepoot. More specifically, although Driepoot and the death of animals in *Disgrace* has sparked many areas of debate (a look at the contents page of numerous books can confirm this), Karenin and his death have been ignored, moaned at for disrupting the classical notion of "novelistic development", deemed as being "seemingly unrelated to the actions and situations" of the other characters,¹ or even relegated to the sphere of "motif" in the novel.² The separate chapters of this dissertation bring to the fore, if not directly the animal characters in the novels, then at least the questions that they bring up in relation to the human characters therein.

As the dictionary definition of ‘animal’ depicts, the ideas that permeate the animal are closely aligned to the concept of the human. In a similar vein, Agamben notes that the various divisions that separate life “into vegetable and relational, organic and animal, animal and human” pass “first of all as a mobile border within living man” and fundamentally, “without this intimate caesura the very decision of what is human and what is not would probably not be possible”.³ What is striking about these lines are the fluid (thus changeable and constantly redefined) nature of what it means to be human and the crucial role of the animal in a human self-definition. That is, the latter is used as a measuring stick by which the former is judged, and visa versa. The animal becomes the means by which the

human and the non-human are defined. This is problematic because it entails a set of criteria that appear to fit neatly into the concept of the human and are thus said to be lacking in the animal. It also creates a normative model of the human that is pernicious to those that do not fit the mould. This is precisely what critics working in the field of animal studies have argued against.

In a 2004 interview with Elizabeth Roudinesco titled “Violence against Animals”, Jacques Derrida reflects on the ontological, scientific and physical violence committed against animals, even through the apparent separation that is signaled and created by oppositional terms such as human and animal:

I am suspicious of the appellation “Animal” in the singular, as if there were simply Man *and* the Animal, as if the homogenous concept THE Animal could be extended universally to all nonhuman forms of living beings [...] Wherever something like “the animal” is named, the gravest, most resistant, also the most naïve and the most self-interested presuppositions dominate what is called human culture (and not only Western culture); in any case they dominate the philosophical discourse that has been prevalent for centuries.⁴

The dominant assumption that Derrida hints at can be traced back in various ways. The ecofeminist Carol Adams (1990), for instance, interprets the Garden of Eden as a vegetarian paradise,⁵ and Derrida in other ways challenges an interpretation of the human protagonists in the tale of *Genesis* as sole proprietors of the animals. Moreover, the Italian philosopher Giorgio Agamben goes back even further to examine the Aristotelian notion of *zoe* and *bios* in numerous of his writings.⁶ The distinction in these concepts is the one between political life and bodily life. The animal is relegated to a state of bodily life, which is more vulnerable to physical harm. Among others, the work of these writers informs many of my own thoughts in this thesis. What these different thinkers have in common is a type of thinking that displaces a purely human account of events and also of human agency. This human agency is constructed on the basis of the human as, implicitly, *Homo sapiens*, that is, a ‘thinking being’. Contrary to this, the

animal has been relegated to the realm of instinct. Like other dualisms that have been challenged in the critical discourses of, for instance, gender theory, queer and race studies, the animal is a construct. But what does one mean when one says that the animal is a construct? One of the implications of viewing the animal in this way is that it affects a view of the human as a heterogeneous group, as well. In other words, any question on the animal has repercussions on the supposed meaning of the human. This is because the two concepts, though intended to be distinct, are ultimately dependant on each other for meaning and affirmation.

Few modern texts exemplify this duality as clearly (or have been as thoroughly commented)⁷ as René Descartes' *Discourse on Method* (1637). In Part V of this text Descartes makes the notorious comparison of animals to "automata, or moving machines".⁸ In this way they are said to be able to react, but are denied the ability to suffer. Additionally, Descartes claims that animals lack language and "this proves not only that the brutes have less reason than man, but that they have none at all".⁹ Thus, alongside a denial of language, animals are denied the ability to think. Finally, animals are denied consciousness and with that, an eternal soul (which, in opposition, humans supposedly possess). Descartes' conception of animal souls, however, betrays a sense of ambiguity: he allows animals to possess one, but declares that "feeble minds" must not suppose "that the soul of the brutes is of the same nature with our own".¹⁰

The problem of the soul casts its shadow in both *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* and in *Disgrace*. In Kundera's novel, the problem forms the basis (and the title) of two of its sections, and we are reminded by the ever-present narrator that Tereza's constant gazing into the mirror is but "a longing to be a body unlike other bodies".¹¹ What is at stake in the denial of the soul is the horror of being only a body like all others, "one like the next, with souls invisible".¹² In the chapters that follow, I argue that, for various reasons, Tereza's point of view becomes fundamental to our understanding of the animal experience in Kundera's novel. Importantly, in *Disgrace* the problem of the soul gains resonance, not with reference to a human character, but to the abandoned or ill animals at the Animal Welfare Clinic. Here, Lurie's attention to the material existence of the animals,

even after their deaths, signals the possibility that there is more to animal existence than purely a bodily life.¹³

For Derrida, “when it comes to the relation to “the animal””, the Cartesian divide between the body and soul, which has come to represent the divide between the human and the animal, “determines all of modernity”.¹⁴ Essentially, this divide “assumes, for animal language, a system of signs without response: *reactions* but no *response* [...] with everything that depends on this distinction, which is always limitless”.¹⁵ Derrida sees the border between the human and the animals as fluid and porous. For this same reason, however, the scope of separation can become “limitless”, that is, expandable with every new distinction.

In line with this, Matthew Calarco (2008) similarly states, “the aim of trying to specify what constitutes being human is, at bottom, an ontologically bankrupt and politically pernicious project”.¹⁶ This ontological bankruptcy, however, is one that continues to separate and to be paid for in animal lives and in animal representations of beings considered less-than-human. The two novels I will explore are immersed in complex and at times problematic images and representations of this. The insult Lurie screams at Pollux when he catches him spying on Lucy in the shower, “*You swine!* [...] *You filthy swine!*”¹⁷ sheds light on this aspect. Of importance here is the role of (violent and negative) language in the construction of the animal.

Accordingly, Matthew Calarco observes that in the western philosophical tradition, “the putative break with animal instinct comes [...] with the acquisition of language”.¹⁸ “It is because animals lack language”, he goes on to state, “that they are unable to break with their environmental and instinctual milieu... ”.¹⁹ This is, of course, a point that many critics working in the field of animal studies have stated, and argued against. In Kundera’s novel, the notion of human language as depicting a form of human rationality or transcendence is comically thrown into disarray. Sabina and Franz’ affair, for instance, is marked by linguistic and conceptual misunderstandings, which the narrator attempts to clarify

(unsuccessfully) in the “Dictionary of Misunderstood Words” in part three of the novel.²⁰

For philosophers in the Continental tradition, therefore, the “question of the animal”²¹ is not an isolated one. It hinges on innumerable other issues that affect more than just animals. For Derrida, its importance lies in that

it also represents the limit upon which all the great questions are formed and determined, as well as all the concepts that attempt to delimit what is “proper to man” , the essence and future of humanity, ethics, politics, law, “human rights,” “crimes against humanity,” “genocide” etc.”²²

Agamben similarly notes that “it is more urgent to work on these divisions [...] than it is to take positions on the great issues, on so-called human rights and values”.²³ This is because, for Agamben, the border between the human and the animal passes first through the human. Thus, this division is conceived as the most elemental, the one all others stem from. In line with this, he goes on to state, “perhaps even the most luminous sphere of our relations with the divine depends, in some way, on that darker one which separates us from the animal”.²⁴

In his essay *The Animal that therefore I am* (2008) Derrida returns to the question of the animal. The original French title of his essay, *L'Animal que donc Je Suis*, mirrors Descartes' original dictum "Je pense donc je suis" from his *Discourse on Method* (1637), also originally in French.²⁵ That Derrida's own arguments concerning animals are so vehemently against Descartes' is doubly reflected in the skewed title of his essay. Here, he takes to task not only Descartes for his mechanization of animals and the careless attitude to their suffering, but also other philosophers such as Aristotle, Kant, Heidegger, Lacan and Lévinas for their own disavowal of the complexity of animal life.²⁶ Part of the complexities that they deny the animal are reason, the ability to mourn, to feel pain, to be able to laugh, and an awareness of death.²⁷ Derrida traces these prejudices directed at the animal via a reading of the biblical myth of *Genesis*. Here, he critiques the conflation of Adam's naming of the animals with his taking possession of them.²⁸

Derrida examines the stakes in this “scene of name calling”²⁹ and asks a set of fundamental questions:

Who was born first, before the names? Which one saw the other come to this place, so long ago? Who will have been the first occupant, and therefore the master? Who the subject? Who has remained the despot, for so long now?³⁰

Crucially, in Kundera’s *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, Karenin has a sense of intentionality, considers Mefisto the pig his friend, is said to smile, and feel sadness. Towards the end of the novel, moreover, we may read his desire to act better than he as depicting a level of pity towards his human companions (who are suffering because of his illness). In Coetzee’s *Disgrace*, the animals at the clinic are not denied an awareness of death and Katy is described as being in mourning because “no one wants her, and she knows it”.³¹ In addition, the novel does not deny that animals can feel a sense of shame. We will return to the rich set of concerns that Derrida explores in his essay in the second chapter of this thesis.

In modern societies the dog occupies an ambiguous zone between object (belonging to a human owner) and a living being. Moreover, as a domestic animal, the dog is almost entirely dependent on the human for survival. In his seminal essay “Why look at Animals?” John Berger (1980) articulates the complexities of this role:

Is there not one way in which animals, instead of disappearing, continue to multiply? Never have there been so many household pets as are to be found today in the cities of the richest countries. [...] The pet is either sterilised, extremely limited in its exercise, deprived of almost all other animal contact, and fed with artificial foods. This is the material process which lies behind the truism that pets come to resemble their masters or mistresses. They are creatures of their owner’s way of life.³²

Berger's choice of words- "masters", "mistresses", "owner"- is telling. Again, the implied relation between the animal and the human is one of ownership, appropriation, or domination. While Berger's words about the artificiality of pet lives ring true in some ways, in this thesis I want to move away from a negative (and belittling) notion of pets as a purely middle class fancy. Here, I move closer towards what Donna Haraway, in *When Species Meet* (2008), reminds us is the root of the term 'companion': from the Latin *cum panis* "with bread", thus referencing those who break bread together.³³ Haraway's focus sheds light on the aspect of a shared domain (because to break bread with someone means that both parties inhabit the same space, even momentarily), and also on a crucial link between humans and animals: the very physical reality of eating, which forms part of numerous other processes we have in common. The breaking of bread and its associated meanings of peace and understanding come to the fore in Kundera's novel. Here, Tomas and Karenin literally break bread. This follows from a game they've established before and which (towards the end of the novel, when Karenin is ill) becomes emblematic of Karenin's inclusion in the unit formed by Tomas and Sabina and the mutual love they share:

He [Tomas] put the roll in his mouth and dropped down on all fours opposite Karenin. Then he slowly crawled up to him. [...] Without moving his body, the dog took the end of the roll sticking out of Tomas's mouth into his own. Then Tomas let go of his end so that Karenin could eat it all. [...] After a short while, the dog responded with some yelps of his own. At last! What they were hoping for! Karenin feels like playing! Karenin hasn't lost the will to live!³⁴

This depiction of shared bread sheds light on another important aspect of Karenin's persona in the novel: his name. Karenin is initially given to Tereza as a gift by Tomas when they get married. He is named after one of the protagonists in the book Tereza had with her when she first met Tomas, *Anna Karenina*. The door that opens when this name is introduced lets in a lot of dust. For one thing, the dog is actually a bitch, and the name 'Karenin' belongs not to the female

protagonist Anna, but to her estranged husband. Tomas and Tereza think about this and move on to have a discussion about the name. Soon afterwards Tereza wonders: “wont calling her Karenin affect her sexuality?”³⁵ Here, even Karenin’s sexuality is not “a matter [...] left undifferentiated- or neutralised”,³⁶ but is instead addressed in numerous parts of the novel. From that moment forth, Karenin is referred to as ‘he’ and no longer as ‘it’.

Conversely, in *Disgrace*, Driepoot is consistently referred to as it, and this is related to the fact that Lurie “has been careful not to give” Driepoot a name.³⁷ It is Bev who names him in reference to his physical deformity (his “withered left hindquarter which it drags behind it”).³⁸ Here, Coetzee’s inclusion of a body that is not whole highlights a further degree of non-normativity with regards to the body. I want to suggest that this is a central preoccupation in both novels. In *Disgrace*, Driepoot’s deformity comes to represent, to a large degree, the ‘animal experience’.

The differences in naming highlight an important distinction between Karenin and Driepoot: the former is granted the subjectivity of great literature (and as I argue in the following chapters, is allowed a degree of narrative subjectivity, too), while the latter is largely confined to the realm of the body. That Lurie would think of including Driepoot in his opera, however, also depicts the emerging possibility of inclusion in Coetzee’s novel.³⁹

The episodes in naming are fascinating on their own, but they may also be looked at in relation to Derrida’s discussion on naming. These episodes are in some ways emblematic of the expansive webs these novels cast, and also of the border crossings that Karenin and Driepoot as characters in the novels come to represent. They also highlight the various avenues of investigation (gender theory, animal studies, philosophies of naming, etc) that literary representations of animals invite us to visit.

In line with this, in this thesis I have consciously ‘inserted’ the animal into areas of enquiry where the animal was not explicitly named. I have done this as a way to put pressure on existing theories and, indirectly, to highlight the limitations of a purely ‘human’ *vision du monde*. I aim to open up old debates and find other ways to

discuss the rich and complex set of questions that are brought to the fore in an engagement with animal companions.

In the first chapter of this thesis, “Behaving Like Animals”, we continue to discuss the ideas that emerged from Derrida’s reading of *Genesis* from *The Animal that therefore I Am*. I look specifically at David Velleman’s (2001) reading of this biblical myth and the subsequent construction of shame. In addition, I offer a reading of some of the sexual encounters that take place in the novels to depict the ways in which they trouble the notion of shame as being “proper to man, that is to say, foreign to animals”.⁴⁰

In the second chapter, “Alternative Lives, Alternative Deaths”, I shadow Agamben’s notion of the “mobile border within living man”⁴¹ to examine the stakes of existing as what Jeff McMahan (2002) has deemed “beings on the margins of life”, which include the comatose, foetuses, and animals within its conception.⁴² Moreover, Judith Butler’s work on non-normative, or queer, lives, guides my enquiry in that chapter. Therein, the physical deaths of both Karenin and Driepoot are seen through the scope of what Freud deemed “the work of mourning”.⁴³

The final part of this dissertation is, of course, a conclusion. But, as its title (“More Beginnings”) suggests, it is one that does not attempt to conclude on what Derrida has referred to as the “the question of the animal”. Instead, this thesis aims to open the doors of critical enquiry to the role of the animal in literary investigation.

Chapter 1

Behaving Like Animals

Perhaps the woman stood frequently in front of the mirror observing her body, trying to peer through it into her soul, as Tereza had done since childhood. Surely she, too, had harbored the blissful hope of using her body as a poster for her soul. But what a monstrous soul it would have to be if it reflected that body, that rack of four pouches.

- *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, 137-138.

'The Church Fathers had a long debate about them, and decided they don't have proper souls,' he observes. 'Their souls are tied to their bodies and die with them.' Lucy Shrugs. 'I'm not sure that I have a soul. I wouldn't know a soul if I saw one.'

- *Disgrace*, 78-79.

On close inspection, all literature is probably a version of the apocalypse that seems to me rooted, no matter what its sociohistorical conditions might be, on the fragile border (borderline cases) where identities (subject/object, etc.) do not exist or only barely so-double, fuzzy, heterogeneous, animal, metamorphosed, altered, abject.

- *Powers of Horror*, 207.

One of the most discordant tales in Kundera's novel is the one that tells the story of Stalin's son who "habitually left a foul mess" in the latrine of the German camp he was imprisoned in during World War II.⁴⁴ He is unable to stand the humiliation that he, "the Son of God (because his father was revered like God)", defecates. He is accused "of being dirty"⁴⁵ and commits suicide by running onto the electrified fence that surrounds the camp. "Stalin's son," the narrator tells us, "laid down his life for shit".⁴⁶ What his death highlights, we are further told, is the "vertiginously close" relation between the "sublime" and the "paltry": the desire for a link to the divine, and the reality of the physical body.⁴⁷ The narrator goes on to trace this relation from different Gnostic and theological viewpoints.⁴⁸ The death of Stalin's son, therefore, is no trivial matter. It sheds light on a metaphysical question⁴⁹ that casts its shadow over other characters in the novel. As Guy Scarpetta (1987) notes, Stalin's son's conundrum explores the duality of "the body and the soul, of the upper and lower, that of a humanity created "in the

image of God" but needing to shit every day".⁵⁰ In this way, Scarpetta sees defecation "in metonymic relation to original sin, to the indelible stain of the species".⁵¹ The word "stain" can here be figured as the one left from physical processes (which we share with other animals), and can be further thought of as the burden of shame, which in *Genesis* is attributed only to the human and is again related to the body.

The biblical tale of *Genesis* tells us that in the Garden of Eden Adam and Eve "were both naked" and "were not ashamed".⁵² However, after eating from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, both their eyes "were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves aprons".⁵³

The question of what exactly Adam and Eve were made aware of has vexed readers for centuries. In an article titled "The Genesis of Shame", David Velleman (2001) takes an original stance in his reading of this biblical tale. He suggests that the knowledge gained from eating the forbidden fruit had little to do with a discovery of the possibility of sexual encounter between Adam and Eve, which surely they knew from before given that they had already been commanded by God to "be fruitful and multiply", and had cleaved to each other "and become one flesh".⁵⁴ "The knowledge gained from the tree," claims the writer,

was not physically extracted from the fruit itself [...] it was knowledge gained in the act of eating the fruit [...] and] was gained in practice only after having been suggested in theory, by the serpent. What the serpent put into Eve's ear as a theory, which she and Adam went on to prove in practice, was the idea of disobedience: "You don't have to obey".⁵⁵

Interestingly, Velleman views the challenge to obedience as lying in a negation of the godly command to "be fruitful and multiply". He notes that Adam and Eve became ashamed only when they realised that they had some control over the

actions of their bodies, but that this could be overturned (and visibly so) by physical desire.⁵⁶ This newfound knowledge thus brings forth “if not the idea of saying “no” to sex, then at least the idea of saying “not here” and “not now””.⁵⁷ In this way the writer traces the idea of shame into the domains of the public and the private. This requires a specific place and time in which to perform certain bodily acts, including sexual ones. It entails not only recognition of privacy and transgression, but also an awareness of the role of the body (now refigured as culpability) in this transgression. In a way, observes Velleman, “the serpent’s message of disobedience did convey a piece of sexual knowledge, after all”.⁵⁸

For Velleman, then, the biblical quote about Adam and Eve’s eyes being opened hinges on the difference between looking and seeing. It is not that Adam and Eve were blind before eating the fruit, or that they were not naked, but that they became conscious of their nudity and the possibilities inherent in that. The denial to “be fruitful and multiply” is one of these. The difference between looking and seeing thus marks the conventional split between the animal and the human, the body and the mind, being and knowing.

In line with this, Velleman states that privacy “is made possible by the ability to choose in opposition to inclination”.⁵⁹ In other words, it is made possible only through a conscious negation of instincts. At this point, he falls in line with “the old Churchfathers” spoken of by Lurie in *Disgrace*.⁶⁰ He states:

To a creature who does whatever its instincts demand, there is no space between impulse and action, and there is accordingly less space between inner and outer selves. Because a dog has relatively little control over its impulses, its impulses are legible in its behaviour. Whatever itches, it scratches (or licks or nips or drags along the ground), and so its itches are always overt, always public. By contrast, our capacity to resist desires enables us to choose which desires our behaviour will express.⁶¹

For the writer, the process of knowing what to do in public and what to leave for the private domain requires making “your noises and movements [...] interpretable, not merely as coherent speech and action, but also as intended to be

interpretable as such”.⁶² It means being able to wear a social mask that limits what is done in public and separates it from the private. The writer is careful to note that “self-presentation is not a dishonest activity” because

there is nothing dishonest about choosing not to scratch wherever and whenever it itches. Although you don't make all of your itches overt, in the manner of a dog, you aren't falsely pretending to be less itchy than a dog.⁶³

For Velleman, it comes down to knowing which itch to scratch, and where to scratch it. The failure to conform to this, either through inability, ignorance or defiance, signals a transgression that aligns the transgressor with animals. In the end, “our sense of privacy”, becomes intricately woven with “an expression of our personhood”, which animals are here denied.⁶⁴ What is interesting here is that the notion of privacy finds its origin in humanity’s first consciousness. This marks the split between an interior invisible realm (the mind or soul) and our visible presence (the body). In the tale of *Genesis*, the animals did not eat from the forbidden tree, thus remained innocent of that transgression, and of the subsequent punishments related to that fall (including expulsion from Eden and the burden of shame). That they are relieved of blame, however, has initiated them into another type of fall: they are seen as different and separate to the human. This has been a form of punishment, and has led to subsequent punishments. In our colloquial use of the term, even calling someone “shameless” has negative connotations.

Velleman’s analysis of shame, although riddled with an overt sense of what Richard Ryder in 1970 coined “speciesism”,⁶⁵ sheds light on the role of the body in relation to shame. That is, shame entails an acute awareness of the body and its actions. Therefore, at least since *Genesis*, shame can be thought of as a human attribute. A denial of the body or its desires (whether it be scratching an itch, passing gas or fornicating) signals an ability to control the body and its urges, thus safeguarding against shame. To control these urges is seen as an element of separation from the ‘animal kingdom’ (which becomes characterised as lacking in shame, thus having no need to cover up the body and its processes). In other

words, shame can be said to belong to the descendants of the fallen, and thus be seen as a factor that distinguishes them from animals.

The biblical tale of *Genesis* forms a crucial backdrop for our understanding of both these novels. Coetzee's *Disgrace* makes several subtle references to it (even in its title)⁶⁶ and Kundera's novel contains longer, more detailed, references to the Fall and specifically to the consequences on the treatment of animals.⁶⁷ As I stated earlier, one of the elements that link these two novels is a preoccupation with the 'human' and a persistent testing of the limits between the human and the animal. I want to argue that the idea of shame as being a typically human attribute is thrown into disarray in various ways in both these novels. The title of this chapter is indebted to the many sexual encounters that take place in both novels and to thinking through some of the ways in which these acts complicate, rather than safeguard, a sense of what it means to be human.

Kundera's novel was published a few years before Derrida's *The Animal that therefore I am*, and both texts take to heart the notion that animals, unlike Adam and Eve, were never expelled from Eden. The narrator of *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* makes the incisive (and comic) observation that "of course, Genesis was written by a man, not a horse".⁶⁸ This gesture alone signals a change from reading *Genesis* as only a tale consisting of human protagonists and human consequence, and instead shifts the attention to the role of animals. The taken-for-granted supremacy of humans (and male humans at that) above other animals is explained as being so entrenched in human outlook, however, that to recognise it would only be possible from the point of view of "a third party [...] a Martian [...] a non-man".⁶⁹ Velleman's astute description of the human as a "self-presenting creature" is relevant to us here as it discloses the human as one who makes absent, or hides, aspects of one's life.⁷⁰ One way to do this is through language. As the word "hides" connotes, this can be a conscious decision, and can have baleful or otherwise treacherous implications. The human fall from grace, after all, rests upon the deceit (or "subtle" words) spoken by the serpent.⁷¹

There are constant references to the body, the invasion of privacy and the dislodgement of language in *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*. Kundera's novel depicts various scenarios where language, or even simple conversations between friends, are used to create suspicion and are the origin of trickery, hypocrisy or deceit. The weekly radio show that broadcasts the "montage of private conversations recorded with the latest bugging devices by a Czech spy who had infiltrated the émigré community" is an example of this.⁷² The horror that these shows inspire in the listening audience is not so much concerned with what is said (which is acknowledged as being the same things everyone else is saying) as with the fact that the private is made known publically. The dismantling of the boundaries between the private and the public is made more threatening by the inclusion of words and expressions that call forth an (unseen) animal cluster. In the passage from where this quote is taken, the description of the unaware speakers as having "their every step dogged", and words and phrases such as "bugging devices", the "strength and vitality of an ox" and "bugged" depict this.⁷³ There is something decidedly un-human, inhumane, in making public news of private matters. What is threatened here is not only one's privacy, but one's sense of what it means to be human when living within a social body that routinely ignores the borders one has set up.

The issue of borders is, of course, an important aspect of *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*. Borders are instrumental in guiding the events of the novel, which is set during the Prague Spring of 1968. Thus, it set at a time when Czechoslovakia's own borders (in the sense of physical or geographical markers) are invaded by the Soviet army. This invasion itself forms the basis for the transgression of a number of other borders, not least the ones that demarcate the private realm from the public one (as we saw in the discussion on the recorded conversations). Moreover, the novel was published in installments in 1984, when Kundera was in exile⁷⁴ and at a time in which other notorious borders still divided the European continent (the Berlin Wall would only come down in 1989). This division, made literal by walls, casts its shadow in the novel:

Since the days of the French Revolution, one half of Europe has been referred to as the left, the other half as the right. Yet to define

one or the other by means of the theoretical principles it professes is all but impossible. And no wonder: political movements rest not so much on rational attitudes as on the fantasies, images, words, and archetypes that come together to make up this or that *political kitsch*.⁷⁵

Nevertheless, geographical borders mark the life of various characters in the novel. Franz, for instance, in his search for “the fantasy of the Grand March”,⁷⁶ initiates the fateful trip to the border between Cambodia and Thailand, only to not be allowed to cross, and is later killed.⁷⁷

The crossing of borders has similarly negative consequences for Tomas and Tereza when they emigrate from Czechoslovakia to Switzerland. When Tereza unexpectedly returns to Prague, Tomas has the startling realisation that:

the borders between his country and the rest of the world were no longer open. No telegrams or telephone calls could bring her back. The authorities would never let her travel abroad. Her departure was staggeringly definitive.⁷⁸

On his return to Czechoslovakia, Tomas is “welcomed by columns of Russian tanks”.⁷⁹ The ironic reference to his homecoming signals a border (marked by a row of Russian tanks that take half an hour to pass) that he will not be able to cross again. His return is also “staggeringly definitive” and Tomas and Tereza live out the rest of their days in the countryside. Curiously, various critics writing about Kundera’s novel have focused on (or formulated) other imaginary (or imagined) borders in the novel. These borders have been used to separate characters into groups, which in fact mimics a move taken by the ever-present narrator of *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*: “We all need someone to look at us. We can be divided into four categories according to the kind of look we wish to live under...”.⁸⁰ For instance, in her analysis of Kundera’s oeuvre, Gurstein (2003) signals “three kinds of characters or ideal types”.⁸¹ These are “the vulgarian, the liberationist, and the modest person”.⁸² Gurstein states that “whether from hubris or ignorance, characters like Tereza’s mother, Tomas, Edwige, and Jan [in *The*

Book of Laughter and Forgetting] are unable to recognize, as Tereza does, that there are definite limits to experience, lest one finds oneself trapped on the other side of "the border"⁸³. Similarly, the French writer and critic Guy Scarpetta (1987), writing about sexuality in *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, states that the novel "places in opposition romantic obsession, which seeks THE woman in every woman, and can only lead to disappointment, and the libertine obsession, whose donjuanism aims at the uniqueness of each woman, her "formula"⁸⁴. The initial distinction Scarpetta draws between romantic and sexual obsessions leads him to further divide the characters into groups. That Scarpetta first divides them on the basis of sexual difference ("on the masculine side...as for the women...")⁸⁵ seems inadequate given that, as I intend to show, the novel is particularly concerned with a careful dismantling of static notions of gender, traditional sexual roles (the passive woman and the dominant male) or even species lines. We can thus usefully rework his analysis into a division of those that are "inept at libertinage"⁸⁶ (Franz and Tereza) and those that thrive in the physicality of the body (Tomas, Sabina and Tereza's mother). There is some truth in Scarpetta's naming of this latter group as those that "rehabilitate shit and wallow in it"⁸⁷. These divisions also form the backbone to the structure of the novel, specifically in the two separate chapters titled 'Soul and Body'.

One way to articulate what is meant by the 'border' that Gurstein and other critics hint at but do not explain, is to say that it relates to the complex (and somewhat equally imagined) boundaries between the human and the animal. That these boundaries cause anxiety in some characters, and that even critics of the novels struggle to define it, is telling. It hints, if not exactly at the non-existence of a border, then at least at what Giorgio Agamben has deemed "first of all [...] a mobile border",⁸⁸ one that is permeable to change and is in that way dependant on the social situations in which it exists.

I want to maintain the links that critics have drawn between the transgression of purity and sin, shame and shamelessness, or have simply called the "border", but I want to add that these divisions also hinge on the duality between the body and the soul, which the novel attempts to trace. This duality also introduces an

important division in the novel between the animal and the human, which the reader experiences through Tereza.

“The point where difference and identity undecidedly converge for Kundera,” writes Terry Eagleton, “is above all sexuality, linking as it does the unrepeatability of a particular love-relationship with the ceaselessly repetitive, tediously predictable character of the bodily drives”.⁸⁹ Here, then, Eagleton presents us with a simple, but sophisticated, description of the ‘undecided convergence’ of two fundamental aspects of the novel: the physical and the spiritual. The complex, and seemingly incongruous, relation between these two poles falls most heavily on Tereza in the novel, who we are told repeatedly by the narrator has, since childhood, “stood frequently in front of the mirror observing her body, trying to peer through it into her soul”.⁹⁰ It is from her perspective, after all, that the idea of the body as the ‘seat of the soul’ begins to be dismantled. Through her eyes, for instance, we see breasts that are not idealised but instead described as “quivering pouches” that do nothing more than spray “tiny drops of cold water right and left” when leaving the sauna.⁹¹ Similarly, her thoughts make us imagine the buttocks as “two enormous sacks”.⁹² There is, however, something decidedly honest in the description of these two body parts, for in their shape and dimension, they may certainly resemble the roundness of a bag (“pouch” or “sack”). Here, Tereza does not know the woman whose body she is describing, thus is able to look on her (her physical qualities) in a detached manner, without seeking out her ‘soul’ (as she attempts to do with herself in front of the mirror). The language she uses reflects this and is devoid of emotional touches that would ‘dress up’ her descriptions. In a way then, her language is as naked as the woman is.⁹³ This shows that, if language has the capacity to adorn and beautify, it is equally able to dress down or, in a sense, expose. This same level of objectivity is used by the narrator to describe the human face, depicting it as “nothing but an instrument panel registering all the body mechanisms: digestion, sight, hearing, respiration, thought”.⁹⁴ That thought would here be classified as a mechanism of the body is

interesting because it diminishes a sense of it being attached to the mind, rationality or other 'higher functions'. Instead, it is brought down to the level of reflex. Gurstein observes that this way of seeing the body is related to an attempt "to do away with those artifices that embellish or disguise the potentially leveling [sic] aspects of bodily functions".⁹⁵ What Gurstein does not explain, however, is what level these depictions supposedly come to. I argue that what these descriptions do is remind us of the physical urges and processes we share with other animals, thus humbling a view of the human as superior or as somehow more enlightened than animals. "By concentrating on the body," Gurstein notes, every experience is pulled "down to earth, turning spirit into flesh".⁹⁶

The description of bodies as "flesh" can, moreover, be linked to Tomas' own clinical language used elsewhere in the novel. His profession means he has consented, like other doctors, "to spend his life involved with human bodies and all that they entail".⁹⁷ The emphasis on the body, however, does not diminish the sense that there may be more to the human than pure physicality:

Surgery takes the basic imperative of the medical profession to its outermost border, where the human makes contact with the divine. [. . .] God, it may be assumed, took murder into account; He did not take surgery into account. He never suspected that someone would dare to stick his hand into the mechanism He had invented, wrapped carefully in skin, and sealed away from human eyes. When Tomas first positioned his scalpel on the skin of a man asleep under anaesthetic, then breached the skin with a decisive incision, and finally cut it open with a precise and even stroke (as if it were a piece of fabric - a coat, a skirt, a curtain) , he experienced a brief but intense feeling of blasphemy.⁹⁸

Here, the body and soul hang together in an uneasy compromise, as they do throughout the novel. As Gurstein notes, the description of the "brief but intense feeling of blasphemy" that Tomas feels the first time he cuts the skin of the patient "compels us to notice how closely the realm of the body is connected to things sacred".⁹⁹ Moreover, that the skin of the patient should be described

parenthetically “(as if it were a piece of fabric- a coat, a skirt, a curtain)” is telling, for all these objects are themselves meant to be a cover to the body or, like a curtain, to one’s privacy. We can see a link between Tomas (the “defiler of privacy”)¹⁰⁰ and Tereza’s mother, who we are told liked to parade naked before strangers, only to have a sixteen year old Tereza try “to protect her mother’s modesty” by quickly closing “the curtains so that no one could see from across the street”.¹⁰¹ The underbelly of the “brief but intense feeling of blasphemy”¹⁰² that Tomas experiences is here illustrated in the raucous laughter of Tereza’s mother and her friends:

“Tereza can't reconcile herself to the idea that the human body pisses and farts," she said. "What's so terrible about that?" and in answer to her own question she broke wind loudly. All the women laughed again.¹⁰³

Not surprisingly, we are told that Tereza grew up in a home where “there was no such thing as shame”.¹⁰⁴ In the novel Tereza is frequently described as trying to escape, physically and mentally, from the “world of immodesty”¹⁰⁵ in which her mother lives and to which she has forced her to belong. Her mother’s behaviour includes farting in public, blowing her nose loudly, speaking about her sex life, loosening her teeth, walking around naked and not closing doors in the house.¹⁰⁶ What horrifies Tereza about her mother is not only that she herself “can't reconcile [...] the idea that the human body pisses and farts”,¹⁰⁷ but that her mother lets in what Tereza regards as private, to the domain of the public. In her desire to escape from this “world of crudity”,¹⁰⁸ Tereza is, in some ways, not very different from Stalin’s son, who similarly cannot stand the incompatibility of the “sublime” and the “paltry”.¹⁰⁹ Both are constrained by a vision of the human that excludes, but cannot exist without, the body.

The tension between the holy and the quotidian casts its shadow over many parts of the novel. Notably, the duality between the purely physical and the ether-like spiritual substance that the soul represents is described as “that fundamental human experience”.¹¹⁰ This would suggest that animals, including Karenin in the novel, are exempt from this duality and thus retain only their physicality. I want to

argue, however, that through Tereza we gain an additional perspective on the animal in the novel. This is depicted through her close relation with Karenin, the various dream sequences of bodily vulnerability and the numerous comparisons of her to Saint Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of animals and the environment.¹¹¹

In the exploration of this duality, Tereza has recurring nightmares about being cast only as a body without a soul. We can think back to the Cartesian divide which denies animals a soul, and read Tereza's horror as depicting explicitly the violence of this denial: to be forced to live as only animal is, among other things, to be vulnerable to harm. I want to argue that Tereza's suffering at the cost of being considered only a body renders the experience of being only 'animal' explicit and legible. So while the narrative voice, especially the omniscient narrator, allows Karenin's thoughts to be perceptible,¹¹² a further dimension of comprehensibility is made possible through Tereza who clearly articulates the horror of being considered soulless.

Tereza likens this to existing in a world which is "nothing but a vast concentration camp of bodies, one like the next, with souls invisible".¹¹³ For her, this again harks back to her mother's world, where "all bodies were the same and marched behind one another in formation".¹¹⁴ Tereza experiences a similar horror when she recognises that Tomas' affairs will not stop:

She had come to him to escape her mother's world, a world where all bodies were equal. She had come to him to make her body unique, irreplaceable. But he, too, had drawn an equal sign between her and the rest of them: he kissed them all alike, stroked them alike, made no, absolutely no distinction between Tereza's body and the other bodies. He had sent her back into the world she tried to escape, sent to march naked with the other naked women.¹¹⁵

In Kundera's novel, the emergence of the soul (which is never defined but is articulated as a non-physical substance) 'rescues' the individual from this purely physical state. That Tereza yearns to form part of a spiritual, rather than physical, domain is made palpable in her desire for books and music, elements that she regards as "the emblems of a secret brotherhood [...] a single weapon against the

world of crudity surrounding her”.¹¹⁶ Here, Tereza draws a bold line separating the world of ‘culture’ from that of the body, which can in other words be described as the duality of the mind and the body, or forming part of the nature-culture divide. That a dog (thus steeped in the natural world) such as Karenin should be named after a highly regarded cultural product is thus of interest to us. It again draws attention to the complexity of his character and to the wider domain of meaning encompassed by his persona in the novel, which we will continue to explore in the following chapter.

As I have mentioned, the duality of the body and soul remains an enduring (and unresolved) concern in the novel, and comes to the fore especially in scenes of physical encounter. The sexual encounters that take place in the novel are some of these. It is here that words lose “their magic power”,¹¹⁷ which further sheds light on the body. Tereza’s affair with the engineer (who may be a spy) is an example of this and presents us, moreover, with a way in which the discourse surrounding the possession of a soul may be used to condone behaviour or evade a sense of wrongdoing or blasphemy.¹¹⁸ The image of Tereza’s soul hovering above the bed while she is in the throes of passion with the engineer demonstrates this:

...the engineer’s hand referred to her body, and she realised that she (her soul) was not at all involved, only her body, her body alone [...] she also knew that if the feeling of excitement was to continue, her soul’s approval would have to keep mute [...] what made the soul so excited was that the body was acting against its will; the body was betraying it, and the soul was looking on.¹¹⁹

After Tereza has sex with the engineer, she enters his toilet and defecates. She regards this as

in fact a desire to go to the extreme of humiliation, to become only and utterly a body, the body her mother used to say was good for nothing but digesting and excreting [...] Nothing could be more miserable than her naked body perched on the enlarged end of a sewer pipe.¹²⁰

Here, the description of the toilet as “the enlarged end of a sewer pipe” is another example of the ability to employ language as tool of embellishment or exposure, which is a recurring preoccupation in Kundera’s novel. The narrator explains that toilets

in modern water closets rise up from the floor like white water lilies. The architect does all he can to make man ignore what happens to his intestinal wastes after the water from the tank flushes them down the drain [...] the sewer pipelines reach far into our houses with their tentacles, they are carefully hidden from view, and we are happily ignorant of the Venice of shit underlying our bathrooms, dance halls, and parliaments.¹²¹

This description reveals the “hypocritical”¹²² construction of toilets that aim to disguise their function. Working class toilets, the narrator says, are less inclined to be as hypocritical and this is reflected in their modest (purely functional) design. Tereza’s mother and her husband belong to this group, hence perhaps their depiction as somehow more ‘animal’ and coarse, but also honest. That the pipelines in the above quote are described as tentacles that stretch across a number of domains (homes, areas of entertainment, and the place of politics) is therefore interesting because, once again, it depicts a shared aspect of physicality (despite one’s social situation) that “pulls every experience down to earth”.¹²³ Here, the aesthetic appeal of a toilet that resembles a water lily, parallels the covering up we do with words.

The hypocrisy I have just alluded to in terms of Tereza’s absent soul or the construction of toilets is visible also in the relationship between Franz and Sabina, which is similarly burdened by shame. Tereza’s desire to separate the sublime from the physical is comparable to Franz’s desire, when having sex, to seek a darkness that calls for an erasure of the limits of the body: “the darkness was pure, perfect, thoughtless, visionless, that darkness was without end, without borders; that darkness was the infinite we carry within us”.¹²⁴ For this to function, however, Franz establishes a strict set of borders that limits the time and place of his sexual rendezvous with Sabina. For him, thus, love “was not an extension of public life

but its antithesis”.¹²⁵ His creation of a “restricted zone of purity” that prohibits him from having sex with Sabina in certain places is emblematic of this.¹²⁶ The “independent space”¹²⁷ he creates allows him to have sex without feeling he has disregarded the border of the zone of purity he has created. Comically, this limits “their lovemaking to foreign cities”.¹²⁸ Franz’s attempts to demarcate a singular space, outside of his own conjugal space, illustrates his need to separate his heart or head (he is an academic, after all) from what his body craves. The joke here, of course, is that in spite of these self-imposed restrictions, Sabina and Franz continue their affair. Moreover, Franz falls deeply in love with Sabina and leaves his wife (only to be abandoned by Sabina before he has a chance to return to her).

The characters that remain furthest from a hypocritical account of their lives and actions are Tomas and Sabina. They are, moreover, the characters most at ease with the physical processes and urges of the body. Most notably, for instance, Sabina (unlike Tereza) has an orgasm at the thought of defecating in front of one of her other lovers, Tomas.¹²⁹ In various ways, Tomas and Sabina are the most ‘animalistic’ and shameless of the characters. Another way to explore this is through the encounter between Tomas and the stork-woman.

After Tomas loses his job, he becomes a window cleaner. This allows to him to continue his inconspicuous sexual encounters with all types of women. One of these women is referred to as the “stork-woman”¹³⁰ and is described in terms that mingle the animal and the human: “an odd combination of giraffe, stork, and sensitive young boy”.¹³¹ She initiates a “do as I do” kind of game” in which she mirrors every one of Tomas’ strokes and caress.¹³² This unsettles and fascinates him. On their second encounter she not only fails to comply with his “strip!” command (which has been, until now, an unfailing ploy of his) but actually counter-commands him to do the same thing.¹³³ She follows his movements along his own body and reaches his anus, “mimicking his moves with the precision of a mirror”.¹³⁴ Her own anus is described with words that suggest Tomas’ own medical language: “unusually prominent, evoking the long digestive tract that

ended there with a slight protrusion".¹³⁵ Here, neither Tomas nor the stork-woman is preoccupied with souls. Equally, no attention is paid to beautiful bodies. What comes to the fore is an acceptance of the body's oddness, or what might otherwise be perceived as ugliness.

In line with this, the encounter with the stork-woman is replete with adjectives of strangeness. These include "bizarre", "curiosities", "unusual" and "odd".¹³⁶ The images of mirrors, glass and water (in many forms: in the toilet, in the bucket, in urine, in wine and in sinks) also pervade this scene of sexual encounter. All these objects are able to reflect, which recalls the biblical myth founded on something that was seen, and also Tereza's constant looking in the mirror. Yet neither Tomas nor the stork-woman feel 'strange' or ever catch a glimpse of themselves in them. Perhaps what is unusual is that in this scenario of intense sensual enjoyment and transgression (both are married to other people and he has been sent by his boss to clean her windows), both characters remain, perhaps against the reader's judgement, free of shame. Here, the image of Tomas and the stork-woman standing above their garments naked and unashamed, coupled with the descriptions of water and wine, call to mind a quasi-religious interaction that is at odds with its highly sexualised nature.

Scarpetta notes that for characters "who are as far from puritanism as they are from pansexualism, from idealism as from naturalism, sexual pleasure *presupposes* the sense of sin".¹³⁷ For Scarpetta this can mean they acknowledge "that the consciousness of a stain is necessary, if only for the sake of transgressing that consciousness".¹³⁸ The prefix ('pre') in "presuppose" opens up the reading that the characters are in a state prior to this acknowledgement. Like Adam and Eve before the Fall, these characters are naked and not ashamed. We can thus read this scenario as "a typological return"¹³⁹ to a time before the Fall (there is a fall of sorts in this one, too)¹⁴⁰ in the Garden of Eden, before shame was ever felt. This means we can refigure these characters' lack of shame as linking them to Adam and Eve before sin, or to animals.

What Tomas, Sabina and the stork-woman share is a mutual fascination with the hidden aspects of the body (internal organs, intercourse, cleansing or defecation). On encountering Sabina again in Zurich after leaving Prague, for instance, Tomas

is happy to think that “he carried his way of living with him as a snail carries his house”.¹⁴¹ Unlike other characters in the novel, these characters celebrate, rather than bemoan, the permeability of the ‘border’.

Crucially, the “right to shame”¹⁴² that Tereza’s mother denies her daughter becomes a potent element in the safeguarding of (human) identity and guides the attitude and actions taken in *Disgrace* by Lucy and David. An important distinction is that Coetzee’s novel derails the idea of shame as pertaining only to humans. The image of the dog Katy “glancing around shiftily as if ashamed to be watched” while defecating demonstrates this.¹⁴³ Equally, we are told that before dying, the dogs at the clinic “flatten their ears, [...] droop their tails, as if they too feel the disgrace of dying”.¹⁴⁴ Here, the word ‘disgrace’ creates an implicit link between the dogs and Lurie, who has elsewhere described himself as being “in what I suppose one would call disgrace”.¹⁴⁵ But not only are the animals in *Disgrace* able to feel shame, they can also identify it: “If, more often than not, the dog fails to be charmed, it is because of his presence: he gives off the wrong smell (*They can smell your thoughts*), the smell of shame.”¹⁴⁶ By granting animals the right to shame, the novel sets up implicit links with the human characters, and thus enlarges the scope of consideration regarding the capabilities and emotional lives of animals.

Both novels are set in a secular time, and although Coetzee’s *Disgrace* also relies to some degree on a theological vision of transgression and sin, it is not so much God’s word that functions as a delineator of transgression. In this novel, the law demarcates one’s behaviour in society. In *Disgrace* the acts that guide this process are imagined in detail by Lurie on the day he receives the memorandum “notifying him that a complaint has been lodged against him under article 3.1 of the university’s code of conduct”.¹⁴⁷ Lurie’s transgression has been to mingle the private and the public. That is, in his relations with Melanie, Lurie shifts a public relationship (the teacher-pupil relation) to the domain of the private (sexual intercourse). He is thus a transgressor of these limits and is made to feel the implications of this transgression in his expulsion from the university.

Lurie, moreover, seems to have a knack for making the private public and for retaining his calm in these awkward moments.¹⁴⁸ The conscious encroachment of Elaine Winter (“chair of his onetime department”) at the supermarket is an example of this.¹⁴⁹ She “has a trolleyful of purchases, he a mere handbasket” yet he obliges her to go before him.¹⁵⁰ She is acutely aware that her private life is being exposed in front of him by way of the objects she is purchasing, which he “then takes some pleasure” in watching her unload.¹⁵¹

At the committee of enquiry, Lurie’s refusal to seek forgiveness using “words [...] from his heart”¹⁵² speaks back to his own knowledge of words as being capable of deceit, words used like whisky in one’s coffee “to lubricate” the listener.¹⁵³ This makes his decision not to “speak from his heart” at the enquiry but later to attempt to do so in front of Melanie’s father, Isaacs, interesting.¹⁵⁴

The problem is that the language Lurie uses to explain his actions is anything but “naked”,¹⁵⁵ it is riddled with otherworldly allusions that take the listener “in circles”.¹⁵⁶ This, I suggest, can be seen as a factor that distances him from the event itself, and his complicity in it. He expresses his own rising desire as emerging “from the quiver of Aphrodite, goddess of the foaming waves”¹⁵⁷ and describe his violation of Melanie first as “not rape, not quite that”,¹⁵⁸ then vaguely as an inappropriate desire¹⁵⁹ and, finally, as having been the work of Eros.¹⁶⁰ Although he does not make a recognisable connection between his violation of Melanie and his daughter’s own rape, this is something that other voices in the novel put pressure on. Lucy’s assertion that “you are a man, you ought to know” highlights the proximity of these two separate events.¹⁶¹

Like Cooper in her paper “Metamorphosis and Sexuality” (2005), I am interested in “the deployment of sexuality in the framework of allusion and under the aegis of myth”.¹⁶² For Cooper, the “dense allusiveness and intricate play with mythic possibilities” this opens up implies that “Coetzee’s fascination with sexuality in *Disgrace* is deeply shaped by language and the various symbolic forms it gives to instinct and desire”.¹⁶³ In her analysis Cooper is concerned with the manner in which these allusions create an “interplay of desire with scholarship and knowledge” that (because they deal with ‘imported ideas’) frames the “unresolved destiny of Anglo-European traditions, conventions, and

epistemological structures in South Africa”.¹⁶⁴ I, on the other hand, want to argue that the allusions created by Lurie in his descriptions are at once an attempt to denounce shame, and are conducive to a demarcation between the human and the animal. This boundary-making is betrayed by references to Lurie’s own “urgencies of passion”¹⁶⁵ and by the animalised descriptions of sex and rape that casts their shadows in the novel.

We can think this along what Cooper has deemed a “narrative derailing”,¹⁶⁶ which is the disjuncture between the event and its retelling. This has the effect of displacing the teller of the story when the event is removed from how the teller views him or herself. This is a concern in Coetzee’s novel and can be seen in Lurie’s retelling of his involvement with Melanie and in Lucy’s silence concerning her rape. Thus, even as Lurie’s use of mythical allusions to describe his violation of Melanie can be seen to distance him from his actions, the recurrent image of Eros also alters “the terms of exchange between spirit and flesh, divine and human”.¹⁶⁷ This means that Lurie’s version of sexual intercourse displaces a purely ‘human’ account of events in that it mingles “both the divine and the bestial” and in its mythic conception “dislocates the human” as the sole agent of the event.¹⁶⁸ I don’t agree with Cooper’s strict separation of “the divine and the bestial” because it paints a picture of complete separation between the human and the animal. In this way, it implies that there are (unshared) aspects that are proper to the human, thus demarcating an imagined, dualistic and perhaps harmful line of separation from the animal. But we can usefully employ the notion of this mingling of human and animal qualities (*and* maintain that they are inseparable) to reveal the impulsive, rather than rational, nature of Lurie’s affair. This harks back to our discussion on *Genesis* earlier in this chapter, specifically the insistence on a lack of control over the body (its functions and desires) as being linked to shame. While we may read, then, Lurie’s words in the novel as attempting a degree of separation from the event and from himself as animal, the narrative nonetheless derails this vision by associating his image with the other-than-human aspects he describes. In this vein, a critic recently made the following astute observation:

The beginning and middle of the novel are characterized by a double standard concerning Eros on Lurie’s behalf. He denigrates

libido as animalistic but appeals to the concept when it helps him justify his behaviour. When Lurie has sex with Melanie [...], he imagines the event to be motivated purely by instinct and thus to be removed from the responsibility of the involved parties, just as animals are not responsible for their behaviour.¹⁶⁹

This then begs the crucial question:

Is it possible that the same god that made him seduce Melanie acts through the rapists, the same god that dignifies even dogs by his presence, as he explained to Lucy only minutes ago?¹⁷⁰

The difficulty of answering this question ties into Lurie and Lucy's different approaches to these transformative events. Lucy refers to her rape as "a purely private matter" which her father interprets as rooted in "some form of private salvation".¹⁷¹ Later, Bev reiterates Lucy's position of privacy when she tells Lurie "you weren't there [...] You weren't"¹⁷² which echoes Lucy's earlier "*you don't know what happened*".¹⁷³ This outrages Lurie because he is "being treated like an outsider".¹⁷⁴ This is precisely the point. Lucy refuses to "come out before these strangers"¹⁷⁵ because they are strangers to the experience she has undergone and to her pain. In her silence, she exercises her "right not to be put on trial [...] not to have to justify" herself.¹⁷⁶ In this way, she is not unlike her father in his own 'trial', both are holding fast to a vision of themselves that is contradicted, or derailed, by the events. Both silences are a mask: "Lucy's secret, his disgrace".¹⁷⁷

On the other hand, Elleke Boehmer (2002) has read Lucy's silence as embedding "in herself, her body, the stereotype of the wronged and muted woman, the abused and to-be-again-abused of history: she becomes, in a phrase, the figure of a double silence".¹⁷⁸ Boehmer's reading of *Disgrace* critiques the implications of Lucy's silence as implying "as ever" the idea that women are required "the generic pose of suffering in silence".¹⁷⁹ This view echoes the novel's own narration:

Bev responds only with a terse shake of the head. Not your business, she seems to be saying. Menstruation, childbirth, violation and its

aftermath: blood-matters, a woman's burden, women's preserve.¹⁸⁰

I want to argue that we may also read Lucy's need for silence as tied into her own conception of herself, and not (as Boehmer's paper suggests) as an allegorical representation of Melanie or of all women. After all, Melanie did lodge a complaint and she appeared before the committee of enquiry the day before Lurie.¹⁸¹ Lucy's silence, therefore, is distinct from Melanie's silence. It offers Lucy a means to safeguard her own individual identity (rather than become another statistic), and of keeping her (private) identity outside the public domain. The manner of her rape, commencing as it did in an invasion of her private space (her home), and by numerous men means that the event and her persona have been rendered public. To amplify this, she later comes into contact with one of the men in public (at Petrus' party), thus further intensify the degree to which her private pain has become a public matter. Lucy attempts to safeguard (and perhaps, recuperate) her dignity by treating her rape as private. In this way she is implicitly *not* "taking on this doglike status"¹⁸² or "becoming reconciled to the point of conventional object"¹⁸³ as Boehmer suggests, but rather retaining her own subjective story and separating herself from a sexual act that has otherwise been described in animalistic terms:

'You think they will come back?'

'I think I am their territory. They have marked me. They will come back for me.' [...] 'They spur each other on. That's probably why they do it together. Like dogs in a pack.'¹⁸⁴

And:

'They were not raping, they were mating. It was not the pleasure principle that ran the show but the testicles, sacs bulging with seed aching to perfect itself.'¹⁸⁵

As I stated before, the mixing of mythic and animal elements in the retelling of events is not flattering to human agency or ideas about the scope of what is perceived typically as 'human'. All the previous examples are alike in that they

highlight the animal within. That these (negative) descriptions come up in times of violence or trauma is telling, and also problematic. When Lurie finds Pollux, one of the rapists (whose name bears significant mythical roots)¹⁸⁶ spying from a window on his daughter in the shower, for instance, the insult he repeatedly screams is “*You swine!* [...] *You filthy swine!*”¹⁸⁷ He later refers to him as being “like a jackal sniffing around, looking for mischief”.¹⁸⁸ When Lucy’s wrapper slips loose to reveal her breasts, Pollux looks on “unashamedly”.¹⁸⁹ His lack of shame here is linked to something being “wrong with him, wrong in his head”.¹⁹⁰ He is animalised by being denied a position as a thinking, or rational, individual. In this way he is relegated to the domain of animals: he can feel when he is hurt and react (“Ya, ya, ya, ya, ya’ he shouts in pain”)¹⁹¹ but his mental deficiency recasts him, too, as “morally deficient”.¹⁹² In this way, he is seen as less-than-human. Lucy’s protection of him is equally problematic and is also implicitly seen by Lurie as linked to her mental state: “more and more she has begun to look like one of those women who shuffle around the corridors of nursing homes whispering to themselves”.¹⁹³ The grotesque results of human and animal mingling finds its culmination in Lurie’s dismayed avowal that “like a weed he [Pollux] has been allowed to tangle his roots with Lucy and Lucy’s existence”.¹⁹⁴

To say that these depictions of an animalised humanity are constructed along supposed racial lines, however, is incorrect.¹⁹⁵ Lurie’s own desires are also linked to animals (his own analogy between the “excited and unmanageable” golden retriever and himself is an example).¹⁹⁶ He, too, is berated for not ‘learning his lesson’ and is told to “stay with your own kind”.¹⁹⁷ In fact, Lurie’s desire for Melanie, which is described as “the seed of generation, driven to perfect itself, driving deep into the woman’s body, driving to bring the future into being”¹⁹⁸ is a precursor to his thoughts about the rapists as “mating”¹⁹⁹ with his daughter. The distinction here is that Lurie embellishes his desire in lofty quotations: “sooner murder an infant than nurse unacted desires”.²⁰⁰ These may veil, but do not diminish, his sense of shame.

We may come to view shame in *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* and in *Disgrace* as singularly attached to the body, its functions and to the exposure that it is bound to by merely being a body. Here, I am thinking specifically of Judith Butler's conception of the body as that which shatters the boundaries between an inside (the private) and the outside (the public): "this disposition of ourselves outside ourselves [which] seems to follow from bodily life, from its vulnerability and its exposure".²⁰¹ Fundamentally, language (in the form of bodily descriptions, Lurie's embellishment, or Lucy's silence) becomes a constituent of the body and of the safeguarding of shame. I have argued that the infringement of one's private persona threatens not only one's privacy, but one's own sense of 'humanity'. The fact that it may be threatened shows that it is not static or stable. The public arena is in both novels figured as a threatening locale, in that it is here that one's shame is exposed. The links between the body, sex and shame seem to threaten a conception of the human, of exposing animal traces within its domain. I have argued that more than threatening this (recognisable yet inexplicable) border between the human and the animal, this web depicts the porosity of the 'border', its constructed nature, and its flexibility. This ushers in the artificiality of the *vision du monde* in which the animal and the human are separate and disconnected entities. Both novels show us that the sounds, acts and thoughts that bridge this divide are often misread (by characters in the novels and by critics of the novels), or otherwise read in predominantly negative terms. Those that speak only in the vocabulary of humans are deaf to the language of animals, which we, too, possess.

Chapter 2

Alternative Lives, Alternative Deaths

'This dog,' answered Eumaeus, 'belonged to him who has died in a far country. If he were what he was when Odysseus left for Troy, he would soon show you what he could do. There was not a wild beast in the forest that could get away from him when he was once on its tracks. But now he has fallen on evil times, for his master is dead and gone, and the women take no care of him. Servants never do their work when their master's hand is no longer over them, for Zeus takes half the goodness out of a man when he makes a slave of him.'

So saying he entered the well-built mansion, and made straight for the riotous pretenders in the hall. But Argos passed into the darkness of death, now that he had seen his master once more after twenty years.

- *Odyssey*, Book 17

Dogs do not have many advantages over people, but one of them is extremely important: euthanasia is not forbidden by law in their case; animals have the right to a merciful death. [...] Assuming the role of Death is a terrifying thing. Tomas insisted that he would not give the injection himself; he would have the vet come and do it. But then he realised that he could grant Karenin a privilege forbidden to humans: Death would come for him in the guise of his loved ones.

- *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, 299-300.

Should he mourn? Is it proper to mourn the death of beings who do not practise mourning among themselves? Looking into his heart, he can find only a vague sadness.

- *Disgrace*, 127.

Soon after Tereza learns of Karenin's terminal illness, she has a "sacrilegious thought" that she cannot get rid of: "the love that tied her to Karenin was better than the love between her and Tomas."²⁰² This thought occurs right after the discussion of *Genesis* and the role of animals that we explored in the previous chapter of this thesis. The word 'sacrilegious' finds its roots in the idea of a transgression of that which is held to be sacred.²⁰³ That Tereza would feel this in line with a thought related to Karenin is significant. First, it again highlights the

sinister or otherwise anti-social tones that underline an individual who displays a close relation with an animal. Second, the guilt associated with mourning the death of an animal is by this word confined to the domain of a transgression, of something that should not be done. In this case, it is perhaps because it appears to take precedence over a human relation, the one she shares with Tomas. Tereza is aware of this and we are told that as a result she must hide it “more than she would an affair”.²⁰⁴ Nevertheless, the thought that she may live on longer than Karenin is unbearable to her: “her home was Karenin, not Tomas. Who would wind the clock of their days when he was gone?”²⁰⁵

The importance of Karenin in Tereza’s life means his death is imbued with meaning. As such, it is preceded by careful planning and followed by a period of extended mourning. On a structural level his death spans the entire last section of the novel in the chapter titled ‘Karenin’s Smile’.²⁰⁶ In contrast to this, the death of the two main human protagonists is announced in a single paragraph less than half way into the novel.²⁰⁷ This means that as readers we read the rest of the novel knowing that the protagonists will die without addressing it in a substantial manner, whereas we experience Karenin’s illness and death in detail.

On the other hand, in *Disgrace* many types of animals meet their death at the hands, or guns, of humans. Very few of these animals are mourned. On a structural level, Driepoot’s death is never explained; it is only announced in the final line of the novel, which is also the last thing we hear from Lurie: “Yes, I am giving him up”.²⁰⁸ So while Karenin’s death in various ways marks the end of an era for Tereza and Tomas, the death of Driepoot in *Disgrace* is one among many other deaths. In this chapter I suggest that Driepoot’s death forms part of a wider social system, in which death is one of the very few options available to homeless animals. In this sense, Driepoot’s death is not an end, it is a continuation.

What can we make of these grand discrepancies and how might the inclusion of animals as figures of non-normative lives relate to this? The importance of this question is alluded to in the title of this chapter: ‘Alternative lives, Alternative deaths’. The idea of non-normative life is one that I have borrowed from Jeff McMahan and Judith Butler. McMahan speaks of “beings on the margins of life”²⁰⁹ to refer to the lives of individuals such as embryos, foetuses, the

irreversibly comatose or those who suffer from brain damage or dementia, and animals. What all these lives hold in common is that they are considered as lacking consciousness or, in the case of the comatose, exist in a state of disrupted consciousness. In this sense, they could be considered 'animal' in that they are marked predominantly by their bodily (rather than mental) state. Judith Butler's work is largely concerned with queer or otherwise non-normative lives. Her work on mourning and loss informs my thoughts in the following section.

In her essay 'Violence, Mourning, Politics' (2006), Butler performs a psychoanalytic reading of loss and grief. Freud's much-used phrase "the work of mourning" gains resonance in Butler.²¹⁰ She proposes a view of mourning as an ongoing and transformative state, one that alters the individual or the community indefinitely:

[...] One mourns when one accepts that by the loss one undergoes one will be changed, possibly forever. Perhaps mourning has to do with agreeing to undergo a transformation (perhaps one should say *submitting* to a transformation) the full result of which one cannot know in advance. There is losing, as we know, but there is also the transformative effect of loss, and this latter cannot be chartered or planned.²¹¹

In his seminal essay 'Mourning and Melancholia' (1917) Freud asserts that mourning is "regularly the reaction to the loss of a loved person or to the loss of some abstraction which has taken the place of one, such as one's country, liberty, an ideal, and so on."²¹² This means that Freud's notion of mourning is open to include the loss of things or ideals. Butler continues with this notion, but her call for recognition of one's complicity in the life, loss and grief of others presents a main point of departure from a Freudian method of analysis. For Butler this emerges from complex bonds of sociality. At the heart of her concern are the social relations that can emerge from the traumatic events that cause loss and pain. For Butler these relations can lead to a sense of solidarity that is socially engaged in its formation and adaptation to loss. In this respect, the idea of mourning breaks away from what Freud would deem "melancholia",²¹³ the internalised and

inactive extreme of mourning, which is at odds with Butler's own conception of the possibility of a politicised communal mourning. For Butler, community emerges as the central concern and primary component of "the work of mourning".²¹⁴ In this way she abandons the notion of mourning as constitutive of "internal work"²¹⁵ and opens it up to public display and expression. As a further point of divergence, Butler proposes that "we take injurability and aggression as two points of departure for political life."²¹⁶ She notes:

What this means, concretely, will vary across the globe. There are ways of distributing vulnerability, differential forms of allocation that make some populations more subject to arbitrary violence than others.²¹⁷

Butler thus notes that what is considered aggression (and, subsequently, mourning) is not universal, but instead depends on the location and time in which it occurs. Moreover, her notion of mourning implies a non-violent public mourning that is turned outwards to engage with a fellow community.²¹⁸ The word 'community' itself announces a commonality that transcends the bounds of the singular (and at times solitary) individual and encompasses others within its reach. Butler theorises this by unravelling the "we" she presupposes by going back to the "I", only to expound that the two are resolutely intertwined and necessary to each other:

I might try to tell a story here, about what I am feeling, but it would have to be a story in which the very "I" who seeks to tell the story is stopped in the midst of the telling; the very "I" is called into question by its relation to the Other.²¹⁹

And:

One speaks, and one speaks for another, to another, and yet there is no way to collapse the distinction between the Other and oneself. When we say "we" we do nothing more than designate this very problematic. We do not solve it. [...]. This disposition of ourselves

outside ourselves seems to follow from bodily life, from its vulnerability and its exposure²²⁰

This echoes part of our discussion in the introduction to this thesis: that the individual is dependent on others (human or not) for self-definition. This recognition complicates a notion of the individual as autonomous and pre-existent. Rather, it moulds an image of the individual that comes to surface only as a result of the relation with others.²²¹ For Butler this means that even our future is “always in relation to the Other”.²²² Butler’s consistent use of the capital letter in ‘Other’ calls to mind a Levinasian approach to the other, which she develops further in other parts of *Precarious Life*.²²³ This is relevant because there, Butler focuses on the Levinasian notion of the face as not being exclusively a human face.²²⁴

As part of our exposure to others, Butler introduces the body as a material presence in the discussion of vulnerability and susceptibility to loss, pain and grief. Butler theorises the body as “a site of desire and physical vulnerability” that exposes us to others.²²⁵ This refigures the body both as the place that exposes us to physical harm and to the experience of the loss of others. She explains:

The body implies mortality, vulnerability, agency: the skin and the flesh expose us to the gaze of others but also to touch and to violence. The body can be the agency and instrument of all these as well, or the site where "doing" and "being done to" become equivocal. Although we struggle for rights over our own bodies, the very bodies for which we struggle are not quite ever only our own. The body has its invariably public dimension.²²⁶

Butler puts forward “a dimension of political life” that is rooted in the body and “that has to do with our exposure to violence and our complicity in it”.²²⁷ Here, she proposes “a basis for community” in the conditions of bodily life.²²⁸

Of course, Butler’s conception of loss and communal mourning is rooted in a post 9/11 frame of reference. She speaks directly of the inability to publicly mourn or create obituaries for those she refers to as living non-normative or otherwise “queer lives”²²⁹, namely the lives of sexual and racial minorities or those

killed abroad in wars involving the United States.²³⁰ Butler directs her concerns via an analysis of “the question of the human” and more specifically, to the limitations introduced by a normative vision of the human.²³¹ This normative vision dictates not only how lives are lived, but also delineates the limits of mourning. The act of making only certain lives publicly grievable can thus be refigured as being akin to a censorship of feelings and attitudes directed at non-normative lives and deaths. Butler states that those that are denied public mourning filter into a zone of mass anonymity and are thus deemed unintelligible. Their exclusion from acts of public mourning, including the obituary, opens up questions of the ‘real’:

What is real? Whose lives are real? How might reality be remade? Those who are unreal have, in a sense, already suffered the violence of unrealization. What, then, is the relation between violence and those lives considered as “unreal”? [...] If violence is done against those who are unreal, then, from the perspective of violence, it fails to injure or negate those lives since those lives are already negated.²³²

In ‘Mourning, Violence, Politics’ Butler enquires “...who counts as human? Whose lives count as lives? And, finally, what makes for a *grievable* life?”²³³ These three questions guide my own enquiry in this chapter. Unlike Butler, I want to address these questions, not necessarily as a way to focus as she does on “the question of the human”,²³⁴ but to explore the dynamics of mourning animal lives in *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* and in *Disgrace*. The inclusion of animals into this enquiry begs another set of questions: how, if we presuppose that animal lives are different from human lives, can one mourn the death of an animal? Is this even a possibility? What are the implications?

Before we turn to this enquiry it is important to mention that the emotional texture of Butler’s words, specifically her insistence on the body as a site of vulnerability and exposure, bear a striking similarity to Cora Diamond’s in ‘The Difficulty of Reality and the Difficulty of Philosophy’. We can relate Butler’s thoughts back to Diamond’s opinion that our shared vulnerability with animals is

something that wounds the individual. That Diamond lays out these thoughts in reference to another of Coetzee's works, *Elizabeth Costello*, further highlights their relevance to us in this chapter:

The awareness we each have of being a living body, being “alive to the world”, carries with it exposure to the bodily sense of vulnerability to death, sheer animal vulnerability, the vulnerability we share with them. This vulnerability is capable of panicking us. To be able to acknowledge it at all, let alone as shared, is wounding; but acknowledging it as shared with other animals, in the presence of what we do to them, is capable not only of panicking one but also of isolating one, as Elizabeth Costello is isolated. Is there any difficulty in seeing why we should not prefer to return to moral debate, in which the livingness and death of animals enter as facts that we treat as relevant in this or that way, not as presences that may unseat our reason?²³⁵

In the above extract from Diamond's essay, the “in this or that way” is used almost as an aside. In this chapter, I explore some of the difficulties and discontinuities that arise in relation to the death and mourning of animal lives. I suggest that while these difficulties do wound the grieving individual, they do so in different ways in each novel. Thus, for the purpose of this chapter, the “this or that way” becomes increasingly important as a means to discuss these disparities, which I aim to show are a result of social relations. These relations, or lack of relations, come to direct what Freud referred to as “the economics of pain”.²³⁶ What this means is that mourning takes on special significance when thought through in terms of the social bonds that exist *before* the death of the animal. John Berger (1980) has theorised these bonds as being constructed by economic binds. He claims that domestic animals are just one part of the ideal middle-class household and lifestyle:

[...] that universal but personal withdrawal into the private small family unit, decorated or furnished with mementoes from the

outside world, which is such a distinguishing feature of consumer societies.²³⁷

Berger's distinction between an animal as either serving a "useful purpose" (hunting, security, mice eating) or being kept "regardless of their usefulness"²³⁸ is echoed by Lucy in *Disgrace* when she articulates that in South Africa animals are treated as "part of the furniture, part of the alarm system".²³⁹ That Lucy should allude to animals as things is significant because it foreshadows the treatment of animals, their subsequent deaths and disposal in the novel. In this chapter I will focus mostly on Driepoot in *Disgrace* and Karenin in *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*. That the main dog character in each novel is supposedly killed by euthanasia seems a good point at which to begin our discussion. The principal divergence of these novels, however, will also be born from this first point of comparison.

The term 'euthanasia' is generally defined as a gentle or easy death brought about especially in the case of an incurable or painful illness.²⁴⁰ Prominent philosopher Jeff McMahan notes that 'euthanasia', like 'suicide', is a "concept with blurred edges".²⁴¹ The act of euthanasia implies an act of killing or letting someone die that meets two conditions: "first, that death benefits, or is good for, the individual who dies and, second, that the agent must be motivated to do what is good for that individual and must intend to benefit the individual in bringing about his death".²⁴² There is an important distinction in the act of euthanasia when it comes to human and animal lives. An animal, like other marginal lives discussed by McMahan,²⁴³ is not able to give or withhold consent regarding the termination of his or her life. This means that in these cases euthanasia becomes reclassified as "nonvoluntary".²⁴⁴ Here, the human occupies the role of (active) agent in the killing.

McMahan makes a further distinction "between killing and letting die".²⁴⁵ The former takes on connotations of agency and control (such as actively injecting a deadly chemical into the blood stream of a patient), while the former assumes a

more passive position to killing (such as removing a patient from life-support system).²⁴⁶ The moral significance of this distinction lies in the “more general distinction between doing and allowing”.²⁴⁷ In an active instance of killing, the agent is more closely tied to the event. This makes him appear “more responsible for it than he would have been if it had occurred even in his absence”.²⁴⁸ For McMahan, the difference lies not only in the passive/active continuum but in the differential positions between “doing harm” and “allowing harm to occur”.²⁴⁹ The former betrays the agent’s complicity in the act of euthanasia or killing, the latter relinquishes the sense of responsibility that links the agent to the death.

This very brief account of euthanasia sheds light on a major difference between the death of Karenin in *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* and Driepoot in *Disgrace*. Karenin is gravely ill, unable to move and in pain. Driepoot is lame in one leg, but appears otherwise healthy. This ushers another major distinction between these two dogs: Karenin forms part of a unit in Kundera’s novel; Driepoot is essentially homeless. Although the focus of this chapter is not on euthanasia, the importance of these different deaths is that they form part of the complexities and contradictions of mourning non-human lives. This is partly because these lives have been actively terminated.

Yet in *Disgrace*, Lurie’s final words are “Yes, I am giving him up”.²⁵⁰ These words blur the distinction between doing and allowing. While his words can be read as a confession of active involvement in Driepoot’s killing (the “I”), the “giving him up” makes it sound as though there is a third party to which he is giving Driepoot up to. Moreover, the words create the impression that Lurie has ‘fought for’ Driepoot and must now relinquish his will to continue and must give (him) up. These words distance Lurie from the act of killing and lend him an air of innocence in the act. They are an attempt to veil his involvement in a death that he will form a part of. This is also meant to diminish Lurie’s own sense of responsibility and remorse, which in the previous chapter I discussed in line with other events in the novel.

Despite the weight of these distinctions, critics have unanimously referred to Lurie’s killing of Driepoot as ‘euthanasia’ and, on the other hand, critics of Kundera’s novel have almost consistently ignored an analysis of Karenin’s death.

Following McMahan's thorough analysis of the act, I suggest it is a euphemism to call the killing of a healthy animal 'euthanasia'. The use of a euphemism in this case forecloses the scrutiny which the word 'killing' would require. McMahan's analysis of the complexities of "convenience euthanasia" is useful to us here. It refers to euthanasia performed on an animal that is not necessarily ill or even abandoned, but is still killed for the sake of (economic or social) convenience.²⁵¹ The term 'convenience' in this phrase echoes the economic dimension that filters through it. I suggest a large number of animals euthanised in the welfare state fall into this category. Driepoot is one of these animals. Coetzee's novel does not name it as such, but it is made apparent:

When people bring a dog in they do not say straight out 'I have brought you this dog to kill,' but that is what is expected: that they will dispose of it, make it disappear, dispatch it to oblivion.²⁵²

And:

One by one he brings in the cats, then the dogs: the old, the blind, the halt, the cripple, the maimed, but also the young, the sound- all those whose term has come.²⁵³

So although both the principal dog characters in the novels are killed, Driepoot's death is somewhat different from the mercy killing that the term 'euthanasia' implies. The mercy or alleviation involved in Driepoot's killing is not only directed towards him or the other animals 'put to sleep' in the clinic. It also alleviates pressure from individuals or from the social system that cannot take care of unwanted animals. In line with the enquiries of this chapter, this begs the question: can a basis for communal mourning exist in this?

Tom Herron notes that "there are animals everywhere in *Disgrace*".²⁵⁴ These range from 'actual' animals such as Driepoot, the bitch Katy and the suffering goat with the infected scrotum "swollen like a balloon",²⁵⁵ to animals as metaphor.

This second category is just as present in the novel. One could open up the novel at random and find an example of this. The description of one of Lucy's rapists as "the dull-faced apprentice, the running-dog" is one of these.²⁵⁶

David Lurie's involvement with animals, real and metaphorical, grows as the novel develops. By the end of the novel he has begun to call himself, "the dog-man";²⁵⁷ which is the title Petrus previously used on himself.²⁵⁸ This self-appointed title is interesting because, in this case, the hyphen sets up ambiguity. It could be read as the man that looks after the dogs, or as the man that is both dog and man. In this way, the term harks back to Cooper's account of the mingling, if not exactly of "both the divine and the bestial", then at least of the animal and the human in Lurie.²⁵⁹ This sets him up as human and animal, and again displaces a purely 'human' account of events. Moreover, the idea of the man who is half dog, thus a wolf-man, calls to mind Giorgio Agamben's description of the wolf-man from his book *State of Exception* (1998). Here, the wolf-man is the "bandit and the outlaw" of Germanic and Scandinavian antiquity who is banished from his community for committing a wrong deed.²⁶⁰ The image of the "man without peace" who is outside the protection of the law and is, moreover, a "hybrid of human and animal, divided between the forest and the city" seems applicable to Lurie's state in the novel.²⁶¹

The Animal Welfare Clinic is the point of convergence for the animals he encounters. Some of the animals cannot be healed because there is a lack of supplies and so for them the clinic is a place of "last resource".²⁶² By the end of the novel, Lurie finds himself implicated in the life of these animals to the extent that he feels a sense of responsibility for them even in death. I want to argue that although the work done by Bev at the animal clinic serves a necessary purpose (she even acts as dentist to some dogs),²⁶³ there is a pervasive feeling that some of the animals, "leaping with excitement",²⁶⁴ do not want to die. It then becomes difficult to justify killing them. But they are killed nonetheless because, as Bev explains, "there are just too many of them".²⁶⁵ This is a phrase that is echoed later in Lurie's thoughts: "The dogs are brought to the clinic because they are unwanted: *because we are too menny*. That is where he enters their life".²⁶⁶

Armstrong (2008) and Clarkson (2009) have both noted that the “too menny” in this passage harks back to Thomas Hardy’s novel *Jude the Obscure* (1895). Here, the young Little Father Time kills his younger siblings and then himself in an attempt to alleviate the economic hardships of his family. He leaves a letter with the exact phrase written on it. In this way, we may read *Disgrace* (as both these critics do) as deeply engaged with the complexities of destitute animals and the human responsibility toward them. I want to argue that in *Disgrace* the problems of destitution presents a double bind precisely because humans and animals are confined to a similar situation. Consider the following passage:

The sign outside the clinic reads ANIMAL WELFARE LEAGUE W.O. 1529. Below is a line stating the daily hours, but this has been taped over. At the door is a line of waiting people, some with animals. As soon as he gets out the car there are children all around him, begging for money or just staring. He makes his way through the crush, and through a sudden cacophony as two dogs, held back by their owners, snarl and snap at each other.²⁶⁷

This excerpt presents us with an unlikely image of shared poverty. The clinic itself, were it not for the sign, could just as well be any other welfare institution. Those that surround the area (“begging for money or just staring”) are destitute. The tape over the hours attests to the lack of regular working hours but also to the time that is offered by those like Bev who volunteer their own time and services at the clinic. The collective noun “crush” signals the enormity of the crowd and, by mere nature of being a crowd, erases the individual nature of the people that constitute it. In this way it is like the homogenous terms ‘animal’ and ‘human’. It is also unlike them because in this case both humans and animals are united, albeit in a state of destitution. These lives are expressly united by a shared vulnerability that is hastened by poverty.

This unity forms part of a wider structural overlapping that takes place in the novel. It insistently points towards an intertwined relation between the animal and human community in the Eastern Cape and elsewhere. There is, for instance, a shared experience of violence in the attack suffered by Lucy and David and the

violence inflicted on the dogs by those same men. These can be deemed ‘losses’ (of safety, of life) and lead to a series of conflicted and problematic alliances, not least between Lucy and Petrus:

I don’t believe you get the point, David. Petrus is not offering me a church wedding followed by a honeymoon on the Wild Coast. He is offering an alliance, a deal. I contribute the land, in return for which I am allowed to creep in under his wing. Otherwise, he wants to remind me, I am without protection, I am fair game.²⁶⁸

Here, even the language takes on a hue of human-animal mingling. The Wild Coast is, of course, a physical location, but we can read the following passage as enacting some kind of ‘law of the wild’. Without Petrus’ protection, Lucy is open to being hunted (like game, hunted for food or sport) by further men. She is like a hurt bird and the help that Petrus can offer in the alliance is akin to the protection of a nest, without which she cannot survive.

Another alliance that emerges from a situation of loss (of animal lives, of work, of sexual desirability) is the one between Bev and David in their combined work at the animal clinic. That these two characters have a brief sexual affair is perhaps irrelevant in light of the wider reach that their combined work has on the community. This is done in spite of the fact that the clinic should be funded by the government but instead depends on volunteers, fundraisers and donations.²⁶⁹

The shared precariousness introduced by descriptions of poverty is something that trails on unto death. Like the sign at the animal shelter, the fence at the incinerator “has long ago been cut through; the gate and the notice are simply ignored”.²⁷⁰ Here, there is a crowd of women, children and vagrants who wait to pick through the waste in search of “syringes, pins, washable bandages, anything for which there is a market, but particularly for pills, which they sell to *muti* shops or trade in the streets”.²⁷¹ We are presented here with an obvious problem. The shared destiny that the novel depicts for poor humans and animals makes it appear as though poverty makes animals of humans, and that the state of poverty creates a sub-division in the human. Lurie explicitly attempts to separate himself from this:

He comes, he does his work, he goes; he does not form part of the society of which the incinerator, despite the wire fence and the padlocked gate and the notice in three languages, is the hub.²⁷²

Nevertheless, his contact with the corpses of the dogs snaps into focus the harsh reality of their material existence. The distance that separated him from the “burning offal”²⁷³ on the farm is here diminished as he is the one introducing the bodies into the nearby fire. Lurie can no longer deny the materiality of the animal corpses or his role in their death. Or can he?

Before we return to this question, we can link this further to the incident with the Persian sheep. When Lurie contemplates buying the sheep from Petrus he comes to the conclusion that he would accomplish very little:

Petrus will only use the money to buy new slaughter-animals, and pocket the difference. And what will he do with the sheep anyway, once he has bought them out of slavery? Set them free on the public road? Pen them up in the dog-cages and feed them hay?²⁷⁴

We should note that both “slaughter-animals” and “dog-cages” have been turned into hyphenated nouns. The hyphen could have been avoided in both cases and can be read as visual representations of both the knives (used to slaughter) and the cages (where animals are kept). I want to argue that the hyphen in these words marks the imposition of human terms (in language and material existence) on the animal. This creates a new condition of life (or death) that goes beyond what would be ‘natural’ to the animal. I do not think Lurie is oblivious to this imposition of terms or to the violence they imply. Yet he remains confused even as he confronts the sheep, now transformed to meat, on a plate. Here, he performs an awkward attempt to ‘pass the buck’, to Petrus. The latter, savvier than he is initially given credit for, refuses on the grounds that “[o]therwise we are passing plates all night”.²⁷⁵ Thereafter, Lurie tells himself “I am going to eat this [...]. I am going to eat this and ask for forgiveness afterwards”.²⁷⁶ Lurie is momentarily at a loss for words and frozen by what he experiences.

Clarkson (2009) states that the “moment of attempting to reach out beyond the limits of a given conceptual or representational scheme, and hence beyond what has been sayable in the language before, is also a linguistic breakingpoint”.²⁷⁷ This “breakingpoint” is the limit at which one may express something that has in some way led to one’s own ‘breaking’. It represents the point at which the individual is undone by the event and thus unable to coherently articulate the event. In a strange synchronicity, Lurie’s own breaking-point emerges at the point at which the dog corpses are themselves being broken. Lurie is visibly moved by his recollection of the event:

One Sunday evening, driving home in Lucy’s kombi, he actually has to stop at the roadside to recover himself. Tears flow down his face that he cannot stop; his hands shake.²⁷⁸

In spite of this, he tells himself that he takes care of the corpses because “there is no one stupid enough to do it. That is what he is becoming: stupid, daft, wrongheaded”.²⁷⁹ His language is thus reduced to insults, to a hierarchy of non-meaning (“stupid, daft, wrongheaded”). This negation has the effect of cancelling out a logical explanation to the events he is implicated in. Perhaps this is precisely the point: that there is a limit by which certain things can be rationalised, made logical, explained. I want to borrow from Natalie Pollard’s recent essay titled “The Fate of Stupidity” (2012), and think of stupidity as a “powerfully corporeal”²⁸⁰ state in which “our critical faculties are confused, because ‘what has struck us’ evades rational and physical grasp”.²⁸¹ Even as an academic, Lurie finds it difficult to rationalise and articulate the killing that takes place at the animal clinic. I suggest that not only does he find it difficult to justify such killings when they are masked behind the veils of ‘euthanasia’ and ‘animal welfare’, but he is (literally) struck by the immensity of what he witnesses (and feels) at the clinic. Lurie is at a loss for words precisely because he cannot defend his implication in the killing of these animals, and because he is physically jolted by their bodily conditions.

As I have mentioned, *Disgrace* presents us with an array of losses. Amongst these are Lurie’s loss of job, the loss of his youth and sexual power that the novel implicitly traces and Lucy’s loss of financial, corporeal and emotional freedom.

But the narrative also allows animals the possibility of inclusion on this list. Here, I am thinking of “poor old Katy” who is described as “sulking”²⁸² and we told by Lucy is in mourning because “no one wants her, and she knows it”.²⁸³ This, in spite of possibly having “offspring all over the district who would be happy to share their home with her”, only “it’s not in their power to invite her”.²⁸⁴ The outcomes of these losses remain unanswered. Whether the alliances that emerge can support a process of mourning remains unanswered, too. If anything, they can be read as both enabling and disrupting an acknowledgement of loss. I have signalled Lurie’s language as a constant impediment to the acknowledgement of his complicity in these losses, and to an acknowledgement of loss itself. His language, meticulous and thought out, paradoxically functions as a cul-de-sac to thought and action.

While Lurie’s ‘letting go’ of Driepoot has received numerous compelling readings,²⁸⁵ I read his ‘giving up’ as an attempt on his part to excommunicate the animal from his own surroundings. This is analogous to his explicit note of separation from the destitute²⁸⁶ and betrays his desire to demarcate not only a boundary between the human and the animal, but also an inter-class division from other humans.

Nevertheless, a strange inversion of roles seems to have occurred with readings of *Disgrace*. It appears that critics have ‘fallen for’ the religious undertones explicitly called forth by Lurie’s use of words and have read parts of the novel as such. In this light, Marais (2006) states that the novel ends when Lurie “selflessly sacrifices the lame dog that he has come to love”.²⁸⁷ In addition, he asserts that:

Lurie must give up the dog because it is in the dog’s interests that he does so. His own needs, desires, feelings, predilections and predispositions are totally immaterial. To sympathise, Lurie must lose, indeed sacrifice or offer, himself.²⁸⁸

Besides the absence of an explanation as to how being killed is in Driepoot’s interest, I would contest that Lurie’s “needs, desires, feelings, predilections and predispositions” are *totally* material and conducive to Driepoot’s death. Moreover, it is not himself that Lurie sacrifices; it is Driepoot that he kills. Lucy Graham

(2003) notes that in addition to the structural similarities between Lucy's rape and Melanie's own assault, there are structural links between the killing of the dogs by Lucy's rapists and Lurie's own implication as a "dog-killer" of sorts.²⁸⁹

Yet the trend to wholly dismiss the death of animals in the novel is widespread. In a chapter on animal refugees in his book *What Animals Mean in the Fiction of Modernity*, Philip Armstrong is similarly doubtful of the opinion that:

what Lurie is really giving up when he offers Driepoot for euthanasia is the prerogative of maintaining a privileged category of saved animals, whose existence is permitted only insofar as it is encompassed by the property rights which underlie contemporary capitalist societies.²⁹⁰

Like Armstrong, I am unconvinced of this view regarding Driepoot's death. Although I agree that certain animals are "privileged" enough to be included in modern households (and this in some cases fact safeguards their survival), the sweeping scope of this statement ignores the fact that Lurie still owns all of his possessions at the end of the novel (including his house in Rondebosch). He is not only giving up a prerogative, he is terminating the life of a living being. The easy transposition of animals into things to think through other topics gives another angle to Lévi-Strauss' famous adage that "animals are good to think with".²⁹¹ The materiality of their deaths, or killing, gets buried beneath the weight of discourse that is almost entirely separate from the act of their death or killing. This falls prey to Armstrong's criticism of the use of animals as "screens for the projection of human interests and meanings".²⁹² Descriptions that ignore the materiality of animal bodies in the text (but not human ones) designate the death of animals in *Disgrace* to the realm of representation. As Marais states elsewhere in his essay, "representation [...] can only ever indicate the failure of presence".²⁹³ So although animals are present everywhere in *Disgrace*, they can just as quickly disappear.

This disappearance means that the lives of animals in Coetzee's novel are, to a great degree, denied grievability. This is related to their condition as stray, unwanted or homeless animals. In addition to the condition of homelessness, they

are further hidden behind the “closed and locked doors” of the animal shelter.²⁹⁴ In this sense, the animals in *Disgrace* form part of the “unreal” that Butler discusses in her essay.²⁹⁵ The mourning that accompanies their loss is confined, like their deaths, to different forms of locked and closed doors. Lurie’s breakdown in the van is a literal manifestation of this situation. The metaphysical dimension of these locked doors is the bar introduced by the language Lurie uses, which attempts to rearticulate or disguise his grief as stupidity. This serves to diminish the sense of loss, which is almost as quickly discovered as it is discarded.

The Unbearable Lightness of Being, by comparison, seems to be consumed by the urge to recover lost people, moments, or things. In fact, one way to conceive of this novel is to think of it as being essentially concerned with the dynamics of loss. A great part of the losses that the novel explores are obligatory, or otherwise the result of choices made under what Giorgio Agamben has called a “state of exception”.²⁹⁶ Tomas’ and Tereza’s move to Zurich, their subsequent move back to Prague, Tomas’ refusal to sign a retraction for the Oedipus article he wrote, and their subsequent move to the country all form part of these ‘obligatory choices’ made under the duress of the Russian invasion.

The structure of Kundera’s text reflects the idea of choice and the different avenues that close up when a choice is made. The novel is divided into seven parts and is replete with variances that by their definition cancel out the other. These include the chapters titled “Lightness and Weight” and “Soul and Body”.²⁹⁷ The extreme in each title appears to cancel out the other, or otherwise lead to an uneasy, often contradictory, coexistence. I have thus far explained this via the division of the animal from the human in the first chapter of this thesis, or in terms of Tereza’s uneasy relation with her body in the previous chapter.

We may think this further alongside Freud’s assertion that mourning is “regularly the reaction to the loss of a loved person or to the loss of some abstraction which has taken the place of one, such as one’s country, liberty, an ideal, and so on.”²⁹⁸ As I mentioned earlier, Freud’s notion of mourning opens it

up to include the loss of things or ideals. We can now relate this to the 1968 Russian invasion of Czechoslovakia that the novel explores. Are the mass marches that take place in different countries during this invasion perhaps an example of Butler's communal mourning?

Before we move on to discuss this question,²⁹⁹ it is necessary to mention that alongside the marches to protest the invasion of Czechoslovakia, there is also mention of marches to commemorate and remonstrate against the loss of autonomy of other countries. Among these marches are the comically retold failed attempts to march in Cambodia.³⁰⁰ There are also increasingly "nervous and hectic" marches in favour or against "the American occupation of Vietnam, [...] against the Vietnamese occupation of Cambodia; yesterday for Israel, today for the Palestinians, yesterday for Cuba, tomorrow against Cuba...".³⁰¹

Sabina's relation to these marches or crowds is one of distaste and distrust. Her attempts to disassociate from them depicts another side to the "we" that Butler supposes. If Butler's communal mourning has to do with the acknowledgement of loss and the inevitable change that it brings forth, then the forced marches of the Communist or Soviet state are a denial of the pain that accompanies loss. They are marching against remembrance and against mourning. The novel depicts these marches as creating a "we", but for Sabina it is a tenuous "we" founded on a falsified sense of unity and elation. Thus, Sabina's reactions against the totalising and "idiotic" slogans commonly expressed at marches can be read as a continuation of attempts to disassociate herself from group identities.³⁰² Her objection is not random. For Sabina they are associated with the obligatory marches of her youth. These, she associates with a false sense of joy and a "mask of beauty" imposed on individuals as part of the attempt to do away with individuality (which becomes reconfigured as dissidence).³⁰³ For Sabina, the forceful creation of "the categorical agreement with being"³⁰⁴ that the marches represent are central to what is variously referred to as either Communist, Soviet or Totalitarian kitsch.³⁰⁵ This is related to "the absolute denial of shit" because it "excludes everything from its purview which is essentially unacceptable in human existence".³⁰⁶ That these marches do not offer her certainty or solace is not only because there is no "we" that Sabina belongs to, but because the "we" has been

forcefully appropriated and disguised as a group in agreement. In her youth, the agreement was garnered on the theses of Communism. Instead of mourning the loss of their freedom, which for Sabina hinges on what she may or may not paint, those that march are made to sing and appear joyful. Marching becomes antithetical to the loss Sabina experiences as a result of the government decrees and the limits they set on thinking and on art. She is awake to what Terry Eagleton has called the “grotesque discrepancy between material hardship and the idealising claims of the state”.³⁰⁷

The material hardships of totalitarianism are made apparent everywhere in the novel, not least in the loss of jobs. After Tomas’ job gets taken away he becomes a window washer. This signifies the loss of that which “he had come to call the meaning of his life”.³⁰⁸ His loss and all it signifies forms only a part of a larger array of loss that the novel explores. These changes, or losses, may be included as further lives to mourn because of the radical change that they initiate. They can be read as the loss of former life and lifestyle:

...the editor told the story of how his paper had been banned, what the artist who designed the poster was doing, and what had become of other Czech painters, philosophers and writers. After the Russian invasion they had been relieved of their positions and became window washers, parking attendants, night watchmen, boilermen in public buildings, or at best- and usually with pull- taxi drivers.³⁰⁹

These changes are compared to a cancer that destroys the social body and spirit:

But many also died without being directly subjected to persecution; the hopelessness pervading the entire country penetrated the entire soul to the body, shattering the latter.³¹⁰

There is, moreover, a material realisation to this cancer. It is the cause of Karenin’s illness and eventual death. His death, however, is tenderly administered “in the guise of his loved ones”.³¹¹ This is in contrast to the brutal killing of animals that the novel articulates in other parts.³¹² We can relate this directly to

Karenin's inclusion into the family unit, which he seems to occupy from the first in the role of a child:

He took it home to Tereza, who picked it up and pressed it to her breast. The puppy immediately peed on her blouse.³¹³

In this sense, Karenin's place in Tomas and Tereza's life safeguards him against what Butler has called the "violence of unrealized".³¹⁴ He is recognised as a member of the group formed by Tomas and Tereza. On the level of structure, his presence is introduced early in the novel and is present until the final pages of the text. Moreover, Karenin's thoughts and ideas are presented to us in the narrative in the same way that the human voices are. For instance:

Karenin was not overjoyed by the move to Switzerland. Karenin hated change. Dog time cannot be plotted along a straight line; it does not move on and on, from one thing to the next. It moves in a circle like the hands of a clock, which- they, too, unwilling to dash madly ahead- turn round and round the face, day in and day out following the same path. In Prague, when Tomas and Tereza bought a new chair or moved a flower pot, Karenin would look on in displeasure. It disturbed his sense of time. It was as though they were trying to dupe the hands of the clock by changing the numbers on its face.

Nonetheless, he soon managed to reestablish the old order and old rituals in the Zurich flat. As in Prague, he would jump up on their bed and welcome them to the day, accompany Tereza on her morning shopping jaunt, and make certain he got the other walks coming to him as well.³¹⁵

Here, Karenin is described as being "the timepiece" of Tereza and Tomas' lives. In this manner his significance in their daily activities is established and developed, but simultaneously undercut by the fact that "in periods of despair, she [Tereza] would remind herself that she had to hold on because of him, *because he was weaker than she*, weaker perhaps even than Dubcek and their abandoned homeland".³¹⁶

Even while the narrative allows Karenin a sense of independent time and intentionality, his negative position (as weak) is reiterated. This is done in comparison to Tereza, who is herself weakened by Tomas' constant infidelities and is on the verge of a breakdown.

As I mentioned in the previous chapter, Tereza's close relation with Karenin and the numerous comparisons of her to the patron saint of animals and the environment, Saint Francis of Assisi,³¹⁷ suggests that while Karenin is the timepiece of the family life, Tereza may be read as a mouthpiece to Karenin's life. The discussion in the previous chapter alluded to this: Tereza's desire to be considered more than a body is rooted in her feeling that what is at stake is her soul. Here, to be considered only a body is to be 'animalised' and to be open to violence, including the violence of an anonymous existence (depicted by Tereza in naked mass marches where all bodies are the same). This suggests that Tereza's defence of Karenin and her close relation with him is as much rooted in a deep love for Karenin as it is with a need to safeguard her own 'humanity'. Paradoxically, this seems to estrange her from people in general. Her discovery of the half buried crow, followed by the words "It was children" uttered in a way that reveals "unexpected repugnance for people in general" is indicative of this.³¹⁸

We can relate Tereza's denial of the body and again compare it to Franz's denial. His attempts at controlling the body's urges (in the pursuit of the soul) can be traced into the realm of death. It makes sense, then, that Franz would view cemeteries as "an ugly dump of stones and bones".³¹⁹ It coincides, too, that Sabina would be fascinated by death and by cemeteries, in which she finds beauty and solace. Her fear after she learns of Tomas and Tereza's deaths is that she will be buried with a stone over her grave. Her choice to be cremated and her ashes thrown to the wind encapsulate the lightness she comes to represent in the novel. It is also emblematic of her desire for freedom from crowds or a fixed place: "in the mind of a woman for whom no place is home the thought of an end to all flight is unbearable".³²⁰

Franz's own death then brings up an interesting problem in mourning. After his death, his wife Marie-Claude appropriates his body and places the words "A RETURN AFTER LONG WANDERINGS" on his tombstone.³²¹ As readers we know that this inscription is patently untrue, yet we know that many people on his wife's side will believe it. As far as proof is concerned, the wife's false words (made solid on stone) will outlive the quiet love and devotion of the "girl with the glasses".³²² The inscription on Tomas' grave is equally misleading: "HE WANTED THE KINGDOM OF GOD ON EARTH".³²³ Similarly, the poet Frantisek Hrubin is appropriated after his death by the Minister of Culture who "made a speech over the grave about the poet's love for the Soviet Union" even though "the poet did everything possible to hide" from him while he was alive.³²⁴

These examples highlight, once more, the treacherous dimensions of language that the novel explores, and also the precariousness of bodies (dead human ones, in these cases) that have no say in how they are treated or mourned. The last example is significant in its unveiling of the political dimension of mourning. It unveils the possibility that lives can be framed in ways that dictate the way these lives are mourned and commemorated.

If the mourning of human lives can have political motivation and expression, what is at stake in mourning the life of an animal? This can be explained in line with Tereza's experience:

Along the way they [Tereza and Karenin] met a neighbour who was hurrying off to a cow shed in her rubber boots. The woman stopped long enough to ask, "What's wrong with the dog? It seems to be limping." "He has cancer," said Tereza. "There's no hope." And the lump in her throat kept her from going on. The woman noticed Tereza's tears and nearly lost her temper: "Good heavens! Don't tell me you're going to bawl your head off over a dog!" She was not being vicious; she was a kind woman and merely wanted to comfort Tereza. Tereza understood, and had spent enough time in the country to realise that if the local inhabitants loved every rabbit as she loved Karenin, they would be unable to kill any of them and they and their animals would soon starve to death. Still, the

woman's words struck her as less than friendly. "I understand," she answered without protest, but quickly turned her back and went her way. The love she bore her dog made her feel cut off, isolated...³²⁵

The above extract depicts the threat of anti-social or anti-human behaviour that accompanies the mourning of an animal life. If, as I have argued, the human is created in contrast to the animal, then a distinction such as this makes it possible to assume that if one is able to mourn an animal life, it must be at the expense of mourning a human life. In so being, it is seen as apolitical and disengaged from the complexities and tragedies that accompany human life. In *Precarious Life* Butler addresses the challenge of mourning non-normative lives by noting "how certain forms of grief become nationally recognised and amplified, whereas other losses become unthinkable and ungrievable."³²⁶ The neighbour's response to Tereza's grief betrays the neighbour's own sense that the "hierarchy of grief" has been challenged.³²⁷ Like Lurie's words to himself, the neighbour's "less than friendly" words to Tereza are meant to act as a tacit censor to Tereza's feelings.³²⁸ Yet, the effect is not a cessation of pain but instead a cue that makes Tereza 'turn her back' and walk away. This isolationist gesture on Tereza's part paradoxically confines her mourning to the state that Freud in his essay would deem melancholia and define as a "pathological condition".³²⁹ This is in stark contrast to the possibility of communal mourning that Butler proposes, which is closed off to Tereza by virtue of the type of life she mourns.

The censorship that takes place denies the influence that Karenin has had on Tereza. It does not take into account the active role that Karenin has played in the life of the couple, or in the choices regarding their life. We may claim, for example, that Tereza and Tomas' move to the country is as much influenced by the desire to avoid running into people from their past, or to diminish Tomas' infidelities, as it is by the desire to live in an open space "big enough to give Karenin room for a decent run".³³⁰ Karenin's inclusion in the unit formed by Tomas and Tereza allows his death to be mourned. The injection is administered to him "in the guise of his loved ones",³³¹ he is given a final treat (chocolates) and he is buried along

with his precious belongings in the garden.³³² This is the reverse of the “unmarked, unmourned” death of animals in *Disgrace*.³³³

In spite of these important acts, Guy Scarpetta dismisses Karenin’s death as vaguely unimportant. He notes that it is “seemingly unrelated to the actions and situations of its characters” and claims that the final section of the novel essentially concerns “the slow death of a dog”, which for Scarpetta betrays “an overt desire [by Kundera] to destroy the classical notion of “novelistic development”.³³⁴ Scarpetta’s dismissal of Karenin as simply “a dog” and his disavowal of Karenin’s importance in the life of Tereza and Tomas depicts a view that the death of an animal is somehow out of place in a work of serious literary production and that perhaps, it detracts from more serious concerns. Thus, in a single sentence the critic denies the emotional, familial and indeed even the political importance of Karenin in the novel, which I have attempted to show here. On another level, ignoring Scarpetta’s dismissive tone, we can see that perhaps the novel’s careful telling of Karenin’s illness and death does in some ways subvert classical notions of novelistic development where the human takes precedence over other forms of life. This forms part of wider concerns regarding political agency and powerlessness in Kundera’s novel.

I have used the work of various critics and have consciously inserted the animal into their theories, even in places where the animal was not explicitly involved. I have done this as an avenue of exploration into not only what constitutes a life, but more specifically into what constitutes a ‘grievable’ life. As much as I have discussed some impediments to mourning, the question of mourning animal lives has remained without conclusion. This relates to both Freud and Butler’s conception of mourning as a task and as an ongoing state. If we think of mourning as a transformation, “the full result of which we do not know in advance”,³³⁵ we do not find the conclusion that Freud first anticipated in his notion that “when the work of mourning is completed the ego becomes free and uninhibited again”.³³⁶

There are alliances that can be formed (and perhaps only become possible) through loss. But these relations are not easy and there is a certain awkwardness that accompanies them. The contradictions and discontinuities of mourning a life that is not human raises questions about the ‘mournability’ of such lives and brings to the fore our own limitations in the consideration of the meaning of ‘a life’. These webs of relation link the enquiry of this chapter into the wider problems of autonomy, representation and an often taken-for-granted human supremacy.

But this is not to conflate all discourses of exclusivity. Instead, I have attempted to show that various points of convergence- family, society and economics- are not makeshift puzzle pieces that fit neatly together. They are understood differently in different instances. My focus on Karenin and Driepoot are only two of these instances. There are many others. Thus, to conflate the varying discourses of animal rights, sexism, racism, prisoners of war and sexuality (as many animal rights activists do) and to treat them as though they are all part of the same grand scheme erases the important individual characteristics of each, as well as the historical circumstances that delineate them.³³⁷ This is akin to what Judith Butler discusses in *Bodies that Matter*:

It seems crucial to resist the model of power that would set up racism and homophobia and misogyny as parallel or analogical relations. The assertion of their abstract or structural equivalence not only misses the specific histories of their construction and elaboration, but also delays the important work of thinking through the ways in which these vectors of power require and deploy each other for the purpose of their own articulation.³³⁸

I have tried to show that these “vectors of power” differ in alternative contexts, cast different shadows and thus cannot be read in light of a single discourse. Still, the varying points of convergence are significant in the way they mark the life of individuals- animal or not- and the way these lives are mourned. In this way they can be said to govern the “economics of pain” surrounding the loss of life,

country or autonomy.³³⁹ There is no norm that every life can fit, and there is no norm by which to mourn each life.

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Conclusion

More Beginnings

The two chapters in this thesis have in some measure focused on the body and its vulnerability. This is, of course, something that unites human and animal subjects in both novels. The body is an element that depicts the overlapping dualities of the human and the animal: its materiality and its processes call to mind the difficulty (if not the impossibility) of separating what is often portrayed as two disassociated poles of existence. In *The Open* Giorgio Agamben sees this duality as coinciding with “the aporias of philosophy of our time”, of “this body that is irreducibly drawn and divided between animality and humanity”.³⁴⁰ This is, as I have mentioned, a persistent concern in both novels. Moreover, the frailty of the body comes to the fore in *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* in the detailed depictions of Karenin’s illness, and in *Disgrace* it is highlighted via Driepoot’s maimed hind leg. The body is further threatened through forms of violence, which in both novels creates links between the supposed spheres of the human and the animal.

This is not to say that we are all the same. One way to think about the human is to view him or her, as Velleman suggests, as a “self-presenting creature”.³⁴¹ The forms of presentation alternate in different contexts and is shown in the different ways the human characters in these novels construct their own identity. Lucy’s silence in *Disgrace*, which challenges her father’s (and perhaps also the reader’s) opinions is one example of this. Another example is from the excerpt in *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* where Tomas and Tereza discuss Karenin’s name. That a dog character could inhabit the realm of humans (and do so in a way that goes beyond mere anthropomorphism) and complicate not only gender but species borders, should alert us to the rich array of possible literary interpretation that lie on the horizon of what Susan McHugh has deemed “the bleeding edges of queer studies and animal studies”.³⁴²

Here, the image of blood is not incidental. Both animal studies and queer studies, although not the same thing, are founded on the need to overturn negative assumptions. For both these fields, a point of departure for this is found

in challenging the negative connotations in the words themselves: queer and animal.³⁴³ These negative assumptions are themselves the seeds of various forms of violence. Not least among these, with regards to the animal, is the fact that we kill and consume their bodies daily. If we accept Derrida's idea that the "industrial, scientific, technical violence" that continues to be performed on animals, "must change",³⁴⁴ then this thesis is a change in that direction, or at least an attempt. Furthermore, the imperative that Derrida proclaims is in line with the problems I have attempted to highlight here.

In *An Artificial Wilderness* (1987), Sven Birkerts notes that in seeking lines of enquiry "every reader knows how serendipity works- coincidentally encountered allusions open hidden doors, formerly peripheral names become new centres of interest".³⁴⁵ In my analysis of these novels, I have opened doors of enquiry by borrowing from different, seemingly disconnected, critical discourses. In some cases, this has meant 'inserting' the animal into these theories in places where the animal was not explicitly named. I have done this for a number of reasons. Among these, is the recurrent thought that to challenge a (possibly) violent humanism, we have to open the doors of enquiry to let in those we have shut out, or, to borrow a phrase from Lucy in *Disgrace*: "to share some of our human privilege with the beasts".³⁴⁶ This has meant putting pressure on existing lines of enquiry. My multi-disciplinary approach to theorising animals and our relations to and with them (never in the singular because not the same everywhere) suggests different potentials and avenues for future research in the growing field of animal studies. Thus, rather than 'writing about' animals (dogs in particular), I have attempted to forge out a dialogic engagement with animals that consistently points to our varying relations with them and to what these relations hint at about our own understanding of ourselves. Moreover, the wide theoretical scope of this thesis has attempted to challenge what Susan McHugh observes is "a more perniciously humanistic prejudice" among literary scholars: that "animals constitute bad intellectual object-choices".³⁴⁷

The prejudice against people who dedicate time to animals is not, however, confined to the academy. President Jacob Zuma's recent comments that "caring for a pet dog was part of "white" culture", and that people who love dogs more

than humans have “a lack of humanity” depict another angle to this view.³⁴⁸ What Zuma’s comments portray (other than ignorance about the historical role of dogs in African societies)³⁴⁹ is the idea that to care for an animal is somehow at the expense of a human relation, that to care for one (the animal), necessarily excludes the other (the human). This attitude bears similarities to the one depicted by Tereza’s neighbour in *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, which we looked at in the second chapter of this thesis. An interrogation of the duality between the human and the animal opens an abyss of questions and problems, which have ‘real-life’ value for those that care about (and think about) animals as more than ‘pets’. I have only scratched at the surface of some of these questions and, undoubtedly, many others remain that are yet to be discussed within this emerging field known as animal studies, or human-animal studies.

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Notes to Introduction

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- ² François Ricard. *Agnès’s Final Afternoon: an Essay on the Work of Milan Kundera*, trans. Aaron Asher. (England: Faber and Faber, 2003), 51-56.
- ³ Giorgio Agamben, *The Open: Man and Animal*, trans. Kevin Attell. (California: Stanford University Press, 2004), 15.
- ⁴ Jacques Derrida and Elisabeth Roudinesco, “Violence against Animals,” *For What Tomorrow...: A Dialogue*, trans. Jeff Fort. (Stanford: Stanford University, 2004), 63.
- ⁵ See Carol Adams ([1990] 2000).
- ⁶ See Giorgio Agamben (1998) and (2004).
- ⁷ See, for instance, Peter Singer (1975), Carol Adams (1990), Jacques Derrida (2004) and (2008), and more recently Marc Bekoff (2007), Donna Haraway (2008), etc.
- ⁸ René Descartes, *A Discourse on Method*, (1637; Project Gutenberg, 2008), par. 7, <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/59/59-h/59-h.htm#part5>.
- ⁹ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁰ *Ibid.*, par. 8.
- ¹¹ Milan Kundera, *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, trans. Michael Heim, (New York: Harper Perennial Modern Classics, [1984] 1999), 47.
- ¹² *Ibid.*
- ¹³ J.M. Coetzee, *Disgrace* (London: Vintage Books, [1999] 2000), 161, 219, etc.
- ¹⁴ Derrida and Roudinesco, “Violence against Animals,” 65.
- ¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 65 (emphasis in original).
- ¹⁶ Matthew Calarco, *Zoographies: the Question of the Animal from Heidegger to Derrida*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 79.
- ¹⁷ Coetzee, *Disgrace*, 206 (emphasis in original).
- ¹⁸ Calarco, *Zoographies*, 83.
- ¹⁹ *Ibid.*
- ²⁰ Kundera, *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, 79-127.
- ²¹ This is a phrase that Derrida uses in various ways in his writings on the animal. See, for instance, Derrida (2004) and (2008).
- ²² Derrida and Roudinesco, “Violence against Animals,” 63.
- ²³ Agamben, *The Open*, 16.
- ²⁴ *Ibid.*
- ²⁵ See David Wills’ note to this in his translation of *The Animal that Therefore I am* for more information.
- ²⁶ Jacques Derrida, *The Animal That Therefore I am (More to Follow)*, trans. David Wills, (New York: Fordham University, 2008), 14, 19, etc.
- ²⁷ *Ibid.*, 4-5.
- ²⁸ *Ibid.*, 15.
- ²⁹ *Ibid.*
- ³⁰ *Ibid.*, 18.
- ³¹ Coetzee, *Disgrace*, 78.
- ³² John Berger, “Why Look at Animals?,” in *About Looking*, (London: Writers and Readers, 1980), 14.
- ³³ Donna Haraway, *When Species Meet* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), 17.
- ³⁴ Kundera, *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, 291-292.
- ³⁵ *Ibid.*, 24.
- ³⁶ Derrida, *The Animal*, 40.
- ³⁷ Coetzee, *Disgrace*, 215.
- ³⁸ *Ibid.*
- ³⁹ Coetzee, *Disgrace*, 215.
- ⁴⁰ Derrida, *The Animal*, 4.
- ⁴¹ Agamben, *The Open*, 15.
- ⁴² Jeff McMahan, *The Ethics of Killing*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 1.

⁴³ Sigmund Freud. "Mourning and Melancholia," in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Volume XIV (1914-1916): On the History of the Psycho-Analytic Movement, Papers on Metapsychology and Other Works* (1917): 243, 244, 245 etc.

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⁴⁵ Ibid., 244.
⁴⁶ Ibid., 245.
⁴⁷ Ibid., 244.
⁴⁸ Ibid., 245-248.
⁴⁹ Ibid., 245, 248.
⁵⁰ Scarpetta, "Kundera's Quartet," 114.
⁵¹ Ibid.
⁵² Gn.2:25.
⁵³ Gn.3:7.
⁵⁴ Gn. 2:24
⁵⁵ David Velleman, "The Genesis of Shame," *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 30 (2001): 30.
⁵⁶ Ibid., 31.
⁵⁷ Ibid., 30.
⁵⁸ Ibid.
⁵⁹ Ibid., 35.
⁶⁰ Coetzee, *Disgrace*, 78.
⁶¹ Velleman, "The Genesis of Shame," 35.
⁶² Ibid., 36.
⁶³ Ibid., 37.
⁶⁴ Ibid., 52.
⁶⁵ Richard Ryder, "Speciesism Again: the Original Leaflet," *Critical Society*, 2 (2010): 1.
⁶⁶ Coetzee, *Disgrace*, 167, 169.
⁶⁷ Kundera, *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, 286-290.
⁶⁸ Ibid., 286.
⁶⁹ Ibid., 286-287.
⁷⁰ Velleman, "The Genesis of Shame," 37.
⁷¹ Gn.2:25
⁷² Kundera, *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, 132.
⁷³ Ibid., 132-133.
⁷⁴ Kundera, Copyright and Publication Information in *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*.
⁷⁵ Ibid., 257.
⁷⁶ Ibid., 257.
⁷⁷ Ibid., 256-278.
⁷⁸ Ibid., 29.
⁷⁹ Ibid., 33.
⁸⁰ See, for instance, 269-271.
⁸¹ Rochelle Gurstein, "The Waning of Shame in Modern Life: Kundera's Novels as a Case Study," *Social Research* 70 (2003): 1262.
⁸² Ibid.
⁸³ Ibid., 1275.
⁸⁴ Scarpetta, "Kundera's Quartet," 110.
⁸⁵ Ibid.
⁸⁶ Ibid., 112.
⁸⁷ Ibid., 114.
⁸⁸ Agamben, *The Open*, 15.
⁸⁹ Terry Eagleton, "Estrangement and Irony," *Salmagundi* 73 (1987): 29.
⁹⁰ Kundera, *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, 137.
⁹¹ Ibid., 138.

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- ⁹² Ibid., 137.
- ⁹³ I am thinking here of Derrida's description of "naked" words, implying honest ones, from *The Animal*, 1.
- ⁹⁴ Kundera, *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, 40.
- ⁹⁵ Gurstein, "The Waning of Shame," 1266.
- ⁹⁶ Ibid.
- ⁹⁷ Kundera, *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, 193.
- ⁹⁸ Ibid., 193-194.
- ⁹⁹ Gurstein, "The Waning of Shame", 1261.
- ¹⁰⁰ Ibid.
- ¹⁰¹ Kundera, *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, 45.
- ¹⁰² Ibid., 194.
- ¹⁰³ Ibid., 45.
- ¹⁰⁴ Ibid.
- ¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 47.
- ¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 45-47.
- ¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 45.
- ¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 47.
- ¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 244.
- ¹¹⁰ Ibid., 40.
- ¹¹¹ Ibid., 49, 50, 53, 78, etc.
- ¹¹² Ibid., 74, 283-284, etc.
- ¹¹³ Ibid., 47.
- ¹¹⁴ Ibid., 57.
- ¹¹⁵ Ibid., 58.
- ¹¹⁶ Ibid., 47.
- ¹¹⁷ Ibid., 154.
- ¹¹⁸ Ibid., 155.
- ¹¹⁹ Ibid., 154-155.
- ¹²⁰ Ibid., 156-157.
- ¹²¹ Ibid., 156.
- ¹²² Ibid.
- ¹²³ Gurstein, "The Waning of Shame," 1266.
- ¹²⁴ Kundera, *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, 95.
- ¹²⁵ Ibid., 83.
- ¹²⁶ Ibid., 82.
- ¹²⁷ Ibid.
- ¹²⁸ Ibid., 83.
- ¹²⁹ Ibid., 247.
- ¹³⁰ Ibid., 203.
- ¹³¹ Ibid., 202.
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- ¹³³ Ibid., 205
- ¹³⁴ Ibid.
- ¹³⁵ Ibid.
- ¹³⁶ Ibid., 202.
- ¹³⁷ Scarpetta, "Kundera's Quartet," 115 (emphasis in original).
- ¹³⁸ Ibid.
- ¹³⁹ Jonathan Smith, "The Garments of Shame," *History of Religions* 5(1966): 237.
- ¹⁴⁰ Kundera, *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, 205-206.
- ¹⁴¹ Ibid., 28.
- ¹⁴² Ibid., 57.
- ¹⁴³ Coetzee, *Disgrace*, 68.
- ¹⁴⁴ Ibid., 143.
- ¹⁴⁵ Ibid., 85.
- ¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 142.

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- ¹⁴⁷ Ibid., 38, 39-40.
¹⁴⁸ See, for instance, 47, 165, 179.
¹⁴⁹ Ibid., 179.
¹⁵⁰ Ibid.
¹⁵¹ Ibid., 180.
¹⁵² Ibid., 54.
¹⁵³ Ibid., 16, 168.
¹⁵⁴ Ibid., 165.
¹⁵⁵ Derrida, *The Animal*, 1.
¹⁵⁶ Coetzee, *Disgrace*, 49, 53.
¹⁵⁷ Ibid., 25.
¹⁵⁸ Ibid.
¹⁵⁹ Ibid., 43.
¹⁶⁰ Ibid., 52, 89.
¹⁶¹ Ibid., 158.
¹⁶² Cooper, "Metamorphosis and Sexuality," 23.
¹⁶³ Ibid.
¹⁶⁴ Ibid., 24.
¹⁶⁵ Coetzee, *Disgrace*, 164.
¹⁶⁶ Cooper, "Metamorphosis and Sexuality," 36.
¹⁶⁷ Ibid., 34.
¹⁶⁸ Ibid.
¹⁶⁹ Kai Wiegandt, "J.M. Coetzee's 'Dog-Man' and the Cynicism of *Disgrace*," *Anglia: Journal of English Philology* 131 (2013): 3. [Forthcoming]
¹⁷⁰ Ibid., 5.
¹⁷¹ Coetzee, *Disgrace*, 112.
¹⁷² Ibid., 140.
¹⁷³ Ibid., 134 (emphasis in original).
¹⁷⁴ Ibid., 141.
¹⁷⁵ Ibid., 132.
¹⁷⁶ Ibid., 133.
¹⁷⁷ Ibid., 109.
¹⁷⁸ Elleke Boehmer. "Not Saying Sorry, Not Speaking Pain: Gender Implications in *Disgrace*," *Interventions: International Journal of Postcolonial Studies* 4 (2002): 349.
¹⁷⁹ Ibid., 350.
¹⁸⁰ Coetzee, *Disgrace*, 104.
¹⁸¹ Ibid., 48.
¹⁸² Boehmer, "Not Saying Sorry," 348.
¹⁸³ Ibid., 349.
¹⁸⁴ Coetzee, *Disgrace*, 158-159.
¹⁸⁵ Ibid., 199.
¹⁸⁶ Cooper, "Metamorphosis and Sexuality," 32-35.
¹⁸⁷ Coetzee, *Disgrace*, 206 (emphasis in original).
¹⁸⁸ Ibid., 208.
¹⁸⁹ Ibid., 207.
¹⁹⁰ Ibid.
¹⁹¹ Ibid.
¹⁹² Ibid., 209.
¹⁹³ Ibid., 205.
¹⁹⁴ Ibid., 209.
¹⁹⁵ See Attwell (2002).
¹⁹⁶ Coetzee, *Disgrace*, 90.
¹⁹⁷ Ibid., 194.
¹⁹⁸ Ibid.
¹⁹⁹ Ibid., 199.
²⁰⁰ Ibid., 69.

²⁰¹ Judith Butler, "Violence, Mourning, Politics," in *Precarious Life: the Powers of Mourning and Violence* (London: Verso, 2006), 25.

Notes to Chapter 2

²⁰² Kundera, *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, 297.

²⁰³ *The Concise Oxford Dictionary*, 4th ed., s.v. "sacrilege".

²⁰⁴ Kundera, *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, 287.

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 294.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 279-303.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 122-123.

²⁰⁸ Coetzee, *Disgrace*, 220.

²⁰⁹ McMahan, *The Ethics of Killing*, 1.

²¹⁰ Sigmund Freud. "Mourning and Melancholia," in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Volume XIV (1914-1916): On the History of the Psycho-Analytic Movement, Papers on Metapsychology and Other Works* (1917): 243, 244, 245 etc.

²¹¹ Judith Butler, "Violence, Mourning, Politics" in *Precarious Life: the Powers of Mourning and Violence* (London: Verso, 2006), 21. I first encountered this essay in the journal *Studies in Gender and Sexuality* 4(1): 9-37, 2003. The citations that follow will be from the book edition.

²¹² Freud, "Mourning and Melancholia," 243.

²¹³ *Ibid.*

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 243, 244, 245 etc.

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 246.

²¹⁶ Judith Butler, Preface to *Precarious Life: the Powers of Mourning and Violence* (London: Verso, 2006), XII.

²¹⁷ *Ibid.*

²¹⁸ Butler, "Violence, Mourning, Politics," 19-20.

²¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 23.

²²⁰ *Ibid.*, 25.

²²¹ *Ibid.*

²²² *Ibid.*, 44.

²²³ See, for instance, chapter 5 of *Precarious Life* (128-151).

²²⁴ *Ibid.*, 133.

²²⁵ *Ibid.*, 20.

²²⁶ *Ibid.*, 26

²²⁷ *Ibid.*, 19.

²²⁸ *Ibid.*

²²⁹ *Ibid.*, 35

²³⁰ *Ibid.*, 24, 26, 32.

²³¹ *Ibid.*, 20, 25, 30-33 etc.

²³² *Ibid.*, 33.

²³³ *Ibid.*, 20.

²³⁴ *Ibid.*

²³⁵ Cora Diamond, "The Difficulty of Reality and the Difficulty of Philosophy," *Partial Answers: Journal of Literature and the History of Ideas* 1:2 (2003): 22. The same essay is published in *Philosophy and Animal Life* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008). The following citation is from the journal article. Butler also speaks of "wounding" in her own essay, see "Violence, Mourning, Politics," 46.

²³⁶ Freud, "Mourning and Melancholia," 244.

²³⁷ Berger, "Why look at Animals?," 14.

²³⁸ *Ibid.*

²³⁹ Coetzee, *Disgrace*, 78.

²⁴⁰ *The Concise Oxford Dictionary*, 4th ed., s.v. "euthanasia".

²⁴¹ McMahan, *The Ethics of Killing*, 455.

²⁴² *Ibid.*, 456.

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- ²⁴³ Ibid., 457.
²⁴⁴ Ibid.
²⁴⁵ Ibid., 461.
²⁴⁶ Ibid., 460.
²⁴⁷ Ibid., 461.
²⁴⁸ Ibid.
²⁴⁹ Ibid.
²⁵⁰ Coetzee, *Disgrace*, 220.
²⁵¹ McMahan, *The Ethics of Killing*, 457.
²⁵² Coetzee, *Disgrace*, 142.
²⁵³ Ibid., 218.
²⁵⁴ Tom Herron, "The Dog Man: Becoming Animal in Coetzee's *Disgrace*," *Twentieth-Century Literature* 51.4 (2005): 472.
²⁵⁵ Coetzee, *Disgrace*, 82-84.
²⁵⁶ Ibid., 131.
²⁵⁷ Ibid., 146.
²⁵⁸ Ibid., 64.
²⁵⁹ Cooper, "Metamorphosis and Sexuality," 34.
²⁶⁰ Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 63.
²⁶¹ Ibid.
²⁶² Coetzee, *Disgrace*, 84.
²⁶³ Ibid., 80-81.
²⁶⁴ Ibid., 84.
²⁶⁵ Ibid., 85.
²⁶⁶ Ibid., 146.
²⁶⁷ Coetzee, *Disgrace*, 80.
²⁶⁸ Ibid., 203.
²⁶⁹ Coetzee, *Disgrace*, 73, 84.
²⁷⁰ Ibid., 145.
²⁷¹ Ibid.
²⁷² Ibid.
²⁷³ Ibid., 127.
²⁷⁴ Ibid., 126.
²⁷⁵ Ibid., 131.
²⁷⁶ Ibid.
²⁷⁷ Carrol Clarkson, "J.M. Coetzee and the Limits of Language," *Journal of Literary Studies* 25 (2009): 108.
²⁷⁸ Coetzee, *Disgrace*, 142-143.
²⁷⁹ Ibid., 146.
²⁸⁰ Natalie Pollard. "The Fate of Stupidity," *Essays in Criticism* 62:2 (2012): 125.
²⁸¹ Ibid., 126.
²⁸² Coetzee, *Disgrace*, 62.
²⁸³ Ibid., 78.
²⁸⁴ Ibid.
²⁸⁵ See, for instance, Graham (2002) and Attridge (2004).
²⁸⁶ Coetzee, *Disgrace*, 145.
²⁸⁷ Mike Marais, "J.M. Coetzee's *Disgrace* and the Task of the Imagination," *Journal of Modern Literature* 29:2 (2006): 78.
²⁸⁸ Ibid.
²⁸⁹ Lucy Graham, "Reading the Unspeakable: Rape in J.M. Coetzee's *Disgrace*," *Journal of Southern African Studies* 29:2 (2003): 443.
²⁹⁰ Philip Armstrong, *What Animals Mean in the Fiction of Modernity* (New York: Routledge, 2008), 186.
²⁹¹ Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Totemism*, trans. Rodney Needham (Boston: Beacon Press, 1963), 89.
²⁹² Armstrong, *What Animals Mean*, 2.
²⁹³ Marais, "J.M. Coetzee's *Disgrace*," 86.

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- ²⁹⁴ Coetzee, *Disgrace*, 142.
- ²⁹⁵ Butler, "Violence, Mourning, Politics," 33.
- ²⁹⁶ Giorgio Agamben, *State of Exception*, trans. Kevin Attell (Chicago and London, University of Chicago Press, 2005), 1.
- ²⁹⁷ Respectively, Part One and Part Two of the novel. The same titles, in inverted order, are given to Part Four and Part Five of the novel.
- ²⁹⁸ Freud, "Mourning and Melancholia," 243.
- ²⁹⁹ For a thorough and interesting view on images of crowds in Kundera's novels, see Kuhlman (2001).
- ³⁰⁰ Kundera, *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, 259-269.
- ³⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 266.
- ³⁰² *Ibid.*, 249.
- ³⁰³ *Ibid.*, 249, 252.
- ³⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 248.
- ³⁰⁵ See part six of the novel, titled 'The Grand March' (241-278).
- ³⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 248.
- ³⁰⁷ Eagleton, "Estrangement and Irony," 27.
- ³⁰⁸ Kundera, *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, 179.
- ³⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 212-213.
- ³¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 229.
- ³¹¹ *Ibid.*, 300.
- ³¹² *Ibid.*, 289.
- ³¹³ *Ibid.*, 24.
- ³¹⁴ Butler, "Violence, Mourning, Politics," 33.
- ³¹⁵ Kundera, *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, 74.
- ³¹⁶ *Ibid.* (my emphasis).
- ³¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 49, 50, 53, 78, etc.
- ³¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 210.
- ³¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 104.
- ³²⁰ *Ibid.*, 125.
- ³²¹ *Ibid.*, 276.
- ³²² *Ibid.*, 274.
- ³²³ *Ibid.*, 276.
- ³²⁴ *Ibid.*
- ³²⁵ *Ibid.*, 287.
- ³²⁶ Butler, "Preface," XIV.
- ³²⁷ Butler, "Violence, Mourning, Politics," 32.
- ³²⁸ Kundera, *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, 287.
- ³²⁹ Freud, "Mourning and Melancholia," 243.
- ³³⁰ *Ibid.*, 233.
- ³³¹ Kundera, *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, 300.
- ³³² *Ibid.*, 301-303.
- ³³³ Coetzee, *Disgrace*, 178.
- ³³⁴ Scarpetta, "Kundera's Quartet," 109 (my emphasis).
- ³³⁵ Butler, "Violence, Mourning, Politics," 21.
- ³³⁶ Freud, "Mourning and Melancholia," 244.
- ³³⁷ I am thinking here specifically of the following type of comments: "Just as people of colour do not exist as resources for whites, or women for men, so other animals do not exist as resources for human beings" and "By analogy, why think that permitting "gentler" rape or "more humane" slavery would lead to the absolute prohibition against rape and the total abolition of slavery?", both from Tom Regan and Gary Francione, "The Animal Rights Movement Must Reject Animal Welfarism" in *Animal Rights: Opposing Viewpoints* (California: Greenhaven Press, 1996), 195, 196.
- ³³⁸ Judith Butler, Introduction to *Bodies that Matter* (New York: Routledge, [1993] 2011), xxvi.
- ³³⁹ Freud, "Mourning and Melancholia," 243.

Notes to Conclusion

³⁴⁰ Agamben, *The Open*, 12.

³⁴¹ Velleman, "The Genesis of Shame," 37.

³⁴² Susan McHugh, "Queer (and) Animal Theories," *GLQ* 15:1(2008): 155.

³⁴³ See, for instance, Sullivan (2010) and Butler (2011).

³⁴⁴ Derrida and Roudinesco, "Violence Against Animals," 64 (emphasis in original).

³⁴⁵ Sven Birkerts, *An Artificial Wilderness: Essays on Twentieth Century Literature*, (Boston: William Morrow & Co, 1987), 14.

³⁴⁶ Coetzee, *Disgrace*, 78.

³⁴⁷ McHugh, "Queer (and) Animal Theories," 163.

³⁴⁸ "Zuma Comments cause Canine Chaos," *News 24*, December 27, 2012. Accessed December 28, 2012. <http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News/Zuma-comments-cause-canine-chaos-20121227>. See also Erin Conway-smith, "Jacob Zuma says owning a Dog 'is not African'," *The Telegraph*, December 27, 2012. Accessed February 05, 2013. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/southafrica/9767644/Jacob-Zuma-says-owning-a-dog-is-not-African.html>. And "Zuma's dog comments meant to 'decolonise the African mind'", *Mail & Guardian*, December 27, 2012, accessed February 05, 2013, <http://mg.co.za/article/2012-12-27-zumas-dog-comments-meant-to-decolonise-the-african-mind>

³⁴⁹ See Van Sittert and Swart (2009).