Becoming Human With Dogs:

Race, Affect and Interspecies Autopoiesis in Human-dog Relations in South Africa

By Catherine Rudolph

Submitted to

Central European University

Department of Gender Studies

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Erasmus Mundus Master´s Degree in Women´s and Gender Studies (GEMMA)

Main Supervisor: Hyaesin Yoon (Central European University)

Second Supervisor: Zuleika Sheik (Utrecht University)

Vienna, Austria

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Abstract

This study explores how relations between dogs and humans in post-apartheid South Africa function in the ongoing production of racialized humanness. Drawing on the work of decolonial philosopher Sylvia Wynter, I illustrate the reification of the Human as a category of power in human-dog relations, that is, how Whiteness as Human is instated in the negation and control of Blackness as its referent human Other. Using Wynter's conceptualizations of "sociogeny" and "autopoiesis", I develop her insights from the perspective of interspecies relationality, tracing how racial meanings of humanness, as symbolic, biopolitical, experiential, are inscripted in relations with dogs. Taking into account animal agency, I emphasize the relational poiesis of dogs and humans in systems of power.

First, I consider the ways in which human-dog relationality operates as an apparatus for gendered racial differentiation and for legitimizing violence. Looking at the discourse around the proposed ban on pit bulls in South Africa, I outline how human-dog relations are racialized and moralized to reproduce tropes of Black masculinity as violent and criminal and Whiteness as the universal human(e). I then explore how human-dog relationality operates in the White suburbs and natural public space to produce racialized relations of familiarity and strange(r)ness, structured by affective economies of love and fear. Tracing movements of affect between bodies, I consider how forms of kinship and separation are enacted to reproduce White normativity and colonial constructions of gender and race. In view of this, I explore the possibilities for relation across difference to open up different narratives of humanity in inter- and intra-species relations. I look to South African writers' work on racialized human-dog relations – specifically Gabeba Baderoon's readings of Njabulo Ndebele's "The Year of the Dog" and J.M. Coetzee's *Disgrace*, and Eskia Mphalele's *Mrs Plum* – which offer imaginative grounds for new modes of being human in relation to dogs. My focus on how dog-human relations reproduce the Human as a category of power, facilitates exploring how these relations might be altered towards its disruption, foregrounding relationality and recognition of difference, towards a new kind of humanism.

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A note on orthography

I use capitalization to denote the ‘Human’ as a category of power constructed by Western Man, who instates himself as Human through differentiation from and subjugation of human and nonhuman others. This is the Human of colonial modernity and White supremacy, rather than the human in a broader sense.

I capitalize Black and White, not to reify them as racial categories, but to acknowledge their meaning beyond descriptors, speaking to a mode of being, an identity and a culture, but also (crucially) to historical and ongoing structures of power or subjugation, which shape how that being is experienced.

In both of these cases, when quoting I have left the author’s original orthography.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Considering Human-Dog Relations in South Africa: An Opening

In South Africa, dog-human relations play a significant role in the constitution of humanness and racial difference. I use the following media controversy as a departure point for considering this. In 2017, a tweet posted by 702, a popular commercial radio station in South Africa, included the following images taken at an event organised by the station: a photograph of a Black man holding a baby and a photograph of a dog. The tweet was captioned: 'MTN702Walk Aaaw! Dog VS baby... who's cuter? Go ahead and evoke those broody feelings...'.

There was a response of outrage on Twitter and from the radio's listeners, who felt the tweet to be offensive and racist. During a 702 broadcast the following day, it appeared that the person who wrote the tweet was in fact a Black woman, not White, as some of the responses had assumed. A caller offered the following opinion to the show host:

> I read the tweet. I was shocked. It moved me basically. Obviously, I think it is a white person. But when I heard later on that it is actually a black girl, then it changed the story for me. The way I relate to dogs as a 35-year-old where I grew up in the villages, it is totally different from a 35-year-old who is a white guy...Obviously the child [girl] went to these model C schools[1]. She has a different relationship with a dog. It is unlike mine. Maybe, [her relationship] is more closer to how white people treat dogs. Maybe we need to educate her to understand a broader context. But I am still saying strongly, if it was a white person saying this, it would have been pure racism...If it is a black person, it is no longer a shock. Actually, we just need to educate the child to understand how other black people view the relationship

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[1] Previously Whites-only government schools which became semi-private as part of the negotiated settlement of the White government at the end of apartheid. The schools are administrated and largely funded by a governing body of parents and alumni, who have discretion over who is admitted to the school so that they have become "mixed" in the years following 1994, but remain racially, epistemically, culturally and linguistically structured by Whiteness (Christie and McKinney).

with dogs. It is no longer a race issue for me. ("Person Who Compared Black Babies to Dogs in Tweet Is Black Herself.")

The views of the caller reflect a profound difference between the way in which White people and Black people relate to dogs. For him, the kinship of White people with dogs has particular logic that cannot hold for Black people. Significantly, this is not only personal, but collective and racially dependent. This brings me to the first major idea of this thesis, namely that who "we" are as humans – how we become differentiated as human and how we consciously experience ourselves as an "I" who is part of a "we" – emerges in relation to race. Here, I use Sylvia Wynter's reconceptualization of Frantz Fanon's use of the term "sociogeny" – invoked in many of her works and outlined "Toward the sociogenic principle: Fanon, identity, the puzzle of conscious experience, and what it is like to be 'Black'" (2001) – to denote the cognitive-biological inscription of the hegemonic narrative of Humanness. This elucidates Fanon's experience of violent psycho-somatic dissonance, in being a Black subject in a world that instates Whiteness as Human. Understanding the social genesis of race and meanings of humanness challenges the dominant bio-centric conception of the human as a primarily biological organism preceding social relations, a conception through which racial hierarchy was naturalized to justify White supremacy. Wynter argues instead that we auto-speciate or produce ourselves as human – as part of different human groups, which Wynter calls genres or ethno-classes of the human – through group-specific stories of what it means to be human. Wynter calls this process "auto-poiesis": self-creation. The experience of being human is then determined by our own internal structuring, which, rather than inherent, develops in response to symbolic meanings attached to "humanity". However, Wynter shows that the multiplicity of location and culture-specific 'genres' of being human has been erased by the domination and universalization of the Human. I suggest that in South Africa, human-dog relations are part of reproducing the Humanness of Whiteness. Further, in view of the above comment, I consider how meanings of "being human" are bound up in the signification of and relation to dogs and figured by histories of racial and interspecies violence.

With this in mind, I introduce my attachment to this topic. I am what people, in hegemonic culture, call "a dog person": seeing a dog, I experience a strange compulsion to be close to it, to

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meet its eyes and have it press its nose or body into my hand. Watching dogs interact with one another and the world, I find a small warm elation rising in my chest. My family's first dog, Bijoux, a big black Bouvier, was considered, according to the logics of our racialized interspecies kinship, part of our family. Bijoux was a family dog, but also a guard dog. She let us pull on her fur and lie with our heads on her belly, but she had a big, deep bark and we had a sign on the gate saying "Beware of the Dog". This sign could be seen to address anyone, but it forms part of a long history in South Africa of dogs being used to police Black bodies: by White settlers to protect their property and by the apartheid police to quell protests. Historian Sandra Swart observes that the national psyche is haunted by this history: "Nothing remains as strong in the public's imagination as the snarling German shepherd straining at the end of the apartheid policeman's leash" ("Pit bull attacks in South Africa"). The enduring violence of this is evident in a video that was leaked in 2000, of an event two years prior: in January 1998, five members of South African Police Services' (SAPS) Benoni Dog Unit recorded themselves setting police dogs on Gabriel Pedro Timane, Alexandre Pedro Timane, and Sylvester Cose, three Black undocumented migrants from Mozambique. The detainees were brought to an abandoned field near the mine dumps, where the policemen initiated a "Dog exercise": using two old police dogs to illustrate to younger dogs how to attack a "human target" ("Benoni Dog Unit"). Cheered on by the policemen, the dogs chase down and maul one man at a time. The men are heard screaming and pleading for the police to call the dogs off. The gratuitous brutality of this event reflects how dogs have been used by Whiteness for the control and violation of Black subjects.

Such haunting extends to the Symbolic imagination. In his essay "The Year of the Dog" (2007), South African scholar Njabulo Ndebele reflects on the invective "like a dog" and how the likening to dog-ness becomes a sanctioning for brutality, particularly for Black people. He begins the essay by reflecting on the use of this pejorative comparison by Black people themselves. He opens with reference to Zizi Kodwa, the spokesperson of the ANC youth league, who, in support of deputy-president Jacob Zuma during Zuma's rape trial[2], reportedly called for

[2] Zuma, at the time one of the country's most powerful and popular politicians, had the charge laid against him by a young woman, known as "Khwezi", who was the daughter of one of Zuma's close friends. Writing on the trial, Mmatshilo Motsei observes that the degrading meaning of the label "dog" was inflected by gender, seen in the chanting of Zuma's supporters –

‘the dogs to be beaten until their owners and handlers emerge’. The dogs here are those who criticised Zuma, like Ndebele himself. Ndebele extends an invitation to the reader to follow him in an imaginary scene, in which a “terrified, helpless” nonhuman dog howls and yelps as it is surrounded by Kodwa and a crowd of followers, who break its spine and skull with incessant blows. Ndebele’s evocation of the dog, lying on its side, “a bloody mess, still trying to raise its head” functions to condemn the “righteous brutality” of these men (1). Ndebele then points to multiple historical instances in which such ideological fervour allowed for Black people to be abused “like dogs”. He reflects that this comparison has often been invoked to describe Black people and the violence they have endured – in the Soweto uprisings, the school children “were shot at ‘like dogs’” (Ndebele 2). His narrative mechanism draws empathetic connections between dogs and humans and creates a nightmarish sense of violence repeating itself. Baderoon quotes Ndebele to explain his understanding of these layers of relational violence: for Ndebele “oppressed people sometimes mirror the mechanisms of denigration used against them as a way of ensuring that, in a hierarchy of denigration, at least ‘something [would be] more piteous than ourselves’” (353). While Ndebele proposes the dog as a figure for empathy through which to disavow the violence, I read “piteous” in this instance as wretched or pathetic, rather than deserving of pity.

Ndebele thus argues that in the South African imaginary, the label ‘dog’ indicates the bottom of a racialized natural hierarchy. In being “like a dog”, one is considered deserving of violence. Ndebele suggests that this label leads to the abuse and subjugation of people, but also of actual dogs: dogs become a symbolic figure *and* material being “on which to pin all manners of cruelty” (3). Thus, race-species hierarchies are mutually constituted and enforced to produce violence. Mel Chen observes: “the statement that someone “treated me like a dog” is one of liberal humanism’s fictions: some dogs are treated quite well, and many humans suffer in conditions of profound indignity” (89). Instead, Ndebele is illustrating that when the invective “like a dog” is deployed, both dogs and humans become co-figured as deserving of violence.

“Burn the Bitch” – as Khwezi entered the courtroom (119). Zuma would go on to be acquitted and serve as South Africa’s president.

Reflecting on the phenomenon which originally inspired this thesis – the aggression of dogs towards people of colour – one of my interviewees draws on the notion of violent Black masculinity to narrate dogs' behaviour. She says:

> [D]ogs are much more afraid of men than women. I think we also get a lot of dogs that come from rescue centres here… and then in general, I think they were being abused by Black men. But some of them are like, pedigree dogs and they also bark at Black men. (Mila "Dog Economies")

Her reading of the dogs' reactions locates the main reason for aggression in the imagined action of Black men. However, she also acknowledges that the pattern extends beyond "rescue dogs". Apartheid history is intimated by the qualification that "pedigree dogs" are also hostile towards Black men: their desirable pedigree suggests a wealthy (White) context, in which, it is implied, they would have no trauma or abuse; the dogs' reactions in this case are, I propose, a result of segregation and part of the exclusion of Black people from White space. Her discourse differs from Ndebele's proposal of displaced violence: where Ndebele reads a shared violation, in which violence begets violence, this abuse appears as a human cruelty which is racialized and void of history. The above examples speak to the mutable constructions of humanness and dogness in human-dog relations to produce racial difference.

Indeed, in upper middle-class pet ownership in my home city, Cape Town, dogs are accepted as surrogate children. Here, they are not seen as 'human', but instead function as a site for projection and human identification: I suggest that through this they are drawn into Whiteness, as animals that are innocent like children. At the same time, dogs are attributed individuated consciousness, which contributes to notions of dog subjectivity and "personalities"[3]. This operates flexibly with understandings of innocence: a dog with aggressive tendencies is more likely to be labelled a "problem child", or said to have an abusive past, than to be said to have an aggressive personality. Between these discourses of innocence and personhood, they are

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[3] This is exemplified in an event held by Mila – the aforementioned interviewee's – doggy daycare. The daycare "host[s] a lively graduation ceremony to celebrate the beloved PUPils… [in which] each pup is given an award in recognition of what makes them unique and highlights an attribute that we have come to cherish. In true Dogwarts fashion, the pups are also sorted into houses based on their personality types" ("Graduation")

understood as having capacity to act with intention, for example in interactions with their owners, but not the same capacity and self-awareness as humans, thus excusing any aggressive behaviour towards Black people. Thus they remain outside of a moral framework – innocent of blame – and are special because of their supportive role in White sociality.

The above also illustrates the kinds of intimacies and separations that characterize dog-human relations. Literary and postcolonial theorist, Sakiru Adebayo, reflects that in South Africa, both police and citizens' dogs become socialized into antiblack racism. As such, "most ordinary Black South Africans (especially men) are exceedingly cynophobic" (Adebayo). Walking with dogs on the mountain and in the White suburbs of Cape Town, I have witnessed Black people often responding to dogs with wariness or fear. Moreover, while their behaviours vary, dogs are significantly more likely to bark or become aggressive if the person passing them is Black. A dog's presence thus significantly affects the parameters of movement and interaction between people, tipping power further in favour of hegemonic Whiteness. I come to this study from a position of trouble, from my love for dogs and the empathetic fracturing I feel when a being I have such positive relation and affect with, which brings me such joy, responds aggressively to another person, inspiring equally negative affect in them. I want to consider how these affective experiences – of interspecies love, arising from a familial closeness; and of interspecies fear arising from a violent enforcing of otherness – function in the reproduction of systems of power and separation. As no relation with a dog is "natural", how and to what effect are certain forms of relation encouraged and legitimated? In answering this, I will trace the effect and manifestation of narratives of what it means to be human in relation to dogs. This involves mapping out how human relations and human-dog relations are figured in constellations of physical and symbolic closeness or separation and showing how this results from and reproduces the bio-political ordering of things.

To understand the racialized dynamics of dog-human relations, it is also necessary to understand the racial structure of South Africa. Apartheid legislation classified the population into four racial groups: White, Indian, Coloured or Black. This allowed not just for separation but for hierarchical organization and the designation of different rights, spaces and resources. The spatial segregation of the Group Areas Act saw the eviction and forced relocation of people

of colour to poorly resourced areas on the outskirts of cities. Black people's presence in White space was permitted only for work: the Influx Control Act denied Black people political citizenship and required them to carry an identifying "pass book" – called colloquially, subversively a *dompas* ("stupid pass" in Afrikaans) – which would be used to justify their presence (More 130). Black people became workers, legitimized by White employers and Black townships "serviced" the White city (More 131). In this, the colonial imaging of Blackness as inferior was materially inscribed: race, space and class became inextricable. This exploitative labour system still exists today. Every day, taxis, buses and trains bring Black people to White neighbourhoods, to clean the houses and work in the gardens. The economic system enforces Black presence in White space, but with the understanding of Blackness as a foreign presence.

With the end of apartheid, Black people's movement could not be as strictly monitored: while previously contained by pass laws, the unidentifiable (Black) stranger could now move about freely in White space. This threat of Blackness took on the moniker of "crime", informing the primary affective economy in the White suburbs, in relation to race: fear. Looking at various forms of media to map out impressions of and attitudes towards criminal violence in South Africa, Gary Kynoch finds that "for a considerable portion of the White population race remains the predominant factor when it comes to fear of violent crime" (427). This has historical roots, as Kynoch observes that the separations of apartheid were justified, in part, by White fear, mandating the containment of "the physical threat posed by what was constantly portrayed as an uncivilised black majority" (429). According to available statistics, violent crime increased in the final years of apartheid and spiked dramatically in the first several years of democracy (Ibid). This had an acute effect on the psyche of the White population, which, "[p]reviously insulated from the worst effects of violent crime… was shaken to the core by the robberies, hijackings and home invasions that introduced a horrifying new element into their lives" (428). Here, I suggest that White anxiety, while not entirely manufactured, was both incredibly biased and ignorant to the violences of the oppressive and exploitative apartheid system, on which the protection and privilege of White subjects was established. Kynoch finds that, despite the statistics which reflect that impoverished Black people are the most subject to violent crime, White people perceive themselves to be disproportionately threatened and victimized (428). Thus, the lessening of

control of Black people's mobility at a time of intense racial tension and political instability fed White people's fear around Blackness.

This fear points to the co-construction of race and gender in South Africa: in the White imaginary Black men remain the threatening other and the predominant source of violent crime (Kynoch 430). Azille Coetzee observes that the supposed advancement of Whiteness in the colonial context was evidenced in its gendered order, "characterised by a strict heterosexual, monogamous and hierarchical binary; consisting of an active, rational masculinity set up against the foil of a passive and vulnerable femininity" (3). Conversely, the absence of this order was seen to connote the wildness and sexual 'primitivity' of Black colonized subjects. In the apartheid nationalist myth of *die swart gevaar* (Afrikaans for "Black danger"), White women were seen as the vulnerable, 'virtuous' object in need of protection from Black men (Gqola 11). While Black women were deemed non-gendered, and therefore open to sexual exploitation, the White woman became hyper-vulnerable, by virtue of her race and her gender, to the rapacious Black man. This race-gender construct was pivotal to the establishment and maintenance of White solidarity and power (A. Coetzee 4).

With this context, I investigate how pet dogs in South Africa are scripted into narratives of being human, as part of apparatuses of violent differentiation – the production of a racial "we" and a "not-we". Analysing different forms of human-dog relationality, I consider how configurations of these relations function to legitimize and enforce systems of control, in which certain bodies signify a threat and others are deemed in need of protection. This requires employing different methodologies and drawing on various sites of analysis, yielding insights which inform one another and offer a multifaceted understanding of the biopolitical implications of human-dog relations. In Chapter 2, I conduct a discourse analysis of public responses to the 2022 proposed ban on pit bulls as pets in South Africa. I use this site to explore the signification of dogs in moral discourses around crime and the mechanisms through which White humanity-in-relation-to-dogs becomes instituted as natural truth. Drawing on auto-ethnography and

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material from interviews I conducted with two female owners of dog daycares in Cape Town[4], Chapter 3 traces the movement of affect between bodies in the trans-species and trans-racial encounters in the White suburbs and natural spaces. My aim here is to understand how sociogenic inscription informs affective economies and how this is relationally produced and experienced. This mapping out of the biopolitics of intimacy with dogs prefaces reflections on Gabeba Baderoon's readings of South African writers Njabulo Ndebele and J.M. Coetzee, to consider the possibilities of relation across difference in the creation of new narratives of humanness relation to dogs. In Chapter 4, I turn to the work of Es'kia Mphahlele, analysing his evocations of relation across differences of race and species in human-dog relationships, and whether this might be understood to yield a different form of humanism.

Finally, it is necessary for me to position myself in relation to this research, as one who is implicated in the dynamics about which I write. I am struck by a duality, in my wishing to expose the production of power and oppression, but risking reproducing this by theorizing from a place of Whiteness. This becomes especially difficult when attempting to rethink relation across difference, in the context of historical violence. Following decoloniality's emphasis on the role of subjectivity in knowledge production (Snyman 269), I aim to use my position within Whiteness to consider its extent and workings. I mobilize Wynter's thinking to consider the sociogenic implications of human-dog relations and expose the dominant narrative of Whiteness in South Africa, which naturalizes certain moral and affective relations with dogs, as "human(e)" practices, while enabling multiple forms of violence. At the same time, I draw on Gerrie Snyman's advocation of a hermeneutics of vulnerability as part of a decolonial approach to knowledge production. Here, hermeneutics refers not to modes of interpretation, but to "the problem of understanding itself" (279). This means acknowledging the limits of what I can understand. Writing about the "public" discourses around dogs, I am aware that there are

[4] I conducted the interviews online in March 2022, for a project entitled "Dog Economies: Race, Gender and Commodified Care in Human-Dog Relations in South Africa", which looked at social reproductive care in the dog industry in Cape Town. Both of the interlocutors are personal contacts of mine and have been given pseudonyms: V and Mila. Mila is White and V is Indian. I conducted another interview with Mila in October 2022 around her experience as a White woman, for an oral history project "Narrating White Femininity in South Africa". The interview materials are referred to primarily in Chapter 3.

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innumerable discourses that I have no access to, by virtue of my position, my inability to speak any indigenous language and social segregation. The picture I provide here, in the first two chapters is one, primarily, of race and species *within* hegemonic Whiteness. When speaking about Black spaces like the townships, I try to delineate between actual spaces and those that appear in White discourse.

Vulnerability means not just questioning the morality of the cultural and social structures of Whiteness, but also acknowledging a personal, as well as epistemic, responsibility. Snyman writes: "The concept of vulnerability relates to the one who wants to understand… the focus falls on the one failing to understand that ethical moment when two persons meet face to face, i.e. the perpetrator of racism" (279). As I said, I am coming to this from a place of trouble, from being in the ethical moment where my dog makes another person vulnerable. Further, the separation which dogs enforce inhibits the ability to recognize the interconnectedness which Levinas observes as central to responsibility: "a stranger who shares my humanity, exacts from me a certain responsibility to respect his dignity once I am aware of our interconnectedness" (in Snyman 281). I expose these dynamics with the hope of opening up vulnerability within Whiteness: to dislodge the mode of ontological defensiveness which has come to define it in South Africa.

For Katherine McKittrick, Wynter "demonstrates the difficult *labor* of thinking the world anew"; "Wynter's ideas are, in a sense, invariably verbs, encoded with active thought processes grappling with the magma of far-reaching challenges" (6-7). This thesis is a practice of grappling with violence to consider how the world might be thought anew. But, as Donna Haraway writes in *Companion Species Manifesto*: "[Dogs] are not just here to think with, they are here to live with" (5). I take inspiration from both these imperatives – how to think and live differently with dogs – as a way of challenging the production of Whiteness as Human. My aim is not to redeem dogs in their relation to racial injustice, but rather see how human-dog relations can be productive sites to highlight how the nonhuman is drawn into oppressive mechanisms of power, and whether it is possible to begin to unsettle this power by thinking through other possibilities of relation across difference.

1.2 Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

Critical race and animal studies scholar Claire Jean Kim observes that in Western culture "the dog is *the most human of animals* – not in terms of appearance or cognitive ability or percentage of shared DNA, but in terms of intimacy, familiarity, and identification. More so than with any other animal… we feel for dogs and explore the frontiers of interspecies communication and love with them" (*Dangerous Crossings* 271, my emphasis). Following Kim's words, I suggest dogs are part of the relational production of humanness, that is, how humanness is narratively-defined and experienced. I have foregrounded Sylvia Wynter's "sociogeny" and "autopoiesis" to show how the dominant mode of the Human ontologizes its domination, inscribing itself through the relational abjection of Blackness and making this appear as part of a natural order. However, I find sociogeny does not sufficiently account for the role and the agency of nonhuman animals, particularly the animal with which Western Humanness is so intimate: the dog. Understanding sociogeny as the conditioning of human consciousness and lived experience by White supremacy and autopoiesis as self-creation and regeneration through actualizing symbolic meanings of the human, I revise these (closely related) concepts from the perspective of interspecies relationality in order to consider how H/humanness, in its differentially racialized modes, emerges in relation to dogs.

To elucidate both the violence and transformative possibilities of human-dog relations in South Africa, I propose a framework of "interspecies autopoiesis" combining Jasbir Puar and Julie Livingston's notion of "interspecies relations" with Wynter's conception of "autopoiesis". Wynter elaborates on Chilean evolutionary and systems biologists Humberto Maturana and Francisco Varela's use of "autopoiesis" to describe how living systems generate and reproduce themselves as conscious entities *and* their environment, as they perceive it ("The Ceremony Must Be Found" 22). From this, Wynter elucidates our biosocial inscription and actualization of cultural narratives of humanness as "autopoiesis". However, I suggest that this poiesis is not only self-generated, but also informed by multiple non-human agencies. *Interspecies relations* thus elucidates how species come into being interdependently, through intertwined biological and social processes, with political effects (Puar and Livingston 3). The term "interspecies" acknowledges both the bio-centric taxonomic histories of race and species *and* the non-human

agencies at work in sociogenic and poietic processes. I couple this with Sara Ahmed's concept of affective economies (2004) to consider the affective biopolitics of race and gender in sites of human-dog relationality. This allows me to see how affect accumulates differently around dogs and around racialized bodies, and how dogs are responsive agents in chains of affects, producing bonds of love and intimate kinship or fear and violent separation.

This framework of "interspecies autopoiesis" enables me to understand how dogs and humans are figured by their relations to one another and how meanings of humanness and race are produced in this. Further, if, as Wynter holds, we invent ourselves as biosocial beings, there is space or agency to re-narrate and describe our existence. I use this to consider how relation across differences of race and species can allow for the poiesis of different kinds of humanity in relation to dogs. Taking up Wynter's advocation of a consciousness of our autopoietic humanity towards an ecumenical humanism (in Scott 206-7), "interspecies autopoiesis" finally allows me to consider the possibility of human-dog relationality to unsettle dominant biopolitical narratives of Whiteness as benevolent Humanity, foregrounding an awareness of the multiplicity of human modalities of being.

1.2.1 Race and Meanings of the Human

In "Unsettling the coloniality of being/power/truth/freedom: Towards the human, after man, its overrepresentation – an argument" (2003) Wynter shows how a single genre of being – "Man" – came to represent the Human (262). Man, here refers to the specific ethno-class of Western bourgeois Man, who becomes the universal Human subject. Wynter describes the initiation of this process in Renaissance humanism's detaching of Man/Human from a Christian medieval idea of God as creator of humanity, instead instating Man in ratiocentric terms as "homo politicus" ("Unsettling" 262). Wynter argues that the concomitant knowledge project of Enlightenment not only disregarded non-European "ways of knowing" but also constructed non-Europeans first as physical referent of subrational Other, which would later be inscribed, in biocentric terms, as biologically inferior and abnormal (Ibid 266). In this, humans are seen as the result of a linear biological process of evolution, in which dominance operates according to natural selection or dysselection and the supremacy of Man is reflective of his place at the

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evolutionary pinnacle. His paradigms of rationality and biocentrism institute this meta-narrative of Being and justify the concomitant relations of power.

Elaborating on Wynter, I consider how the narrative of the Human requires malleable understandings of both human and nonhuman others, figured through constructing imaginaries of animality and nature. Here, I use Zakiyyah Iman Jackson's account of the subjugating/subversive plasticity of Blackness in *Becoming Human: Matter and Meaning in an Antiblack World* (2020) and Achille Mbembe's taxonomy of coloniality in *On the Postcolony* (2001). The ratio-centric Man is differentiated for his particular capacity for reason, which entails his possession of an inviolate and full subjectivity. Mbembe writes "the human being can say "I" only if capable of positing himself/herself as a conscious subject" (190). He is segregated from nonhuman animals (simply termed animals to deny the shared category) and subjects who were ascribed traits of animal-baseness and lesser awareness by their designation as racialized, colonial, female, queer or disabled. These subjects are linked to animals in different ways, making animality signify dynamically in an intermediary zone between human and nonhuman status, in ways which entail humane and inhumane treatment.

Unlike these subjects Man is "essentially different from nature… free from nature's laws, autonomous and independent" (Mbembe 190). Subjective consciousness allows for an agency beyond "nature's laws", one which enables progress and civilization. In contrast, "[a]nimals and animal-like humans… are untranscendent, tethered to the body and nature, incapable of civilization and progress, and lacking history" (Kim 25). Becoming Human thus requires an ability to move above the impulses of the body. This becomes at once a question of sovereignty and morality. Jackson writes that the Black body's fleshiness was both aligned with that of animals and characterized by an "insatiable appetite" (6). Thus Black people were both tethered to the laws of nature (entailing a lack of conscious awareness) *and* linked with sins of the body, so that "their blackness was believed to testify to their unlawful and ungodly nature" (Jackson 6). This legitimized management, enslavement and exploitation by Man.

Jackson and Mbembe differ in their views on dehumanization: while Mbembe holds that colonial power relied on creating Black people *as* animal, Jackson argues that *"blackness would*

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be defined as the emblematic state of animal man, as the nadir of the human" (22, original emphasis). Here there is a dialectic between animality and Blackness, in which Blackness is figured by animality as both animal *and* human, to construct the superiority of the Human. In this way, Eurocentric humanism used Blackness as a measure for humanness, to establish Humanity as an achievement of Whiteness. Jackson thus argues that "the concept of humanity itself is fractured and relational" (46) in which, for Black people, animalization and humanization have not been mutually exclusive. Jackson is emphatic that the "selective recognition of black humanity" (46) did not protect Black people from ontologizing violence, but justified this violence. Indeed, and this is Jackson's main thesis and significant for my argument, European humanism has relied on the ontological malleability of Blackness (3).

Similarly, the category of the nonhuman animal is crucial in negotiating the shifting boundaries of humanness. Jackson argues that, contrary to prevalent discourse, constructions of Blackness prefigured the symbolic category of "the animal", as it was produced in Enlightenment discourse (12-13). She proposes that figures such as Caliban functioned to shape "the animal" in relation to racialized constructions of gender and sexuality, particularly, in relation to Black masculinity, that of irrational, amoral base desire and sexual excess. This is indicated by Mbembe's description of Blackness and animality becoming conjoined in the image of "the beast" (182). This conflation justified two projects: dehumanization towards exploitation and "domestication" towards civilization (Mbembe 182). Mbembe writes: "[Africa] is almost always deployed in the framework (or in the fringes) of a meta-text about the animal—to be exact, about the *beast…"* This supports Jackson's assertion, in which certain qualities of animality – "absolute brutality, sexual license" (2); as that which is "strange and the monstrous" (Mbembe 1) – are racialized. Animality can be excised "through processes of domestication and training" (Mbembe 2); the act of colonizing power comes from the colonizer's instantiation of himself as Subject freed of constraint, with the ability to control, create and destroy at will (Mbembe 189). The co-construction of Blackness with animality is thus central to Man/Human autopoiesis.

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Race is also a constitutively gendered project. Jackson observes that “the abjection and bestialization” of Black sexuality was essential to the emergence of Man as rational, self-directed, and autonomous (Jackson 13). The racialization of “nature” and “sex” were the condition for the emergence of White culture and gender (Coetzee 4). As Azille Coetzee shows, the production of Man was also contingent on the production of pure and contained White femininity, in contrast to the putative lasciviousness of Blackness. Coetzee draws on the thinking of María Lugones, who conceptualizes a distinction between the dark and light sides of colonial gender construction. On the light side, White women are constructed as fragile, sexually passive and “weak in both body and mind”, associated with “infants and small animals” (Lugones 202). Black women, in contrast, were “understood to be animals in the deep sense of without gender; sexually marked as female but without the characteristics of femininity” (Lugones 202-3). Jackson quotes Hortense Spillers, observing that “the black female is, if anything, a creature of sex” (8). In the supposed nature/culture division, the Black subject is made to signify as “a creature” of nature, through the co-constitution of race and sex. Constructed in this way, African femaleness provided the foil for idealized Western European bourgeois femininity as the normative embodiment of womanhood.

Both Blackness and Whiteness in South Africa have historically been constructed in relation to animals. In "‘South Africa Is the Land of Pet Animals’; or, The Racializing Assemblages of Colonial Pet-Keeping” (2020), Anna Feuerstein considers how, in the context of Victorian empire in South Africa, the narratives of domestication and control which informed colonial pet keeping functioned within the broader colonial project of mastering non-Human others. As “[t]he right to own is as much part of the question of personhood as the right not to be owned” (Boisseron in Feuerstein 310), pet keeping functioned to support White liberal personhood as autonomous and masterful. Feuerstein draws on Mbembe’s arguments around the “domestication” of Black subjects: “Through the relation of domestication, the master or mistress led the beast to an experience such that, at the end of the day, the animal, while remaining what he/ she was—that is, something other than a human being—nevertheless actually entered into the world for his/her master/mistress” (Mbembe 26). This reflects a dynamic in which the “petification” of the colonized enabled a different, though no less violent, form of relation. “Domestication” also came with a particular affect: the process of “grooming” allowed

for greater sympathy or "even 'love'" for the colonized (Mbembe 26). However, Feuerstein also observes that while pet animals could be characterized as "mischievous" and "delightful", Black servants were often cast in contrast as sullen or disobedient (329). A hierarchy of intimacy is created in which closeness with certain kinds of animals in the domestic sphere is embraced, while closeness with Black people is rejected. Thus pet keeping became marked as a White practice, which instituted the Human as White, established the White woman as both carer and owner and placed animals above Black people (Feuerstein 313). Rather than a clear human-animal divide, what appears is the way the animal is figured and refigured by proximity to racialized humanness. Here "power only takes direction from its own shifting exigencies" (Jackson 10).

These insights are useful for Chapter 2's analysis of the shifting signification of dogs in relation to the Human, race, animality and the "humane". Wynter points out that the understanding of evolutionary selection or dysselection also produces a moral system in which natural supremacy is conjoined with the framework of "humane" and "inhumane" behaviours. Indeed, the Human is inherently moralized: evolutionary 'dysselected' races signify "the name of what is evil" in contrast to the White Human as the "name of what is good" (Wynter in Scott 201). The ethno-class of Western Man dictates the "right", "noble" or "moral" characteristics of Human, which are taken to be universal. These were entrenched in colonizing missions of salvation and civilization, and, contemporarily, in human rights discourses and international laws of justice (Wynter and McKittrick 39). I suggest this extends also to beliefs around animal rights, emerging in the paradigm of liberal humanism.

I have traced the Human's construction on the mutable abjection of Blackness to foreground the significance of "sociogeny" as a concept. In his work *Black Skin White Masks* (1986), Fanon uses the term "sociogeny" to explain the phenomenological experience of being a Black subject in a White world which prohibits the development of this subject. "Sociogeny" describes how the bodily schema is inscribed by the "historico-racial schema" (84). Here, the meanings of lack, animality and sinfulness attached to Black bodies and of wholeness, humanness and righteousness attached to White bodies in the colonial imagination become internalized by colonial subjects. Given that processes of cognition serve to create the world and existence that

we consciously experience, this creates an experience of profound misalignment between his actual existence and his status as a non-Subject. He is rendered, socially and psychically, as a "nonbeing" by the narrative of the Human Being (Fanon 83), where being necessarily means being White.

Wynter's elaboration of sociogeny thus explains how cultural and political systems of belief and belonging, and their symbolic orders and affective economies, inscribe and produce our physiology, embodied consciousness and collective sociality. Wynter explains how this script of being includes a set of *symbolic life/death* instructions, which activate systems of biochemical reward and harm that figure our brains and responding behaviours ("Toward" 54): for Fanon, the symbolic force of the Human narrative becomes neurologically encoded, yielding his sense of subjective negation. Wynter explains that we actualize ourselves as human through myths or "origin stories that explain who/what we are" (Wynter and McKittrick 10), with the hegemonic myth of our time being biocentrism and White supremacy. However, these stories are also genre-specific, binding people together as "kin-recognizing member subjects of the same *symbolic life kind*" (Ibid 41). McKittrick explains that "kind" refers to human groupings, such as race, class or tribe, which become encoded through a "*mimetic desire* for the group-collective *symbolic life*" (Ibid 34, original emphasis). The subjective sense of self and its place in a collective "we" is thus produced between the physiological and the storytelling-symbolic. In the process of *autopoiesis,* Wynter says we create ourselves as "hybridly human", characterized by a choreography between *mythos* and *bios* (Ibid 27). Thus, being "human" is not to occupy a naturally existing category, but to partake in a praxis of collective inscription and relation.

Sociogenisis, in turn, relies on relationality: bodies collectively inventing form for themselves against the bodies of others (Parker 445). The narrative power and sociogenic effect of Whiteness in South Africa create understandings of both humans and dogs and figures relations between them. The radio-caller's comment in the introduction illustrates that Black people and White people have different understandings of what it means to "be human" in relation to dogs, indicated in the feasibility, in a White narrative, for humans and dogs to be interchangeable. I suggest that this is because there is no history in which Whiteness and animality or dogness have been conflated. The opposition of Black people to the comparison

between a Black baby and a dog suggests that a proposed kinship with animals cannot escape a historical conflation of Blackness with "the animal". Further, for the commenter, the identification of Black humanity with dogness by a White person becomes a violent form of racism, whereas, if the person making the comparison is themselves Black, it becomes a question of how they experience their race in relation to dogs. In the commenter's words, the woman who posted the tweet needs to be "educated" about the "broader context", to understand how the "we" of Black people emerges in a different relation to dogs than that of White people. This suggests that human-dog relations, in their biopolitical, affective and symbolic instantiations, inflect both the meanings and experiences of humanness for different racial groups.

1.2.2 Interspecies Relation

In *Companion Species Manifesto* (2008) Donna Haraway argues that dogs have "co-evolved" with humans, proclaiming them to be "constitutively companion species" (2). In relation to Western culture, Haraway cites the myth of canine domestication as one of control and paternity: "the paradigmatic act of masculine, single parent, self-birthing, whereby man makes himself repetitively, as he invents (creates) his tools" (27). Dogs are also inscribed into the origin story of Man, as creator and controller of material otherness: nature. In this narrative, the dog becomes both a 'child' of man and an instrument of/for control. Thus, the co-evolution of dogs and humans is inflected with symbolic, affective and biopolitical significance.

Haraway emphasizes the fundamentally relational nature of companion species, who "become-with" one another, "mak[ing] each other up, in the flesh" (2-3). She describes this as an ever-shifting "ontological choreography" (12) – an ongoing embodied interconnectedness which evades Human fantasies of sovereign control and makes space for animal agency in mutual becoming. Still, Haraway acknowledges power differentials, as "(i)nter-subjectivity does not mean 'equality'" (41). She laments people humanizing their dogs, overlooking the dogs' agency and "otherness", saying we should see dog-human relations as "otherness-in-connection" (45). Through dogs, Haraway insists, we might finally understand what it means to be a "significantly other" (17), relating in spite of difference, rather than collapsing difference. This is her foundation for ethics; she writes: "All ethical relating, within or between species, is knit from the

silk-strong thread of ongoing alertness to otherness-in-relating" (50). However, I find an analysis of race absent from Haraway's work on dogs. While she says the dog-human relations are "relentlessly historically specific" (16) her understanding of specific-difference-in-relation in *Companion Species* is insufficient. Indeed, in South Africa, human-dog relationality cannot be understood outside of race relations. Wynter's work is invaluable here, as it shows the relational constitution of matter and meanings in the production of humanness and racism, as systemic and experiential. This offers a frame for reading a work such as Ndebele's, showing how in histories of subjugation dogness and Blackness, given specific qualities, emerge through one another.

To develop this, I draw on Harlan Weaver's deployment of Puar and Livingston's concept of *interspecies relations* in *Bad Dog: Pit Bull Politics and Multispecies Justice* (2021). For Weaver, the term *interspecies* foregrounds the interrelatedness of life forms, but he develops this to take systems of power and difference into account, through a framework he calls "interspecies intersectionality" (7). Weaver takes "intersectionality" from Kimberlee Crenshaw, who used it to describe the interdependence of systems of race and gender in the oppression of Black women (8). "Interspecies intersectionality" thus denotes how relationships between humans and animals "actively shape experiences of race, gender, species, breed, sexuality, and nation" (8), and how these relations are figured by "inextricable and dynamic interrelatings of power" (12). For Weaver, having his pit bull, Harley, with him meant that "when [he] felt vulnerable as a visibly transgender person, [Harley] ensured [his] safety" (50). In turn, given that pit bulls have become associated with 'the ghetto', Weaver's identity – White, queer, middle-class – "encouraged other humans to read Harley as less threatening" (50). They are both figured by their relation: her breed mitigates his gendered vulnerability; his race makes her signify as less "dangerous". Intersectionality then reveals the effects of the world order of Man, given that His supremacy is constituted on relational differentiation from various human and nonhuman others, in interdependent systems of stratification and domination.

To illustrate this, I use Sandra Swart's "Dogs and Dogma: A Discussion of the Socio-Political Construction of Southern African Dog 'Breeds' as a Window on Social History*"*(2007)

which analyses the history of South Africa's "indigenous" dog breed[5] – *Canis Africanis* – and its relation to race. The *Africanis* stands in contrast to the two other breeds from Southern Africa, the Boerboel and Rhodesian Ridgeback, both developed within White settler society for the protection of property and use on farms. The *Africanis* is predominately present in rural areas throughout Southern Africa and was "dismissed in the past as merely a 'kaffir dog' or 'township special'" (Swart 272). Gabeba Baderoon elaborates that in the colonial context, "[t]he boer hond [Boerboel]and ridgeback became known as 'white' dogs valued for their loyalty and genetic purity and were seen as distinct from 'mongrel Kaffir dogs'" (347). The latter were characterized as "vermin-like" and the racialization of these dogs created a mutually tainting association, justifying practices of population control. In the 1890s and 1900s, colonial authorities instituted policies aimed at limiting Black peoples' mobility and hunting practices by killing their dogs (Van Sittert and Swart 90). These policies manifested in the killing of thousands of African dogs, wolves and jackals, while the demand for 'pure-bred' imported dogs increased (Baderoon 348). The *Africanis*' later label "township special" reflects the dogs' ongoing association with Black space and lack of pure breeding: specifically, its "mongrel" form is linked to it being a product of the township, where dogs reproduce without restraint (or rather, without human intervention). In the *Africanis*, "dysselected" status – those not "chosen" by the invisible hand of evolution – appears to extend not only to humans but also to dogs. As Swart observes, in South Africa, "Human class and dog class—breeding, as it were—[became] inextricably tangled" ("Dogs and Dogma" 272).

Human-dog relationality can thus operate as an apparatus for violent differentiation and domination. The example of the White SAPS policemen training dogs to attack Black subjects echoes a history of canine use for bio-political control. In *Afro-Dog: Blackness and the Animal Question* (2018) Bénédicte Boisseron traces this history (in the context of Central and North America) pointing to the use of attack-dogs by Spanish conquistadors to wrest land from indigenous populations; by White plantation owners to track fleeing enslaved people; by police forces against Black Civil Rights protestors in 1963, and again in 2015 and 2016, against Black

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[5] Its status as a breed is contested, as breeding requires the selection of particular traits and some feel the *Africanis* developed naturally

protestors in Ferguson and First Nations Americans at Standing Rock. He observes that large dogs were imported to the Americas for such purpose and that dogs were trained to "become ferocious only when in contact with blacks" (48). In line with this, Boisseron builds on Haraway and Weaver to describe the phenomenon of the dog trained to threaten and discipline the "reprobate" Black subject as an antagonistic "interspecies 'becoming against'" (48), premised on a "putative[ly] conjoined 'viciousness'" (49). Given that dogs are not systemically weaponized against White subjects in the same way, Boisseron asks: "to what extent… is the intersection of racialization and animalization atavistically ingrained in our collective memory[?]" (xxvi). His question speaks to the weight of human-dog relationality's sociogenic history, that is, how humanness has been inscripted in relation to dogs. While Boisseron focuses on the Black diaspora, his insights resonate with the brutal history of settler colonialism and apartheid in South Africa.

I draw on one of Boisseron's examples to illustrate how the presence of a dog affects the experience of Black subject. In 1993, at the Alabama Court of Criminal Appeals, social justice lawyer Bryan Stevenson sought to overthrow the false conviction of Walter McMillian, a Black man, for the murder of a White woman. McMillian's supporters were prevented from entering the courtroom, until Stevenson appeals to the judge to allow some of them in. One woman, Mrs. Williams, walks proudly towards the courtroom but "stops dead in her tracks at the sight of the police German shepherd" at the door (Boisseron 7). Unable to enter, she tells Stevenson that she was reminded of being at a Civil Rights protest in which such dogs were set on the protestors. She returns the following day and tries again, whispering to herself "Lord, I can't be scared of no dog" as she bravely manages to pass through. When everyone is seated inside, Mrs. Williams continues to stand, and "with tears in her eyes… shouts in the silent room, "I'm here!," before taking her seat" (Ibid). Her visceral reaction to the dog indicates how the dog is part of the historico-racial schema which impedes the *being* of the Black subject. The dog acts as "a reminder of the fragile—not to say incomplete—person status of the black" (Boisseron 8). In contrast, Mrs. Williams's statement, "I'm here", reads as an assertion of her humanness, in the face of historic negation.

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It would be too simplistic to understand dogs merely as "tools" of Whiteness: interspecies autopoiesis speaks to the role and agency of animals in human autopoiesis and our role in theirs. Max Hantel (2018) argues that this understanding is supported by new research in developmental biology and epigenetics, challenging genetic determinism. Hantel observes: "Autopoiesis operates across life forms… and suggests modes of evolutionary change not reducible to the genome"[6] (73). Hantel points to the observed behaviour of a particular elephant herd: four generations after an attempted massacre of the herd by humans, the herd members still exhibited heightened fear and aggression towards humans. This reflects the transmission of modes of relation between species (75), an understanding which carries enormous weight in considering the history of human-dog relations in South Africa. Jackson also problematizes the "auto" of poeisis, instead understanding "the embodied self as a kind of openwork produced by *a lattice of agencies* rather than primarily self-authored closed system" (163). Looking at the constellations of factors that produce disproportionately high cancer rates amongst Black women, Jackson conceptualizes this phenomenon as antiblackness inscribed epigenetically on the body (166; 200). In view of this, sociogeny not only affects the nervous system, but also genetic proclivity[7]. Acknowledging my narrow understanding here, I tentatively suggest that Jackson's and Hantel's works reveal the possibility that histories of dog-human relation inflect current modes of being and relation.

While it might seem that self-creation through symbolic meaning is a purely human phenomenon, Hantel argues that Wynter's vocabulary of humanism does not imply a flattening out of agency in the creation of meaning, through degrees of cognition. He reflects that animals do not only respond to their conditions "through genetic pre-prescription but through cognitive processes we cannot fully apprehend" (75) and offers the example of the elephants "mourning" a

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[6] Though dog behaviour and temperament is certainly genetically shaped – researchers show genes contribute 60-70% in behavioural variation among breeds (MacLean et al.) – emphasis on training by animal behaviourists suggests a social and relational malleability, rather than genetic prescription (Swart, "Pitbull attacks").

[7] Epigenetics denotes the structures for genetic expression – the inhibiting or activating of certain genes – which are affected by social and environmental conditions. These structures are durable (generationally transmitted), but, are also reversible, given their reliance upon the aforementioned conditions (Jackson 200). Dogs have similar socially-mutable structures that control the expression of their genes.

member of their herd. Though we "cannot claim to know what this *means* for the elephants", Hantel observes that the elephants respond to death with a collective practice that *signifies* something. In line with this, Weaver argues that dogs engage in processes of meaning-making that involve "odors, movements, "body language", bodily sensings" (44) as carriers of significance which shape their world. Thus, the way dogs participate in human culture is not a reflection of nature being co-opted into culture. Rather it acknowledges their processes of meaning-making and relationality which inform human culture, without their "meaning" correlating to ours.

This opens a view on affective relations between species. For Weaver, "affect" describes "how feelings can travel between beings and shape bodily movements prior to their concretization in the language of emotions" (Weaver 14). Thus, I suggest that dogs are sensitive to affects, rather than emotions. Here, I echo Hantel's reminder of the opacity of animals' experience to us and my limited understanding of animal neuroscience. However, I feel I have experienced what Haraway describes between herself and her dog – a connection and mutual inscription of bodies signifying "that nasty developmental affliction called love" (3). "Love" here is equivocal. Canine scientist Gregory Berns observes that the differences between human brains and dog brains (size and olfactory capacity, amongst others) mean that even though dogs have certain cognitive and emotional skills in common with humans, their brains may instantiate them differently (173). Still, Berns says dogs have evolved to be more socially compatible with humans than any other animal (Ibid). In studies of canine brains under an fMRI scanner, Berns and others found that 86% of the participant dogs showed equal or greater caudate activation (which relates to cognition, memory and emotions) to expectation of human praise than to expectation of food reward (Cook et al.). They also found a "stable neurobehavioral preference for owner over high value food" (Cook et al.). These "positive affective states are qualitatively similar to those experienced by humans" (Berns 175). In another fMRI study, dogs' brains indicated neural machinery dedicated to human facial recognition (previously thought to be active only in primates), explaining the sensitivity of dogs to human social cues (Dilks, et al.). I outline this to show how interspecies poiesis involves the consciousness, affect and agency of animals.

1.2.3 Affective Economies

Affect is key to sociogeny and interspecies relation. Jackson observes that "sociogeny differs from previous and contemporaneous theories of nature-cultures in that desire and affect play a decisive role in the concept" (161). Weaver describes relating as the ongoing process of "negotiating togetherness", quoting Rosi Braidotti's phrasing of it as "an affect that flows" (50). My love for dogs appears in a broader cultural narrative of dogs as family members and indeed, this was how I came to experience my relation with Bijoux. My sense of self was inscripted not only through the biological registering of cultural narrative – of White Humanness in loving relation to my companion species – but in this affective interspecies relationship. Crucially, this positive attachment was met and returned, in some form, to become a relation. Affect involves an exchange of feeling between bodies and changes the choreography of bodily disposition. Indeed, much of Weaver's training with his rescue dog involves attempting to "read" her body language, but when they are walking together he feels her fear and tension at the prospect of fearful encounters, such that they become his own (31). He describes this as "a bodily travel of feeling" which "disrupts the many divisions between us, including that mediated by the leash" (38).

Indeed, affect is central to "the joint building of a sense of togetherness, a we, and the kind of beings we become" (Weaver 50). However, I suggest that affect in relational identification does not only generate a sense of togetherness, but also separation: to extend this, I draw on Sara Ahmed's work "Affective Economies" (2004). Ahmed suggests we need to think beyond emotion as an individual psychological disposition. She uses the concept of affective economy to describe the way in which emotion, rather than being located in one specific body, increases in its circulation between signs and bodies, creating an "affective economy" (119). Ahmed emphasizes the binding power of emotions, which "mediate the relationship between the psychic and the social, and between the individual and the collective" (119) working "to align some subjects with some others and against other others" (117). Importantly, emotions create the very figures or objects within which they become invested. Ahmed offers the example of hate in nationalist discourse, which outlines and aligns the hated figures, constituting them as a "common" threat. Here, "hate circulates between signifiers in relationships of difference and displacement" (119). In the work of adherence – sticking certain affects and figures together –

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affective economies create coherence. I use this concept to consider the ways in which affective economies work in South Africa, to produce White fear and anxiety around Blackness and to institute certain relations with dogs.

The more affect circulates between particular signs, the more they are perceived as containing that affect (being *inherently* fearful, hateful, loveable) (Ahmed 126). Ahmed draws on Fanon's writing to show how the association between signifiers – "Negro, animal, bad, mean, ugly" – allows the object of fear, the Black man, to be generated in the present as animal, bad, mean, ugly. Thus, Blackness becomes attributed with emotional value that functions to support the coherence and supremacy of Whiteness. Because of historical accumulation, this becomes a "sticky" attribution, which is then naturalized as inherent. I use this concept of affective economy to suggest that, in relation to White femininity, Blackness is invested with fear through the affectively laden symbol of the "rapacious black man" (Kim 42; Kynoch 428; A. Coetzee 2); at the same time, Whiteness instates dogs as loveable companions. I suggest sociogenic narratives and interspecies becomings inform the generative relation between signification, bodies and affect, yielding different affective economies around dogs. For Blackness, dogs signify threat or violence and become invested with fear, whereas for Whiteness, dogs signify kinship and become invested love. The affective investment serves to outline the figure of the dog, preceding any encounter; a history with animals is also a history that "sticks". This signification and affective circulation and accumulation produces particular affiliations and separations; as suggested in the radio-caller's comment.

Ahmed's concept works well with relational becomings because affect "produces the "surfaces" of bodies" (126). Drawing on Fanon's phenomenological description of being fixed by the White gaze, in his encounter with a White child who recoils from him, Ahmed reflects "fear *does something*; it re-establishes distance between bodies whose difference is read off the surface, as a reading that produces the surface" (126). Affects such as fear works not only to differentiate between bodies, human and nonhuman, but to produce those bodies. Through interspecies autopoiesis, I consider the dynamics of power and affect between: dogs and their owners; dogs and Black "strangers" and White female owners and Black men.

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1.2.4 Relation Across Difference Towards a New Humanism

The salience of Fanon's understanding of sociogeny for Black South Africans is perhaps most evident in the writings of Steve Biko, freedom fighter founder of the Black Consciousness Movement in South Africa. Mabogo Percy More draws a connection between Fanon's phenomenological description of colonialism and Biko's reflection on the psychic inscription of apartheid. Biko wrote: "I have lived all my conscious life in the framework of institutionalised separate development [apartheid]. My friendships, my love, my education, my thinking and every other facet of my life have been carved and shaped within [this] context" (quoted in More 136). Biko quotes Fanon's words: "My Negro consciousness does not hold itself out as a lack. It IS. It is its own follower" and reflects "This is all that we blacks are after, TO BE…" (in More 137). This illustrates that apartheid created the "historic-racial schema" produced by the gaze of whiteness on the Black body, shaping the Black subject's sense of self and possibility. Biko's philosophy of Black Consciousness worked against this, emphasizing "an enabling, agentic conception of 'the human' amongst oppressed people at the height of apartheid" (Erasmus 58).

In her chapter, "'Race' and its articulation with 'the human'" (2018), Zimitiri Erasmus gives an overview of Black humanist thought from Biko, Fanon and Wynter, reflecting on the ways in which these thinkers conceptualized the possibility for an ethos of humanity, outside of conceptions of Man. Erasmus observes that Biko only partially succeeds in delinking race from 'the human'. On the one hand, he advocates the abolition of Whiteness: "whiteness ... warrants being ... *destroyed and replaced* by an aspiration with more human content" and on the other, he advocates embracing and valorising Blackness as a path for becoming human (Erasmus 58, original emphasis). Fanon, in contrast, "warns against the absolutist tendencies of nationalisms, particularly of racialised nationalisms." For him, "becoming human lies not in the denial or embrace of 'race', but in recovering 'the human' from its grasp" (Ibid 59).

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Erasmus argues that Wynter's concept of sociogeny "places conceptions of the human both in the realm of lived experiences and in the realm open to human intervention" (Erasmus 62). In this, Wynter says we must resist the incorporation of Black life into the genre of Man and instead "excavate and (re)invent hidden genres of the human as a construct, rather than a fact of existence" (Erasmus 60). McKittrick suggests that the power of Wynter's work lies in its

"undoing and unsettling—*not replacing or occupying*—Western conceptions of what it means to be human" (2). This unsettling necessarily entails a challenge to the forms of power contingent on the current descriptive statement of the human, Man. A reinvention is only possible, Erasmus argues, by those who have been excluded from and oppressed by the dominant conception of the Human, which necessarily means "conceptualising new forms of the human from places of catastrophic suffering/injury and of hope in spite of catastrophe, rather than from places of white dominance" (61). This means not transcending race, but thinking *through* race, from the space of vulnerability (Erasmus 62). Echoing Wynter, McKittrick argues that those constituted as Man's Other can thus "provide a way to think about being human anew" in which "[b]eing human… signals not a noun but a verb" (3). Erasmus too frames being human as "a living critical practice" (64). I suggest that this has to be a practice that is also taken up by White people. As Ambroise argues "we are all now compelled to renarrate the story of ourselves and of our species overall *outside* the terms of... the *Human*, in order to—in Wynter's words— 'give humanness a different future'" (854).

Indeed, for McKittrick "the process of rearticulation is important to highlight because it underscores *relationality and interhuman narratives*" (2, original emphasis). While human life is currently "marked by a racial economy of knowledge that conceals… relational possibilities" these possibilities are still available for the construction of a reality which "push[es] against the laws of captivity" (Ibid 8). As such, "we would do well to reanimate and thus more fully realize the co-relational poetics-aesthetics of our scientific selves" (Ibid 8). It is these "relational possibilities" that I wish to explore through the frame of interspecies autopoiesis. Because Wynter's work illuminates how the Human "*claims to know in advance what counts as a consciousness holding ethical weight*" (Hantel 75, original emphasis), it opens a more capacious consideration of agency and consciousness in interspecies relation. Crucially for my project, the above frameworks suggest that material encounters and constitutions with nonhuman forces "reciprocally affect different autopoietic processes that may regenerate the overrepresentation of Man or enable and inhabit worlds becoming otherwise (and often, both)" (Hantel 74).

Introducing Wynter's work in "The Re-Enchantment of Humanism: An Interview with Sylvia Wynter" (2000), David Scott observes that, for Wynter, the hope of a revisioned

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humanism relies not only on the critique of the violent exclusivity of Western humanism, but on "a reconstructed understanding of the grounds of human being," which "entails a deeper grasp of the dimensions of human cognition and human action" (121). Combining the concepts of sociogeny and autopoiesis, which denote the cultural-symbolic inscription of human cognition and resultant action, with interspecies relation allows me to consider how the grounds of being human can be rethought through relation across difference. This appears in the context of a symbolic and biopolitical order in which relational difference enforces violence through certain proximities, separations and subjugations. Affect plays a significant role in these processes; an attentiveness to affect points not only to sociogenic (symbolic-neurological) codings which inform human and human-dog relations, but also to the movement of affect between bodies, and thus to the agency of dogs in these relations. Interspecies autopoiesis thus offers conceptual means to understand the sociogenic and relational processes through which difference, power and affect emerge in dog-human relations.

With this view, it becomes possible to consider how relation across both inter and intra-species difference can yield different grounds for being human. Wynter emphasizes the need for a conscious awareness of our collective agency in self-institution and inscription, in creating our laws and modes of existence. This allows for two things: 1) for the possibility to remake ourselves in relation to the multi-species societal order that connects us *and* 2) for a new form of humanism to emerge, a realization that *we* are multiplicitous, or, as Wynter puts it, "ecumenically" human (in Scott 194). This entails an acknowledgement of difference, in opposition to the singular master code of the Human and the violence of its rendering of difference as deviance or inferiority. In this, understandings of humanity come *from* an inclusive and heterogeneous human perspective and develop *towards* the interest of that collective humanity, in its heterogeneity (Wynter in Scott 194). In light of this, I consider how relation across differences of race and species can function, in different instances, in the emergence of a new conception of the human and the forging of this new humanism.

With this in mind, and prefacing the discussion of my first chapter, I turn to "Animal likenesses: dogs and the boundary of the human in South Africa" (2016) in which Gabeba Baderoon offers a genealogy to think through genre-specific narratives around dogs and consider

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how these narratives might be rescripted. An explicit use of dogs in defining different human kinds can be found in President Jacob Zuma's 2012 speech at Impendle in KwaZulu Natal. Zuma was quoted saying: '[s]pending money on buying a dog, taking it to the vet and for walks belonged to white culture and was not the African way, which was to focus on the family' (Baderoon 349). In response, many Black South Africans posted pictures of themselves with their dogs on Twitter, challenging the president's assertion that their relationship indicated a betrayal of their Africanness. Indeed, Baderoon observes that viewing dogs and Black people solely in antagonistic or oppressive relationships overlooks "a long history of animism in Africa and its comfortable intimacy with animals" (350). Baderoon also highlights Black middle-class people's assertion of their close relationships with their dogs online as "a refusal to allow whiteness to appropriate companionship" (352). This suggests that racialized dog-human relations are neither homogenous nor wholly determined by biopolitical structures and sociogenic narratives. This public proclamation of intimacy with the animal "which has most been used to malign Black South Africans" (349), intimates a possibility for alternate forms of relation across differences that have been constructed through historical violence.

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2 Race, Morality and Violence in the Pit Bull Ban Debate

Gabeba Baderoon observes the mobility of dog-signification: “the dog as symbol pivots between diametrically different meanings and thus becomes a highly sensitive measure of social power” (351). This chapter will explore how dogs are made part of the “genre-specific (ethno-class) referent-we” of Whiteness (Wynter and McKittrick 38) as Human. I trace how the reproduction of race, gender and species is mediated through the figuring of dogs, specifically in media coverage and public responses to the proposed pit bull ban in South Africa. Analysing these responses, which appear in the context of several pit bull attacks, particularly on children, my aim is not to trivialize the very real loss of life, but rather to look at the narrativizing of these incidents to see how they continue to produce discourses of racialized humanity. I use this debate to explore the entanglement of dogs and humans in moral ideologies, in which “humanity” emerges through specific practices and attitudes towards animals. I suggest that when dogs are ‘kinned’ by (White) humans they are seen as deserving of protection, love and care; this is placed in contrast to the ‘animal’ qualities of Black masculinity, which is figured by criminality and ‘cruel’ practices such as dog fighting. At the same time, Black people are specifically included in the category “human”, in which their action as conscious agents, in contrast to the naïve pliability of dogs, is necessary for them to be punishable. Thus, the discussion around the ban serves as a site for considering how the racialized human is contemporaneously created through the biopolitics of morality.

The comments section of the news article, “Push to ban pit bulls as pets in South Africa” (2022), serves as the primary site for my analysis. The article reports on a call made by the Sizwe Kupelo Foundation in October 2022, advocating for the sterilization of pit bulls and a future ban on owning them. This was coupled with an online petition, through which the foundation would pressure the South African government to “impose a complete ban on the ownership of pit bulls as domestic animals” (“BAN PIT BULLS”). The foundation defines itself on Facebook as a charity organization for the protection of the vulnerable (Sizwe Kupelo Foundation). It issued the call for the ban in response to the death of Storm Nuku, a ten-year-old Coloured boy from Gqerbeha, when he was attacked by his family’s pit bulls on 28 September 2022. The foundation stated: “These attacks continue unabated, and we cannot continue losing young people like

Storm Nuku and innocent civilians to these vicious dogs that have repeatedly shown that they should not be kept as pets" ("Push to ban"). The petition gained further traction when, in the following month, two more attacks led to the deaths of eight-year-old Olebogeng Omolemo Mosime and three-year-old Keketso Saule (Mkhize).

The proposed ban was both supported and criticized by animal-focused organizations. The Pit Bull Federation of South Africa (PBFSA) stated: "a breed ban will not work and will exacerbate the problem of dog maulings [sic] and fatalities" in the country, "open[ing] the door for a black market trade, dishonest identification of dogs and for those keeping them for security, the next potentially dangerous dog will take its place ("Media Statement 15/12/2022"). The PBFSA called instead for increased education on dog ownership and tighter regulations around the breeding of pit bulls. In an interview with a national radio station, public relations manager for the federation, Lins Rautenbach attributed the increase in attacks in recent years to pit bulls' growing popularity coupled with aggression-focused breeding by irresponsible breeders. In view of this, and given that the temperament of a dog is 70% inherited, the federation dissuaded the public from buying pit bulls. Rautenbach continued: "They are phenomenal dogs when bred properly, owned right, but you have to be a special owner to own a pit bull"; she concludes that the only way to deal with a human-aggressive pit bull is euthanasia ("You can't rehabilitate a dog's aggression"). Another PBFSA spokesperson Lehanda Rheeder, argued that pit bulls were originally bred for dog-fighting and thus to be animal-aggressive, but not human-aggressive. She states that their aggressive tendency has been directed towards humans by other humans – through training the dog for security or dog fighting ("Mediated Conversation"). This informs the PBFSA's call for all pit bull owners, stakeholders, breeders and rescuers to register in their database to keep "[their] breed in responsible hands" ("Preserving the American Pitbull Terrier").

In contrast, the National Council for the SPCA came out in support of the ban, "standing in solidarity… for the protection of our people- especially the vulnerable, who are the most common victims of dog attacks". They elaborate that while they are an organization mandated to prevent cruelty against animals, both human and animal lives were at risk due to "uniformed irresponsible people" [sic] ("NSPCA Responds"). In a statement published in October 2022, they

encouraged any owners who wished to surrender their dogs to take them to a local SPCA. The following month they reported: “Pitbulls are being surrendered to SPCAs in large numbers and, in communities where owners have not surrendered their pitbulls, the communities are beginning to take matters into their own hands. Animals are being poisoned, stabbed, beaten, and set alight in retaliation from angry communities” (“The Surrender of Pitbulls”). Here, they called for government support and action to address this “national issue”. Subsequently, Manager of the Special Investigations Unit at the NSPCA, Nazareth Appalsamy, qualified the organization’s previous statements saying that they did not support the ban of any breed, but instead the call for stronger regulations. Appalsamy also advocated for responsible (moral) ownership: “We believe that if you have to own an animal, regardless of the breed, you have to be responsible; you have to understand the breed itself. Dogs have no concept of right and wrong” (“Government investigating rise in pitbull attacks”).

Given the country’s history, the ban also holds political resonance: Sizwe Kupelo himself is a government employee and his foundation’s call was supported by the leftist political party, Economic Freedom Fighters, and trade union federation, COSATU. However, according to animal behaviour specialist and lecturer Dr Quixi Sonntag, breed-specific legislation has not been successful in other countries and would be difficult to enforce in South Africa, firstly, because the pit bull is not easily distinguishable from crossbreeds and other breeds and secondly, because a ban might create an unregulated underground market. She suggests that “[s]ome kind of regulation would probably be necessary, but more directed at people than at the dogs…” (“Government investigating”).

The petition, which gained over 139 000 signatures, was handed over to the Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development, Thoko Didiza, when she met with Sizwe Kupelo in April 2023. A statement from this meeting indicated that there would be DNA testing of pit bulls in South Africa to try and establish the cause of the aggressive behaviour, and to ensure legislation held dog owner’s liable. In addition, the government would partner with animal groups, including the PBFSA, to create strategies for “promot[ing] safety of all people living with pit bull and pit bull type dogs [and prevent]… loss of life on all fronts” (“Media Statement”).

Before analysing the comments, I map out the narrative of dog rescue and its racial implications. With this context, I will analyse the comments to show how the issue of pit bull behavioural violence is reformulated as one of human behavioural violence, justifying moral arguments that value 'innocent' animal life over racialized human life. I then consider the "retributive" action by a community towards two pit bulls who killed a child. From this, I reflect on the potentialities in Njabulo Ndebele's call for a transformative intimacy between dogs and Black people.

2.1 Rescue, Whiteness and Morality

Recalling the comment of my interviewee about the abuse of rescue dogs by Black men, I suggest that when the narrative of "rescue" is deployed, dogs are figured through Whiteness, inaugurating another racialized interspecies becoming. "Rescue" dogs become moral symbols, constructed as innocent victims of racialized human cruelty, from which they must be protected by humane Human benevolence. Identity and ontology feed into one another: the practice of "rescue" entails particular identities (rescuers) and systems ("rescues" – privately run, non-profit organizations) that are underpinned by moral ideology, which not only dictates goodness, but also which bodies matter. Here, being "like a dog" means being deserving of care, shelter and resources. Tears Animal Rescue reports donations go towards health care and rescue for animals in "vulnerable communities" ("Your Impact") – communities in which people's basic needs are often not being met. Dead Animals Walking is less subtle: "We mission our way through poor communities by tackling flea and tick ridden, manged, sick, injured, suffering and unsterilized domestic township animals" ("Projects"). Townships, which, given the legacy of spatial and economic segregation, are primarily home to people of colour, are the site for this colonial-style "mission". In the designation "township animals" these animals are made signifiers of the space, a space of Blackness, from which they need to be evacuated. In the shift from "township animal" to "rescue dog" the dog is transformed by proximity to Whiteness: species is made to articulate with race, towards a moral end. Weaver observes that in being rescued, dogs are effectively segregated from Blackness by being placed into domestic spaces presumed to be "good" and, therefore, tacitly White (7). Dogs become absorbed into Whiteness and made to signify in the ongoing production of race.

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This signification also functions to uphold a particular social order. In *No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive* (2004), Lee Edelman describes the "Symbolic child" as the figure of innocence which mandates protection. The viability of society, as a structural and moral enterprise, and its continuity, is based on this figure. The Child manifests not only in supposedly "extrapolitical" family values, but also in a politics which is used to authenticate a social order (particularly, for Edelman, heteronormativity). This imagined Symbolic Child, which is distinct from actual children, is entitled to the inherent goodness for which the social order strives, which entails limiting of rights of actual citizens. Political action is geared towards upholding a social order that can be sustained for the future: the Child is the figure of this future and thus remains the "phantasmic beneficiary of every political intervention" (Edelman 3). Thus, "the Child has come to embody for us the telos of the social order" (Edelman 11). The examples Edelman uses to support his argument share more than a child status; they are all White. The Child is indeed an ubiquitous symbol in Western culture, but it is necessarily racialized (or rather, its Whiteness is universal). Munoz critiques Edelman's reproduction of "this monolithic figure of the child that is indeed always already white" (95), which he reads as symptomatic of an anti-relational (anti-intersectional) queer theory, which silos and prioritizes sexuality as a category of difference (11). That the Symbolic Child is necessarily a White child aligns with the way rescue-dog discourses are part of upholding Whiteness.

I read this figure of innocence, which underpins moral ideology and the inherent goodness of heteronormative family, in the image of the dog as an entity in need of protection and care in a "loving home". Concurrently, the dog becomes 'kinned' – drawn into the familial network of Whiteness. Dogs are named, individuated, sentimentalized and made to participate in human modes of subjectivity. Haraway calls this "caninophiliac narcissism"; knowledge of the intimate other is replaced by an infantilization of dogs as a "refusal to honour difference" (39). However, I argue that dogs' animal difference remains, but is figured differently by the logics of Whiteness. Indeed, as Chen observes, dogs are special precisely because they are not human (100): they animate prelapsarian fantasies of animality as precivilized and innocent. In this understanding, dogs do not occupy Human capacity for reason, but they are not seen as violent or bestial; they are pure, tame, devoted. When dogs such as pit bulls display aggression, various discourses arise to defend them, either as victims of human intervention and breeding, or as

victims of human abuse and violence, which conditions the dogs' violence. In discourses advocating a "nurture" over "nature", the dog becomes a vessel for moral ideology which holds that dogs are fundamentally innocent, until they are corrupted by "bad" people. Because they do not occupy human capacity for reason, they cannot be responsible for their actions and need protection by those who occupy Human status. Thus dogs are made to signify as the Symbolic Child, becoming "White", child-like, but not human. Indeed, their very animality works in the racializing apparatus: they can be violent but *because* of their innocence.

2.2 A "human problem": What kind of human?

The comments responding to the article, "Push to ban pit bulls as pets in South Africa", contest the foundation's call for a ban and the description of pit bulls as "vicious dogs". One comment re-quotes Leehanda Rheeda of the PFBSA who is quoted in the original article saying: "while the pit bull has an inherent temperament, the aggression of any dog towards people is not a breed problem but a human one". This is used to make the claim that: "People determine a dog's aggression" (Vaaltuin Van Staden). The first part of the quote relating to the nature of the pit bull is ignored and the second part is taken up to claim that culture (human treatment of the dog) is wholly determining of behaviour.

I offer the following context to frame this comment. Storm Nuku was killed by his uncle's pit bulls in his home in Anita Drive ("Push to ban"), located in a historically Coloured area (Christopher 201). Keketso Saul and Olebogeng Mosime, the two children who were killed by pit bulls in November, were both Black. Saul was killed in Phomolong township, which in 2011 had 99% Black occupancy (Frith) and Mosime in Vista Park, a newly "desegregated" area of Bloemfontein, with 92.6% Black occupancy (Rex et. al. S12). Given the nature of racial-spatial segregation in South Africa, the commenter would likely assume that the owners of these aggressive dogs were also Black, or Coloured in the case of Nuku. Here, I would like to recall attention to the assumption made by my interviewee that rescue dogs are primarily abused by

Black men. This suggests the "kind" of human that is insinuated in the following discourse, that is the aggressive and/or abusive Black man[8].

In Ndebele's piece, violence towards dogs is framed by a wider history and context out of which it emerges. Without this history, emphasizing the cruelty of Black men towards dogs functions as "a mode of displacement whereby the dramatic narrative of individual choice and responsibility elides the pervasive patterns of institutionalized [and historical] violence against Black [people]" (Kim 225). In this dramatic narrative, humans are cast as autonomous moral agents. Displacement becomes possible because of the understanding of Black people as "human", where action is framed by the narrative of the Human – as conscious, moral and agential – which entails certain behaviours towards animals.

At the same time, establishing this as a 'human problem' recreates the discourse of humanity which relies on the delineating of humanity into a racial hierarchy. Jackson argues that, in being differentiated from animals by abolitionists, enslaved people were then measured as humans 'by their purported capacity to be more or less "animal"' (46); where being 'less animal' was signified by progress toward "human" traits of reflexive agency and morality. The recognition of racialized humanity was framed by the global debate over what "*kind* of human black(ened) people represented" (Jackson 49, original emphasis). In the comments that follow, animals themselves occupy the realm of innocence and people responsible for immoral, agential cruelty deserve dehumanization. Thus certain people are included in the category of human only to be excised from it, for not being "humane".

The ideal of the "humane" posits humanity as something attained by virtue of kind acts and an attuned sensitivity "to the suffering of those of inferior status and lesser capacity" (Jackson 55). Thus humanity is not an inherent aspect of being human, but instead is achievable for those with refined sensibilities. This discourse delineates human identity into a naturalized relational hierarchy, between those who are more and less morally developed. A lack of refinement can be

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[8] I face a challenge in illustrating the implicit racialization of violence and immorality, because, in the comments the connection between race and various forms of violence is only inferred. By articulating this connection, I risk reasserting this racializing discourse.

understood in different ways; as naivety or innocence or as a bestial proclivity to violence. The latter is evident in the characterization of Black Africans, as observed by Mbemebe:

> Clumsy and bestial, no master of his/her instincts, the native took pleasure in crushing the weak, destroying without rhyme or reason. Quick to slip back into the most brutal excesses of the animal world, he/she was incapable of resisting violence… (34)

While Mbembe observes that part of the colonial ideological mission held that the colonized could be "rais[ed] to the level of human being" through "moral education" (Mbembe 34), what emerges below is a distinction between kinds of humans, where the virtuous concept of the "humane" is essential in establishing moral discourse and the value of different human and nonhuman lives. In this, ideological representations make certain relations seem natural, legitimizing hierarchies of power. Thus, through the inscription of dogs, the dominant narrative of White Humanness asserts itself.

This extends to the discourses around violence and criminality that appear in the comments, such as:

> Are you in favor of death penalty for murder, rape, child abuse?
>
> But you want to eradicate an animal because it is abused by humans. (Petfriend)

The comment implies that the foundation would not be in favour of the death penalty, even for heinous crimes. Here, humans are framed as agential and in turn corrupt and punishable, and animals as non-agents and therefore innocent. The image of a human abusing an animal thus becomes "inhumane"; in which a subject has human awareness but no virtue, reflected in their abuse of the vulnerable animal. The comment infers that it is hypocritical and illogical of the foundation to value immoral human life over innocent animal life. Further, likening the sterilization of dogs to the death penalty equates potential dog life with actual human life. Thus, moral ideology works to legitimize hierarchical distinctions, with the implication that certain people are more deserving of 'eradication' than dogs.

This discourse becomes meaningful through a dialectic of said and unsaid statements. Certain people, who are not the commenters, are enacting criminal and abusive violence. While race is not mentioned explicitly, the association of criminality and violence with Blackness in the new South Africa cannot be overlooked (see Kynoch). The association of Black men with animal abuse and crime thus reflects an assumed proclivity to violence, a violence which becomes human, as opposed to animal, and a violence for which they should be punished. As Jackson observes: "forms of human recognition—inclusion in biological conceptions of the human species and the transition from native to universal human subject in law and society—are not at odds with animalization" (18).

Both Kynoch and Suren Pillay emphasize that crime in South Africa is related to ongoing structural inequality. Pillay cites studies of police dockets on contact crimes which show that spatially these crimes are associated with informal settlements in large or 'mega-townships' (Pillay 142). Given the legacy of the Group Areas Act, these areas are inhabited by Black and Coloured people (Pillay 142) and bear the effects of the unequal development and opportunity of apartheid. Unjust social and economic conditions result in higher incidences of crime, as the South African Minister of Safety and Security acknowledged in 2007: "[In South Africa] Poorer communities experience more violent crime than wealthier ones" (in Pillay 142). Pillay cites a number of studies supporting this conclusion, showing a greater prevalence of violent crime in areas in which there are high levels of poverty and low levels of formal education, housing, electricity and sanitation (142). Thus, there is a *systemic* connection between race, space, class and violent crime. However, the implicit connection between crime and Blackness in the comments makes violent crime (and animal abuse) a matter of morality.

2.3 Nature/Nurture: Protecting Children

For Haraway, dog-human relations point to the division and categorization of nature and culture in Western discourse, and animate the issue of "who and what counts as an actor" (27), understandings of which are built on the prior division. Dog-human becomings are figured by this nature/culture divide, reflected in the debate around breed temperament (genetics) versus human input/socialization (nurture). Contesting the primacy of the dogs' "nature", comments

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state that dogs' behaviour is conditioned by people. This ignores the fact that there are dogs that have been bred to have a specific build and temperament: power breeds, like the pit bull, typically have strong, muscular bodies and a "bite-and-hold" fighting tactic (Swart, "Pit bull attacks"). Eliding differences between breeds of dogs, in which they are selectively produced to have certain traits, transforms them into a symbolic category, precluding an argument about genetic difference or aggression, in favour of human nurture. In implying that pit bulls are figured less by "animal" tendencies than by human relation, dogs are made into conduits of White morality and heteronormativity. This is exemplified in the following comment:

> ANY dog is potentially dangerous raised in the wrong manner. There was violence in that dog's life at some point, even abuse. If the dog was raised in a loving environment and treated with love from the start, it would have never attacked that child. (Phil Johnson)

Here, the fatal accident is directly attributed to a human "wrong": violence towards dogs. It is assumed that nurture (conditioning and environment) prevails over nature (genetics, breed temperament or animal instinct). The dog becomes passive – the receptor of input – rather than agentive, entailing a shift in culpability from the dog to the owner. By suggesting that there is a "right" way to raise dogs, good dog behaviour becomes the result of moral human behaviour (loving the dog). The commenter invokes particular affect – love – to justify a moral social order and familial framework; the same which undergirds the narrative of "rescue". Indeed, the comments reflects the upper-class White imaginary of family and home. As Weaver writes: "the worlds that are both built and presumed in these practices of interspecies relatings emerge in the context of settler-colonial mappings of house, home and family, in conjunction with white normative visions of family homes consistent with [a particular] standard of living" (48).

The moral outrage in the comments reflects the accumulation of affect around different signifiers, manifesting in opposing but co-constituting affective economies: that of hate, attached to criminals and animal abusers, and that of love, attached to dogs. Ahmed explains how the circulation of fear and hate stick words like "terrorism" and "Islam" together, so that they "[speak] the language of "floods" and "swamps," of being invaded by inappropriate others, against whom the nation must defend itself" (132). In this logic, fear and hate in White South

African discourse speaks the language of "crime, rape, abuse", still attached to abstract Blackness, from which the innocent (dogs and children) must be protected. Thus, affective economies bolster moral ideologies.

2.4 Dog-fighting and 'the animal'

This affective construction of immorality legitimizes an explicit call to punish people, rather than dogs, as seen in the following comment:

> Think a good start is euthanizing and castrating the owners. It is a status symbol for some people to purposefully seek fighting dog lineages and completely messing up the breed. Problem is when a dog goes bad the damage is usually already done. (Albertus)

Saying that dogs would be sought out for their disposition towards fighting implies that the owners have a proclivity towards violence; they are not owners who give love and care. Further, immoral action – seeking out fighting dogs, 'using' and 'damaging' them – is made to seem a result of inherent disposition. The wickedness of the owners' egoistic motivations and violent nature is further emphasized and condemned through the recommendation of humiliation and violence: castration and euthanasia. The call for emasculation also reflects the assumption that the owners are male, creating a link between immorality and an aggressive masculinity which must be controlled (neutered). Here I return to Jackson's argument that racialization pre-figured modern discourses of "the animal" and understandings of animality (17). She writes: "Power has legitimated itself by taking refuge in the presumed necessity of managing, disciplining, criminalizing, and extinguishing 'the animal'" (53).

Indeed, pit bull ownership is racially coded. The BBC article "South African pit bull attacks: 'We can't live in a world where dogs eat children'" reports that "[t]he increase in pit bull ownership, particularly in townships, is not only for protection, but for illegal dog fighting" (Mkhize). Given the conflation of townships and criminality with Blackness, the understanding

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here is that dog fighters are also Black[9]. In an interview, inspector Mark Syce of the Cape of Good Hope SPCA links dog fighting and gang violence: “While communities are buckling under the terror inflicted by gangs, the city calls upon these same communities to take note of those involved in the illegal sport of dogfighting and to report it” (quoted in Pinnock). Viltoft reflects that in the Western Cape, gangs consist of male youth in Coloured and Black populations, notably emerging in areas characterized by apartheid racial groupings and spatial configuration (9). I suggest that the association of Black masculinity with dog fighting allows for a kind of transference: the dogs’ violent “animality” is shifted from dog to owner.

In her discussion in the article “Pit bull attacks in South Africa - a historian sheds light on the issues” (2022), Swart uses vocabulary which echoes this discourse. She holds that there are pit bulls that are “genuinely family pets who are unlikely to inflict harm” but pit bulls are also “often used as extensions of toxic masculinity, as status symbols with teeth”. Here, the qualities of “the animal” are placed as an object of desire for Black masculinity. Similarly, the ego-driven owners who deserve castration and euthanasia in Albertus’s comment signify a violent hypermasculinity encoded by an assumption about the racial demographic of people who purposefully seek dogs bred to fight. I suggest that the figuring of particular animal qualities and bodies as objects of hypermasculine desire transforms the human-dog relation into a potent and condensed site of race, sex and species becoming. This connection is indicated in Albertus’s call for the castration of owners, which is echoed in a subsequent comment: “I do not support a ban on any breed of dog, but I WILL support the castration of rapist!” (AST). Given that “semiotic resources are laden with their social histories” (Eckert 105), these discourses are also inflected by the colonial construction of Black masculinity, as aggressive and hypersexual.

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[9] While dog fighting in South Africa has attracted increasing media coverage in the last decade, it has not seemed to receive the same scholarly attention. I thus draw on media reporting both as a source and site of analysis.

In contrast, commenter Bramley Clarke, invokes the goodness of her pit bull to perform tacit moral Whiteness:

> Mr Kupelo I invite you to come to my house and see and experience the behaviour of my pitbull. He is the most docile pet ever. Would your argument be the same about humans? We don't raise our kids to be robbers, murderers or rapists but if you look at stats more people are still killed by humans not dogs. (Bramley Clarke)

Here, the pit bull is "the most docile pet ever" – characterized by a notable lack of virility. Clarke uses this image to suggest that pit bulls can be ideal pets, if they have the "right" kind of owner (such as herself). By foregrounding her dog's exemplary behaviour, she signifies her own goodness. If docility is a mark of goodness, domestication and control become moral imperatives (to be undertaken by Whiteness). The implication is that, because of their purity and pliability, dogs' good behaviour can be conditioned, whereas even if humans are raised in the 'right' way, they still might become "robbers, murderers or rapists".

2.5 Agency versus Objecthood

Thus far I have aimed to show that being recognized as human does not preclude animalization. Indeed, violent criminals and abusive dog owners are criticized *because* they are human and therefore moral agents; this is implicitly racialized. In contrast, dogs are exonerated *because* they are animals. This establishes a universalized sense of morality, in which a dog's agency becomes an extension of the owner.

I now return to the 2022 BBC article "South African pit bull attacks: 'We can't live in a world where dogs eat children'" by Vumani Mkhize. In the chains of primary texts, reported and mediated by the author, there is a discursive dialectic between child-like innocence and violence and injustice, which shifts between dogs and humans.

The article begins by describing the scene of a "savage" attack in which three-year-old Keketso Saule was "mauled" by a neighbour's "vicious" dogs, which had been let out of their

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cage. Here, contrary to White discourse, dogs are framed as agential animals. While this appears in the author's voice, it reads as reported speech, echoing the "horror" of the community. The aunt of the dead child is quoted, describing an image of him being "eaten" with his face half-gone, while showing the same face in a picture of him smiling on her phone, creating a dissonance between the gruesome bodily violation by a monstrous animal and whole childish innocence.

The article then establishes a shift in agency, from the dogs to the crowd, who "turn on" the dogs, catching one and "setting it alight", thus focalizing the violence enacted on dogs. The crowd is described as "bay[ing] for revenge", creating an impression of them as dog-like and wild: agency and animality shift from dogs to humans. The description of "[r]ocks, sticks and a burnt-out tyre litter[ing] the area where the dog had been burnt," echoes Ndebele's description of the weapons used to beat the dog in his imagined story.

The two scenes above reflect how dogs are imbricated in cycles of structural violence. Indeed, Mkhize observes that "[f]ear of crime is felt to be a major factor in training animals like pit bulls to be guard dogs." Thus, the use of dogs for security against the effects of structural violence yields its own violence, when a dog attacks. "Backyard breeding" in which dogs are bred by unlicensed owners and crossbred with other larger dogs like Boerboels (which were bred to protect White settlers' farms), for fighting purposes. This apparently makes them more likely to attack children. The implication of this is that even when not acquired for dog fighting, the dogs that become available in the townships are more likely to be aggressive.

The article then observes that pit bulls are not only used for protection against crime, but also for profit in illegal dog fighting. For the latter, the dogs are "trained to be aggressive" and "kept in tight enclosures on chains", portraying them as captives. Reporting a "rescue" of dogs "including puppies", from a dog fighting ring emphasizes the vulnerability of dogs in contrast to criminality of humans. The article thus evokes a world in which the innocent – children and dogs – are brutalized, one in which we "cannot live".

While I am wary of making an abstract theoretical claim about the very real violence described above, there is a tension in this story, between the actions of the pit bull, the actions of the community against the pit bull and the image of pit bulls as innocent victims. Acknowledging these chains of violence, I read in the first scenes a shift, which allows the dog to be understood as an agent. This necessitates a reconsideration of human-animal relations, which dislodges anthropocentrism and the view of dogs as moral objects. Instead of narrating dogs as non-agents and therefore not accountable, or as agents and therefore accountable, this requires a more complex consideration of agency and accountability. While circumstances certainly contribute to dog violence, the same can be said of human violence (as seen in the systemic links I have outlined); I have shown how these violences are narrated differently, to perpetuate racist stereotypes and justify biopolitical control.

2.6 Autopoiesis and "recovering humanity"

In view of this, what might a different form of relation look like? Following Baderoon, I draw on the reflections of scholar and theologian Tinyiko Maluleke, who responds to Zuma's assertion of intimacy with dogs as "unAfrican". In his piece "I am African and I grieve for my dog Bruno", Maluleke writes, facetiously, "What deed can be more unAfrican than an adult black male crying over a dead dog?" He reflects:

> To have deep connections with the plant and animal kingdoms is not just African, it is the first step towards ecological maturity. For centuries we have adopted animals and named ourselves after them, and vice versa. For our ancestors, the lakes were alive, the mountains could watch us and the forests could talk back – until, that is, their African ways were rudely interrupted by those who accused them of animism and ignorance….
>
> Mine are not so much the confessions of an African who is unAfrican; they are the confessions of an African who is rediscovering his African roots, thanks to a dog called Bruno.

Here, the author's relation with his dog allows him to "rediscover" a way of knowing and seeing the world that had been suppressed by epistemicide. This narrative of being "African" in relation to dogs might be read as essentialist, but it shows this relation as part of the interconnectedness of the world, in which not only Man has agency. Animals can also "adopt" people; they are actors in these links of interdependency. To address the violence described in the BBC story requires an understanding of relation other than that instituted by narratives of Humanity, which disavow the agency of dogs and turn them into moral objects. From this appears the necessity for a different politics of humanity and morality.

I return now to Ndebele, who considers the possibility of new forms of dog-human relation, in the face of historical violence. For him, the dog can be a source, not only of violation, but of solace. He writes: "Perhaps if we stop brutalising the dog, if we stop brutalising ourselves whenever we invoke the cruel image of the dog we have created, we may recover our own humanity" (4). Somehow, the dog becomes a figure through which to 'recover humanity': Ndebele suggests that in rehabilitating Black people's relations to the figure of the dog, there is a possibility to end the brutalizing of both dogs and people. Framed as a figure of empathy, the dog becomes a way of disavowing violence: a way out of the cycle of historical brutalization.

In Ndebele's piece, dogs still function as a metonym for evoking compassion, as the object of human brutality. However, Gabeba Baderoon offers a formulation from which I intimate a more complex reading of Haraway's "otherness-in-connection": Ndebele "grapple[s] with the entrenched, bruising history of denigration and abuse which is encoded into the word 'dog' in order to lead… into a relationship with canines which [he calls] 'love'" (358). Thus, when Ndebele writes of the necessity to "recover our humanity", this is a genre of the human that is not Man. Baderoon's reading of Ndebele's proposal of the healing potential of human-dog relations suggests that this new autopoiesis of "recovering humanity" requires addressing the violence of dehumanization, working through the denigration in being associated with animality.

Given the racialized dynamics of dog-human kinship and dog-human violence in South Africa, Ndebele's suggestion – a humanity founded through kinship with dogs – is controversial and it is not my place to argue for this, especially given that it places the onus on Black people to

work through or engage with a violence wrought by Whiteness. However, Baderoon's analysis suggests the transformative possibilities of relation across difference. Here, a shift in interspecies relation requires acknowledging the otherness of the other. Indeed, it is the fungibility of Blackness and animality which entails the violence Ndebele criticizes. Baderoon writes that the potential for relation lies in the fact that between the species there is "proximity, relation, correspondence, but not sameness, not usurpation" (Baderoon 359). This poses a possibility "to recuperate and recreate ways 'the human' is imagined and lived by those set outside of Man as a genre of the human" (Erasmus 61).

Understood this way, Ndebele offers a conception of humanity based, not on biopolitical morality and a notion of universal "good", but on recognition of violent systems and connection across difference. Acknowledging the history of dogs in relation to Blackness, Ndebele's kindness to dogs appears differently to White paternalistic kindness. The re-scripting of "we" in relation to dogs involves challenging dominant narratives of humanness and animality: the sociogenic narrative has to shift in order to come into a new affective relation. Thus, Baderoon's analysis of Ndebele's work yields a counter-assertion to the Human, through a transformed relation to animals.

The affective shift Ndebele presents involves an imagined "conversion" of Kodwa, in which he and all his followers are standing outside the courthouse with their new puppies. Ndebele describes Kodwa's puppy licking his face, which initiates his shift towards non-violence. Kodwa's earlier chanting of "*awu leth'umshiniwam*"[10] (1) which means "bring me my machine (gun)" after the dog is killed, is amended to "*Awu leth'inja yami Uthath'imshini wakho Ngiyayithand'inja yami* ['Bring me my dog/ Take your machine gun away/ I love my dog]" (Ndebele 3). Thus, the love of a dog becomes a direct antidote to violence. Ndebele continues: "Imagine people loving their dogs! Imagine happy dogs licking the chins of their owners and handlers who will never again call for any dog, of whatever description, to be 'hit hard'" (Ibid).

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[10] This is a reference to "Umshini Wami," an anti-apartheid struggle song, calling for a mobilization with reference to the main weapon used by uMkhonto weSizwe in their armed resistance (Malisa and Malange, 310). However, it became re-popularized by Zuma as a rallying call for his presidency (ibid 306).

It is from this new relation that violence becomes less viable. Ndebele asks the reader to imagine these scenes of love between humans and dogs, so that they might be able to make the following declaration: “A child is not a dog to be beaten. A woman is not a dog to be beaten or raped. Workers in factories, farms, mines, or anywhere else, including domestic servants in plush homes, are not dogs to be exploited...” (Ibid). That gender-based violence, the ongoing violence of apartheid and the exploitation of capitalism could be undone with the love of a dog vastly overstates the rehabilitative possibilities of love. Indeed, if the violent structures that institute the initial narrative remain unchanged, love will likely not be enough. Still, Ndebele shows the need for imagining the world otherwise and indeed, this “love” does not come from paternalistic benevolence, but from a recognition of vulnerability.

Reflecting on Ndebele’s work, mpho antoon ndaba says that while he finds Ndebele makes equivalences between forms of violence, Ndebele nevertheless illustrates how “black people’s relationships with the dog are shaped by the history of antiblackness” (85). For Baderoon, grappling with this history is what allows Ndebele to argue for a changed relation. I suggest this process entails a challenge to dominant narratives of Humanness and forms the grounds for different human-animal relation.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have show how dogs have been made part of the laws of auto-institution of Whiteness, to produce and justify power relations. Here, dogs’ status as innocent and child-like, as ‘White’ animals, is the condition for the emergence of Blackness as the agential human figured by racialized animality, that is, as “inhumane”. Normative Whiteness is established in an excision of these racial “others”: criminals and animal abusers. Founded on understandings of human agency and consciousness in contrast to animal innocence, morality is invoked as biopolitical apparatus for governing a racialized hierarchy of humanity. Considering the biopolitical and affective politics of human-dog relations through a kinship between Black people and dogs serves to challenge the taxonomic and moral grounds of Humanness.

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3 “I am on Guard”: Dogs mediating Space, Fear and Racialized-Gendered Becomings

In this chapter, I will track the work of racialization through movements that extend beyond the boundaries of human bodies. Focusing on the White suburban street and the mountain or forest path, I will analyse the racialized and gendered affective exchanges between humans and dogs in these “public” spaces. In these relations across race and species, I consider how affect moves between or arises from an encounter between bodies, to reproduce “strange(r)ness” of Black people in relation to normative Whiteness.

First, I try to establish a picture of affective relations in constellations of human and human-dog encounters. I then outline the White discourses of fear around crime and security and describe the spatial organization of the suburb, which informs dogs’ socialization with White people and hostility towards Black people. Drawing on Ahmed and Fanon’s work on phenomenology, I consider how dogs reproduce the historico-racial schema, in which White bodies are allowed to experience themselves as Human, as bodies “at-home” in contrast to the strangeness of Black bodies. I then look at gendered racialized narratives of threat, considering the phenomenological implications of this for White female subjects. I use intersectional framework to consider the dynamics of power and affect between: dogs and their owners; dogs and Black “strangers”; and White female owners and Black men. Finally, I extend the previous chapter’s focus on the power of affective economies of hate and love, considering Whiteness’s positive affective investment in dogs as a means of disavowing racial tension.

3.1 Locating Fear in Interspecies Becomings

On a Facebook forum soliciting questions from Black South Africans for White South Africans, many comments referenced White people’s relations with dogs. Two comments are particularly illustrative of the dynamic between Black people and dogs owned by White people:

Manelisi Mahlaba

> Why yall gotta leave the gate open after driving into your house, when you saw me about to walk past and you got 6 dogs. There are other ways of testing the limits of a black man's speed.

Qaqamba Sunshine Dunywa

> And why do you say “he/she doesn’t bite” when your dog has teeth AND IS CHASING ME??? 🙄

The comments reflect overlapping issues: the first suggests the sense of threat a dog presents to the commenter, that is, the possibility of being chased; the second images the very real aggression of some dogs towards Black people, which is dismissed by White owners.

In an interview with Mila, a friend and owner of a dog daycare I used to work for, I ask if she perceives a racial pattern in dogs’ responses to other walkers. She responded with a definitive “yes” and, as if stating the obvious, says “this is South Africa”. She qualifies:

> [O]bviously some dogs are completely neutral and don't mind at all. But like, in general, when there is an issue with someone else on the mountain they do tend to be... not White... and generally Black. Sometimes I'll have problems with like, an Indian person or a Coloured person but it’s generally Black people. And, yeah […] it's men too. (Mila, “Dog Economies”)

Though she speaks matter-of-factly, her hesitancy in saying the word “Black” here reflects a sense of discomfort around acknowledging the way dogs respond to Black people. I ask Mila why she thinks dogs behave this way and she explains that they respond to what they are used to in their environment: their aggression towards Black people indicates that they do not encounter Black people very often in their homes. There is an exception with labourers – domestic workers and gardeners – to whom, Mila says, the dogs “acclimatize”. Nevertheless, Black people are

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rarely present in White homes in non-hierarchical social roles[11]. My other interviewee V, a canine physio-therapist, behavioural specialist and day-care owner, confirms this, saying that the primary reason for racial aggression is "a lack of exposure" (V). Indeed, she has done consults for racially aggressive dogs and was told by one client that they were looking for a White trainer because having her would just "add to the problem" (V). However, dogs also respond to the behaviour of people: Mila observes that dogs "[pick] up on energies" of the people they encounter, so that when a person is friendly and greets them, they are better behaved. V reflects that when Black people "are coming into the home, it's the maid, the gardener, that sort of thing, so people are there to do a job". In contrast, "if your friend comes over and [meets] your new puppy, the first thing they're doing is getting down, saying hi, that sort of thing." From this V observes:

> That socialization is basically telling the dog, okay, when White people come over, it's because they're friendly, I say hi, they say hi back. And the reverse side of that is when Black people come over, they avoid me I better avoid them. And for some dogs that being seen turns into aggression where they're like, I've not been socialized with people of colour, so instead of me avoiding them, and they may come close to me, I'm gonna let them know from the get-go to stay back. (V)

Thus, dogs develop their own terms of signification, which are not only based on instinct, but are influenced by human social systems. Their hostile responses to Black people indicate the registering of human difference, a process which, though conditioned through relations with humans, is not reducible to human systems of meaning. Further, White social-cultural practices around dogs – greeting and playing – facilitate a positive relation. If a Black person is wary or distant, as the Facebook comments suggest they would likely be, the dog in turn might perceive them as a potential threat. Dogs thus become normalized to the presence of White people and recognize the strangeness of Black people, typically responding with hostility or aggression. This appears not only as a manifestation of enduring racial spatial and social segregation, but as the

[11] Mila estimates that 90% of her clients are White; V says 75% of hers. The clients are also upper class, given that daycare is a "luxury service" (V).

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result of certain affective investments and responses, which themselves, appear as the result of historically accumulated economies.

Not only are they not socialized with Black people, but also respond to their owners. V offers the example of owners tightening the lead when they pass a homeless person – who, as V points out, will 99% of the time be a person of colour – or pulling their dog away when they're passing a building site (inferring that people who do manual labour are also Black). In this way, V explains, dogs are socialized to be aggressive towards Black people, who they perceive as something to avoid and therefore as a threat.

While it is clear that Blackness registers as strange for these dogs, I suggest their aggression might also relate to affective transmission between dogs and their owners. Indeed, dogs' hostile responses to and their threatening signification for Black people hold further racialized resonance. Mila says that she likes walking with a pack of dogs on the mountain and feeling safe, or – she pauses – "saf*er*". She describes the sense of freedom in having "that silent moment on the mountain, kind of on your own, but have some form of protection around you" (Mila). It is not spoken, but implied that the "danger" from whom the dogs will protect her is that of Black men. Hers is not just fear, as a woman, of sexual violation, but also fear, as a White woman, of racial persecution. In another interview with Mila about White femininity, I ask her how she feels being a White woman in South Africa. After a long pause, she says:

> I feel growing up as a woman in this country where there's so much rape happening around you, but you hear about all the time… but obviously, it's a lot of the time in like townships and stuff and not the areas that – it's going on, but it's still... uhhhm... I feel like... [pause] I mean, scared, obviously, but I feel like it's different, it's a different kind of scared when you're White. Well at least this is how I feel, because I feel like there's like a *hatred* combined with, like, scared-of-being-raped… when I'm sitting in my car, and there's a beggar at the [traffic light] and I can just see that like, what he really hates about me is that I'm White, like, you know. Like not all beggars or anything but just in, sometimes when you look at someone in the eye and just like they literally, and you're like "Sorry, I can't help you" and they look at you… and they just like, I don't know if it's

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> hate or just like, it's not fair, they're feeling how unequal it is… I personally do feel a lot of hate coming from some people. (Mila, "Narrating White Femininity")

Here, Mila's assumption that an act of sexual violence towards her might also be an act of hatred towards her race implies that the men who are responsible for the ubiquity of gender-based violence in South Africa are not White. I will reflect further on this racist narrative later in the chapter, but want to offer one more response from Mila. When she was walking some dogs on the mountain, she was attacked by four men, one of whom hit her in the face, before taking her valuable possessions and car keys. She reflects:

> [T]he *first thing* that came to my mind was there are four guys, and I'm one girl, and I'm gonna get gang raped. That was *the first thing* that I thought I was like, Oh, my God. My greatest fears are coming to life, but I didn't [slight laugh]. But that was mainly, it's I mean… [as] a guy, your physical safety is still… you're still worried about your own physical safety, but you're not worried about being raped which is I think the greatest fear for any woman. Especially by like, four guys... who also might have some sort of hatred towards your race. (Mila, "Narrating")

Together, the comments above reflect a configuration of bodies and affects, in which threat, for Black people, is located in the figure of the dog and, for White people and their dogs, is located in the figure of the Black man. The vulnerability to violence here also indicates how the intersections of axes of power (particularly of race and gender) become lived realities. Expanding on this, I will explore the biopolitical effects of affect and how gendered, racial and interspecies affective relations appear in the reproduction of White dominance.

3.2 White Suburbia and Strange(r)ness

In this section I consider how dogs are part of constructing space and relations in the suburbs, where they are folded into White systems of power, recognizing some bodies as familiar and others as strange. They are part of sustaining the inherent otherness – or what Sarah Ahmed calls "strangerness" – of Black people, in White space and discourse. In "A phenomenology of

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whiteness" (2007), Ahmed observes that over time, the power of Whiteness accumulates in spaces and bodies to the point where it appears as an ontological given (150). Ahmed observes: "[W]hiteness becomes worldly through the noticeability of the arrival of some bodies more than others" ("Phenomenology" 149). Thus, in their recognition of the strange(r)ness of Black people, dogs reproduce the normativity of Whiteness. Further, Whiteness constitutes itself in relation to Blackness as other: in *Strange Encounters: Embodied Others in Post-Coloniality* (2000) Ahmed proposes that individual and collective identity is constituted in encounters with 'strange' others (7). Here, bodies materialize in "spatial relations to other bodies… that are recognised as *familiar, familial and friendly*, and those that are considered *strange*' (40, my emphasis). The "I" is constituted in this moment of recognizing the other as Stranger, as embodied difference (7).

In South Africa, Whiteness thus comes into being in relation to the Black stranger, who is always already invested with fear. As Ahmed argues: "[C]ertain lives become liveable as both safe and valuable insofar as they are *alive to* the danger of strangers" (*Strange Encounters* 33, original emphasis). With Whiteness's fear of Blackness comes discourses of "security", defining the "not me" or "not us" (Ibid 132), from which "we" need to protect ourselves. After the fall of apartheid, the policing of Black bodies shifted to private security companies: indeed, South Africa's private security industry has more employees than the national police force (AfricaCheck). These security forces identify potential "threat" in White suburbs, informed predominantly by racial profiling. Further, Kynoch observes that "this robust protection force is staffed almost entirely by black men, paid to protect whites from other black men" (436). This is evident in my suburb's private security company, ADT. When the alarm goes off and ADT calls, the guard always ask me if the dogs are "out" and won't go over the wall to check the property if they are: the dogs can't tell the difference between Black security and Black burglars. They are thus part of the fixing gaze of Whiteness, in which "what one sees as the stranger is already structured by the knowledges that keep the stranger in a certain place" (Ahmed, *Strange Encounters* 131): the stranger is necessarily out of place, alien and invested with fear. In their making White space hostile to Black people, dogs reproduce the racialization of the "we" or "not-we" in relation to which they act.

Affective economies of fear yield interspecies kinship: Ahmed observes how "(f)ear mediated by love [produces] identification": "The turning away from the object of fear here involves a turning toward home" ("Affective Economies" 130). While Ahmed is talking about the nation here, I understand this in relation to community and family, in which dogs are necessarily part of "us". Ahmed's notion of 'the familial' being 'familiar' resonates when seeing how dogs are incorporated as "part of the family" ("Phenomenology" 154). Returning to Weaver's understanding of interspecies becoming as an affective negotiation of "togetherness" it becomes clear how "the accumulation of affective value shapes the surfaces of bodies and worlds" ("Affective Economies" 121), so that dogs and White subjects become together, through economies of fear and love.

Beyond identification, these economies function in biopolitical control: fear works to restrict some bodies through the movement or expansion of others, producing Whiteness as "the body-at-home" ("Phenomenology" 153). Dogs become part of how "Whiteness… orientates bodies in specific directions, affecting how they 'take up' space, and what they 'can do'" ("Phenomenology" 149). It is common to see signs hanging on the gates of houses in White neighbourhoods that say "*Pasop die hond*/Beware of the dog" or "I am on Guard", with a snarling German Shepherd or Rottweiler. Given the fear expressed by Black people in the comments opening this chapter, I surmise that this threat of dogs would function as a violent reminder to Black people of their precarious presence in the normativity of White space. In sociogenic terms, if Whiteness inhibits the development of the Black subject, perhaps dogs too invoke an 'interruption' in bodily consciousness for Black people (Ahmed, "Phenomenology" 153). As Emily Parker observes, affective exchange is part of the historico-racial schema: "For Fanon, the corollary of his experience of sensing and being sensed, as a larger circuit… resides elsewhere than in Fanon himself: it resides in the fears of the white people he encounters" (Parker 444). In relation to this, I offer Ahmed's concept of strangerness – as the figure which is over-determined and fixed from the outside as "strange" – alongside Fanon's phenomenological sense of nonbeing (I do so tentatively because I cannot make any claim to experience here). If the "sense of otherness of Fanon's own body… becomes Fanon's lived experience" (Parker 444), perhaps the barking dog at the gate elicits a similar experience of strangerness? As Wynter

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writes, the mind is “culturally determined through the mediation of the socialized *sense of self* as well as through the “social” situation in which this *self* is placed” (“Towards” 37).

I have aimed to show how subjugations of race and class (the economic requirement of Black people in White space) manifest in a complex network of human-dog interaction. Whiteness then exceeds literal White bodies (Weaver 17), extending into relations of kinship and otherness. This limits the possibility for interpersonal recognition or connection across racial boundaries. I offer the following auto-ethnographic description to suggest how these dynamics pre-figure any encounter between a Black person, a White person and a dog in White space.

> Walking my fourteen-year-old dog, Kodi, across a narrow pedestrian bridge in our neighbourhood, we encounter a Black woman walking towards us. Anticipating the woman’s discomfort, I hold Kodi on a short leash, and nudge her to one side while we walk, so that my body is a barrier between her and the woman. As she has grown placid with age, has white fur around her face and walks with a limp, I feel Kodi doesn’t seem like too much of a threat. But I still wish we had waited at the end of the bridge. My actions are a signal that the dog needs restraint and the woman presses herself against the edge of the bridge as we pass, so much so that her skirt hooks on the wire and tears as she tries to move forward. I apologize profusely and she turns away from me.

Though she might show no signs of aggression, and though I will her not to be, my dog acts as a barrier between myself and the woman because of a history of affective accumulation, which orient our bodies away from one another. I am cognizant not only of the woman’s potential discomfort, but also of my dog’s potential response. This is difficult to intimate: in her fourteen years she has lost much of her perception and is much less aggressive than she used to be. I know that if I continue walking and act normally, she will likely not notice the woman. However, if I hesitate and she becomes aware of my awareness of a stranger, or I stop and try to restrain her, she might understand this as cause for defensiveness. Her response informs my behaviour; mine informs hers. Thus, understanding affect as the movement of feeling between bodies, I suggest dogs can also respond to their owner’s affective processing of the threat of strangeness. This informs my thinking around the role of dogs in mediating the dynamics between White femininity and Black masculinity.

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3.3 White Femininity; Black Masculinity

I shift my focus now to the moment of encounter between dogs, their White female owners and Black men. Indeed, upper-class dog ownership seems to reproduce, to some extent, White gender and heteronormativity. When Mila suggests that dogs fulfil a desire to "be a mother", but without the same responsibilities, I ask if all her clients are women. She reflects: "The single ones are women and then all couples. I don't think we have any clients like, just a single man and a dog" ("Dog Economies"). Here, White femininity's instantiation through the role of carer, in an intimacy that is familial and domestic, echoes the colonial construction of White womanhood (A. Coetzee 7). Corresponding to the model of gendered Whiteness that Azille Coetzee describes, these White women are deemed bodies in need of protection, a protection afforded by their dogs. This relates particularly to activities such walking or running in the suburbs, or in natural spaces like the forest and mountain. My father will always tell me to "take the dogs" walking with me, and, like Mila, I feel safer with them. Dogs are thus part of the gendered-racialized rhetoric of safety: who needs to be protected, which areas are safe and who can occupy them.

Given that majority of gender-based violence in South Africa is directed against women of colour[12], my and Mila's sense of precarity is partly a response to the hypervisibilising of White female bodies and racialization of Black men as threatening. As Azille Coetzee argues, colonial gender construction was a constitutively racializing project, relying on both the ungendering and hypersexualization of Blackness as its oppositional force. In *Rape: A South African nightmare* (2015) Gqola shows how these constructions of Blackness as "primitive' and perversely sexual allowed for the sexual exploitation of Black women during colonialism and apartheid. Naturalizing and normalizing the violability of Black women made her "unrapable" (Gqola 43); this formed the foundation for the epidemic of sexual violence in contemporary South Africa. In contrast, Coetzee uses Gqola's phrasing to suggest that the White woman became "hyper-

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[12] Statistics South Africa, the percentage of Black women who *reported* having been sexually assaulted is two to three times greater than White women; see "Quantitative Research Findings on Rape in South Africa"

rapable" (4). Whiteness relied on the image and control of White female sexuality, as that which is pure, contained, and vulnerable to contamination; this legitimized White supremacy by necessitating "[the defence] of community, morality, and white male power" (Stoler in Coetzee 4). This made imperative the separation of White women and Black men, for the future of Whiteness.

This reflects the vast affective accumulation of fear around Blackness. Ahmed writes that encounters with strangers "[open] up past histories that stick to the present" (Affective economies" 126). Drawing on an interview with a young White South African woman, Azille Coetzee reflects that "the fear of the Black man that [she] experiences has consequences for how she inhabits her body and how she moves within the world. (22). Here, subjectivity and consciousness have developed by the processing of narratives of Humanness in its relation to race, yielding the specific social location and power dynamics constituting White womanhood. I cannot help but tense if I see a Black man approaching me in the street, in the same way I cannot help but relax if I see he is White: neurologically inscripted cultural myths create a very real and embodied fear. Our experiences are part of "the making of whiteness [which] historically relies on the white woman's fearful withdrawal from the Black man" (A. Coetzee 22). When Mila was attacked, *the first thing* she anticipated was sexual violence; her vulnerability, as a White woman, is both biopolitical and experiential. This is difficult to reconcile: Azille Coetzee suggests that an awareness of this might help White women to undermine the patriarchal imperative of Whiteness by refusing their role of victim. Yet, the experience of physical, but non-sexual, violence has further exacerbated Mila's fear. At the same time, walking with a dog also makes me feel safer, because I know it will "deter" threat (through inducing fear in another). This illustrates the co-production of affects by/with power and how these affective relations create race-species affinities and separations, towards the ongoing production of Whiteness as Human.

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3.4 Being "hated" versus being "loved"

White people conceptualize violent crime in terms of a racial or/and sexual assault – they feel they will be attacked *because* they are White – and dogs are used to ameliorate this fear,

making them (in Ahmed's understanding) subjects of love and protectors of Whiteness. Dogs are affective agents in this process. Indeed, the closeness between White people and dogs is not just a matter of security or righteous morality. I want to consider the "love" that dogs give in relation to the "hatred" Mila feels which makes her fear racial persecution.

Haraway addresses the myth of dogs' capacity for "unconditional love" through which they "restore human beings' souls" (33). Instead, she understands love as coming from an understanding that one cannot *know* the other, or the self, but must be consistently attendant to who emerges in the relation. Secondly, love requires recognizing that the other is *not* "the projection of one's own self" (50). However, Ahmed shows that affective politics work differently: the loved becomes familiar, part of "us". Mel Chen writes that the "invocation of "love" further reminds us of the belief in the corrective and rehabilitative possibilities of affective politics (especially of legitimated kinship and intimacy structures)" (125). For Whiteness, dog-human relations become such a site of legitimated kinship. The "rehabilitative" possibility of love characterizes dog-rescue discourses, but also, as Haraway points out, dogs' capacity for "love". Mila says: "care is the one part of the job that isn't work for me, I'm receiving there" ("Dog Economies"). Other authors show that animals also perform affective labour (see Coulter 2016; Dashper 2018). This happens in bodily proximity: through affectionate touch, animals and humans become "attuned" to one another, which brings about ontological shifts: they emerge transformed by their relation (Weaver 58). While many psychology-related studies attest to the pleasure humans gain from petting dogs (Weaver 41), for Weaver this entails a process of attentive negotiation. In his relation with a shelter dog, Weaver describes gently approaching and allowing the dog to sniff his hand, while being sensitive to the dog's bodily responses. When they are comfortable, he observes the pleasure the dog gets from bodily contact with him. He too is affected by this trans-species intimacy, and gains pleasure in the dog's trust and comfort with him (41).

In the context of post-apartheid White people have had to grapple with, in some form, their complicity in a violent system; at the same ongoing systemic inequality informs a latent racial tension, which I believe informs Mila's experience of being "hated". Mila reflects on the intensity of this:

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> I just feel guilty at the same time. You know, because I'm just like, I'm sorry, like, this is, *I* underst- if I was in the opposite shoe, I probably think I would be quite extreme with my own hatred for White people [she laughs].

She continues:

> So ya… I feel very unsafe but also feel... ya, disliked if not hated, sometimes. Which is also [she speaks quietly now] really hectic. ("Narrating")

In view of this, Whiteness's affective economy around dogs, and relations between dogs and their owners, can offer a sense of reprieve, firstly from a sense of persecution, and secondly, from the guilt and shame that come from recognizing Whiteness's fundamental violence. Wynter observes that, according to Fanon's argumentation, while Black subjects must experience themselves in relation to Whiteness, as its defect, White subjects cannot experience themselves in relation to Blackness, in "any way but as that fullness and genericity of being human" ("Toward" 40). This is dialectical: Fanon is required to "make ·himself into a fact of negation, which alone enables the experience of being 'white'" (Ibid 42). In Mila's discomfort, I intuit an experience which Fanon believes impossible: the inability of Whiteness, in being confronted with the looks of "hatred", to experience itself as fully human in relation to Blackness. This serves to strengthen the sense of "we" mediated by love, and "not-we", established by Whiteness in its defendedness.

This brings me to ask: what might a new genre of humanity look like for Whiteness in relation to dogs? For ndaba, the relations of Whiteness with dogs in South Africa will always produce forms of antiblackness (13). There is no transcending this violence; instead, I consider instead, whether "love", which exists alongside this violence, can be rethought or expanded to refigure Whiteness in its modes of belonging and relation. Here I draw on Baderoon's reading of J.M. Coetzee's 1999 novel *Disgrace*. The notion of love is addressed by Coetzee in his 1987 Jerusalem Prize speech:

> At the heart of the unfreedom of the hereditary masters of South Africa is a failure of love. To be blunt: their love is not enough today and has not been enough since they arrived on the continent; furthermore, their talk, their excessive talk about how they love

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> South Africa has consistently been directed toward the land… mountains and deserts, birds and animals and flowers. (in Baderoon 355)

Coetzee observes that this insufficient “love”, for the land or for animals, is part of the mastership of Whiteness, and also its human limit (its ‘unfreedom’). In view of this, Baderoon asks “How can the white subject find a way to belong to South Africa that is not founded on the legacy of brutal displacement and war?” (355). *Disgrace* offers no redemptive resolution, but explores this question through interracial and interspecies relations.

The novel, set in the years following the fall of apartheid, begins with the disgrace of White English professor David Lurie, who loses his professorship after sexual misconduct and retreats to his daughter, Lucy’s, small-holding in the Eastern Cape. When he arrives, he expresses concern for Lucy, in her living alone as a woman in a Black rural space. In response to this, Lucy says: “There are the dogs. Dogs still mean something. The more dogs, the more deterrence” (Coetzee in Paustian 457). It becomes clear, however, that dogs have lost their significance, a loss which Megan Paustian argues reflects the loss of White power (458): when three men attack the farm, they shoot the dogs in the kennels and rape Lucy. This element of the novel elicited intense criticism; while these men are not racially identified, the novel allows them to be understood as Black. However, Baderoon observes that *Disgrace* offers a complex picture of intertwined racial and sexual violence; the rape of Lucy is paralleled by her father’s sexual violation of one of his students, a Black woman named Melanie. It thus illustrates how the colonial trope of Black violence functions to erase the subjugation of Black women.

The figure of the dog is then invoked differently. In response to her father’s offers to help her to leave the country, Lucy insists she will not leave, even if she has to “give up the land”. Here Lurie likens dogness to the humiliation of having ‘nothing’:

> How humiliating, he says finally. Such high hopes, and to end like this.
>
> Yes, I agree, it is humiliating. But perhaps that is a good point to start from again. Perhaps that is what I must learn to accept. To start at ground level. With nothing. Not with nothing but. With nothing. No cards, no weapons, no property, no rights, no dignity.

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Like a dog.

Yes, like a dog. (in Baderoon 354)

Rather than understanding this as evidence of White victimhood, Baderoon considers the changing implications of being "like a dog" in relation to Whiteness. Initially, it appears to imply that Lucy should be made to occupy the position that Black people endured during apartheid: the list "No cards, no weapons, no property, no rights, no dignity" echoes the history of racial dispossession in South Africa. But the image of the dog, "with nothing", resists a binary racial analogy here. Lucy says "that is what [she] must learn to accept"[13] and this condition of her remaining seems one that is specific to Whiteness. I pose "nothing" in contrast to "the fullness and genericity of being human" built on a negation of Blackness; while I am wary of venerating violence, the shooting of the guard dogs could be read as a refusal of White power. This disrupts the "violently insistent claim to belonging" (Baderoon 355) that White people espouse. Later, Baderoon reads in Lurie's words, a relationship with the land that would be "a good point to start from again", that of 'visitorship, visitation' (355).

This tentative and fragile relationality is explored from being in contiguity with dogs. Baderoon differentiates between being *like* an animal and *being* an animal: this is a closeness, rather than a substitution, which entails relation across difference. This is evident when Lurie volunteers in assisting with the euthanasia of unwanted shelter dogs. Baderoon offers two examples of his narration:

> He has learned by now… to concentrate all his attention on the animal they are killing, giving it what he no longer has difficulty in calling by its proper name: love. […]

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[13] Azille Coetzee criticizes *Disgrace* for its implication that "decolonisation will amount to a handover of women (along with the land) from the hands of white patriarchy to Black patriarchy", ignoring the fact that the "systemic sexual violence that has come to characterise a place like South Africa is produced by coloniality" (A. Coetzee 11). I do not read Lucy's acceptance as the acceptance of the humiliation of sexual violence, as a condition for her remaining, but instead a rejection of the role allotted to her by white patriarchy, of victimhood, (which Azille Coetzee advocates for). Further, I understand Baderoon's reading of *Disgrace* as reflective of an "imagining and reaching for a world beyond such violence" (Ibid).

(perhaps he will carry him in his arms, perhaps he will do that for him) and caress him and brush back the fur so that the needle can find the vein, and whisper to him and support him. ... It will be little enough, less that little: nothing. (in Baderoon 355, 356)

Baderoon observes that Lurie's relationship with the dog, Driepoot, as one which "entails genuine empathy and reciprocity, an exchange to which Lurie gives the name of 'love'" (Baderoon 356), a love which is nevertheless "little enough". Thinking on Coetzee's phrasing of the love of White subjects as a "failure", despite their "excessive" assertions, I agree with Baderoon that in the shifts between "love" and "nothing", *Disgrace* seems to "[revise] the meaning of 'nothingness' towards a reciprocity that defies measure" (Baderoon 356).

To explicate this further, she returns to the phrase "Not with nothing but. With nothing." To "start again", in staying on the land, Whiteness must render itself vulnerable, through an acceptance of an ineluctable 'ethical acceptance of responsibility for the realities of deprivation ... produced by privilege' (Armstrong in Baderoon 356). I understand this as the "vulnerability" which Snyman advocates for, where, "[i]n rendering oneself vulnerable, especially while in a position of power, an understanding of the effects of coloniality will become possible" (279). Vulnerability, here, does not come from a place of fear, but from a truer form of love, producing a mode of being and belonging which entails an infinite responsibility to others (Baderoon 357). This is not the infantilizing or morally righteous love of dog-rescue discourse. Nor is it the excessive yet inadequate love proclaimed in rainbow nation narratives. This new inscription of Whiteness in relation to dogs involves a shift away from an ontological defendedness, towards vulnerability, which, in the case of Whiteness, means taking responsibility. This mode of being White is inaugurated by relations with Blackness, but mediated through relations with dogs. This is significant, given my reading of White relations with dogs as a way of displacing or disavowing such responsibility. In this, a relationship to South Africa as a "new start" is founded on altered relations to difference; a visitorship, perhaps a cohabitation, founded on interdependence. Refiguring love requires an awareness of ongoing and historical violence and a recognition of difference, connectedness and responsibility: a new grounds for being White and human.

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Conclusion

Human-dog encounters are structured affective economies of love and fear; security and threat. These economies configure both bodies and spaces, producing biopolitical affiliations and separations, showing how emotions as work "through signs and on bodies to materialize the surfaces and boundaries that are lived as worlds" (Ahmed *The Cultural Politics of Emotion,* 191). Affective investments are part of systems of power: in the previous chapter, I showed how dogs are constructed as in need of protection; Whiteness, in fulfilling this role, instates itself as superior. Similarly, White women are constructed as in need of protection from Black masculinity, which a dog can provide, instating a racialized interspecies kinship. I have examined the way in which sociogenic narratives inflect embodied affective responses, as part of racial gendered differentiation. Further, I considered how this affect travels between bodies, in an attempt to sketch out complex uneven ways in which intersections of oppression manifest. The overrepresentation of Whiteness as Human in relation to dogs manifests such that Black people are made vulnerable and encounter hostility in White space while Whiteness is allowed to experience itself as loved and loving. Consequently, I looked to Baderoon's reading of *Disgrace*, to consider how Whiteness might be transformed, through its relation to dogs, by practising "love" as vulnerability and ethical responsibility.

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4 *Mrs Plum* and "a more human face"

> We [Black people] have set out on a quest for true humanity, and somewhere on the distant horizon we can see the glittering prize. Let us march forth with courage and determination, drawing strength from our common plight and our brotherhood. In time we shall be in a position to bestow upon South Africa the greatest gift possible--a more human face.
>
> Steve Biko, "Black Consciousness and the Quest for a True Humanity"

> Newer ways to think agency, subjectivity, and social collectivity will need to be forged for the evolution of this social, but not altogether human, species-being.
>
> Carla Freccero, "Carnivorous Virility, or Becoming-Dog"

David Scott's interview with Wynter, "The Re-Enchantment of Humanism" (2000) begins with the following quote from Aimé Césaire: "[T]he West has never been further from being able to live a true humanism – a humanism made to the measure of the world" (119). This is the quote on which Wynter draws to call for a new humanity 'made to the measure of the world' rather than the measure of 'Man' (Erasmus 48). I have shown how, in the context of this study, the creation, institution and experience of ourselves as H/human involves relations with dogs. Given that difference has been constructed as a vector for violence in human-dog relations, my aim in this chapter is to evaluate the possibility for relation across this difference to yield what Sylvia Wynter calls an "ecumenical" humanism. This comes from a "trans-genres-of-the-human perspective" (Wynter in Scott 207), towards an understanding of difference in inscriptions and modes of being human.

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To begin, I turn to the words of Biko in the above quote. What is this "greatest gift" – "a more human face" – and can it relate to interspecies autopoiesis? I apply this question to Es'kia Mphahlele's work, given his stance as an African humanist (Phalafala; Gaylard) and his use of

the figure of the pet dog in *Mrs Plum* to question human-racial-special relations in the White apartheid suburb.

4.1 Hierarchies of Value

While written during apartheid, Mphahlele's rich text offers a site through which to explore how relations across race and species construct the meanings and modes of being, for humans and dogs, and therefore to consider the limits and possibilities of recognition across difference. *Mrs Plum* is set in the White suburbs, which, due to the presence of numerous Black people who lived and worked there, were "full of blackness" (134). It is narrated by Karabo, a Black woman who describes her life working for Mrs Plum. The novel opens: "My madam's name was Mrs Plum. She loved dogs and Africans" (134). Here, Mphahlele humorously criticizes the proximation of race and species, while simultaneously reflecting an implicit order of value: dogs come before Africans. The incisive use of the word "love" speaks to one of the novella's broader concerns: the way "apartheid shapes the affective attachments of white South Africans" (Paustian 447). In the case of Mrs Plum, her "love" for her dogs and Black people is a paternalistic love. Mrs Plum is a White liberal, member of the Black Sash, an anti-apartheid women's group, goes to political meetings on behalf of Black people, and wants Karabo to eat dinner at the table with her; Karabo doesn't like this, but has to obey. Indeed, the way Mrs Plum treats her servants – while better than other White people Karabo has worked for – is an example of the insufficiency of White love. Mrs Plum begins "educating" Karabo, telling her not to use terms like "garden boy" to refer to the Black men who work in the garden. Karabo recounts:

> I say to her I say Madam, I learned the word from the white people I worked for, and all the kitchen maids say 'boy'.
> She replies she says to me, Those are white people who know nothing, just low class whites. I say to her I say I thought white people know everything.
> She said, You'll learn my girl and you must start in this house, hear? (139)

Thus Mrs Plum shows herself to have the same sense of authority as, while defining herself as benevolently different to, other White people. At the same time, Blackness is presented as

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homogenous in the eyes of Whiteness. Hearing that Mrs Plum goes to meetings on behalf of "[her] people", Karabo understands this as familial, rather than racial, terms. She says: "[m]y people are in Phokeng far away… Does [Mrs Plum] know what my mother and what my father want to say?" (137). At the end of the novella, when Mrs Plum says "You know, I like your people, Karabo, the Africans," (166) Karabo sees herself outside of this description, wondering if Mrs Plum liked *her*, Karabo. This shows a limit for recognition: despite her liberal attitude, Mrs Plum is unable to see Karabo's personhood.

This limitation is also reflected in the care Mrs Plum's dogs are afforded, as objects of "love", through the exploitation of Black labour – Karabo shares this work with Dick, a man who works in the garden. This care involves feeding, walking, washing, brushing, spraying, ribbons, pink linen-covered beds in Mrs Plum's room and jackets to keep them warm; here, White feeling accumulates around the bodies of dogs through the seemingly inexhaustible tasks Black people have to perform (Paustian 449). After introducing the dogs – Monty and Malan – through their list of requirements, Karabo reflects: "they make me fed up when I see them in their baskets, looking fat, and as if they knew all that was going on everywhere" (145). An affective economy circulates around the animals, as Mrs Plum's affection is paralleled by Karabo's irritation (Paustian 449).

In the suburbs more broadly, dogs come to reflect the displacement of Black humanity in the logic of apartheid. Karabo observes how dogs are afforded the dignity of a name, where Black people are called 'boy' or 'girl'. In turn, Karabo observes how dogs come to represent Whiteness, even embody it: they "walk like white people in the streets. Silent but with plenty of power" (149). At the same time, dogs signify as the Symbolic Child: in response to rumours of Black people poisoning dogs, the police descend on the suburbs and arrest scores of Black men. The moral imperative is clear in the "letters… sent to the newspapers by white people asking the police to watch over the dogs to stop any wicked things" (160). Karabo wonders if the police just wanted an excuse to "take people without passes" (Ibid). Dogs are thus part of moral and biopolitical apparatuses of apartheid, producing Blackness as domesticated and servile or as immoral and dangerous.

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In the conversations Karabo recounts amongst her and her friends, who work for White families, it is clear that for Black people, dogs represent not only the power, but also the strangeness or difference of Whiteness. When speaking about their "madams and masters", the Black characters detail the absurd things they have to do for their dogs. One of them says she refuses to walk the dog, as it is not her job, saying: "Let them bite their elbow before I take out a dog, I am not so mad yet ..." (140). They reflect on White peoples' relations with animals as unnaturally close:

> It is not like the child of my white people who keeps a big white rat and you know what? He puts it on his bed when he goes to school. And let the blankets just begin to smell of urine and all the nonsense and they tell me to wash them. Hei, people ...! (140)

This reveals not only the degrading work of having to clean up after White people, but also after their animals, which reproduces hierarchies of value and racialized interspecies becomings. As Paustian argues, in *Mrs Plum*, "[w]hite canine culture blurs the species line while underscoring the color line" (449). Trans-species disconnection or alienation for Black people is thus produced in the subjugation of Blackness through the closeness of White people and animals. In turn, Black people define their humanity *in contrast to* animals because of the roles of pets in White households; laughing about White peoples' strange relations to animals is a way of asserting their autonomy, in the face of subjugation.

4.2 Shifting Relation: Agency and Subjugation

It would seem that Karabo's humanity emerges in proximity to dogs in a different way to that advocated by Ndebele. In *Mrs Plum*, Black humanity is principally linked to the ideals of Biko's Black Consciousness. This is illustrated in Karabo's description of her trips into town with her friends:

> We dress the way of many white madams and girls. I think we look really smart. Sometimes we catch the eyes of a white woman looking at us and we laugh and laugh and laugh until we nearly drop on the ground because we feel good inside ourselves. (135)

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For Biko, true freedom was only possible through Black agency, which required an identity and consciousness free of internalized racial inferiority: he writes “Black Consciousness makes the black man *(sic)* see himself as a being complete in himself” (quoted in Erasmus 58). Black Consciousness sought to catalyse self-examination and awareness of the psychological (sociogenic) violence of apartheid, towards a sense of self-determination and collective pride (Biko). Further Biko emphasized that Black people should be wary of White liberals, who wield their authority by determining the *modus operandi* of the anti-apartheid struggle (Biko). Instead, he emphasized Blackness as a lived political experience, from which change would come. I suggest that *Mrs Plum* offers a politics of the every-day, the domestic sphere, and resistance from within this space[14].

Indeed, Karabo is initially deferring towards Mrs Plum and grateful to her and her ideas. Her political consciousness grows when she starts going to the Black Crow Club, where she learns emancipatory ideas from Lilian Ngoyi. When asked if it was possible to take the “good madams and masters” as friends, Lilian Ngoyi responds: “A master and a servant can never be friends. Never, so put that out of your head, will you! You are not even sure if the ones you say are good are not like that because they cannot breathe or live without the work of your hands” (141). Indeed, both White people and their dogs are sustained through the labour of Black people. Influenced by Lilian Ngoyi, Karabo gains a greater sense of autonomy and begins to reject Mrs Plum’s White newspapers, asking instead for magazines about Black people. When Mrs Plum obliges, Karabo reflects: “I did not think she would do it” (142). In this, Mrs Plum surprises Karabo by enabling a means for self-actualization, *outside* of Mrs Plum’s influence.

The following humorous story that Karabo’s friend Chimane tells her about Moruti KK and his dog reflects how Africanness and self-determination are tied together:

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[14] Significantly, in voicing a female Black narrator, it offers a perspective that Biko ignores, as Erasmus points out, as his term “brotherhood” suggests. Biko’s work addresses Black men and White people of liberal persuasion (Erasmus 58).

> "[Moruti KK] is standing in front of the Black Crow. I believe his big stomach was crying from hunger. Now he has a small dog in his armpit, and is standing before a woman selling boiled eggs and - hei home-girl! - tripe and intestines are boiling in a pot - oh - the smell! You could fill a hungry belly with it, the way it was good… The dog keeps wriggling and pushing out its nose, looking at the boiling tripe. Moruti keeps patting it with his free hand, not so? Again the dog wants to spill out of Moruti's hand and it gives a few sounds through the nose. Hei man, home-girl! One two three the dog spills out to catch some of the good meat. It misses falling into the hot gravy in which the tripe is swimming I do not know how. Moruti KK tries to chase it."

At the end of her story, Chimane remarks: "That is a good African dog. A dog must look for its own food when it is not time for meals. Not those stupid spoiled angels the whites keep giving tea and biscuits" (143). This shows "African dogs" as agentive, in contrast to "European dogs" (145) which are objectified by Whiteness. The latter is exemplified in Karabo's description of the grotesque scene she encounters of Mrs Plum pleasuring herself while pressing Malan against her. Karabo sees "Malan silent like a thing to be owned without any choice it can make to belong to another" (159). The words read as a condemnation of Whiteness, which reveals its primary mode to be that of domination. Indeed, the Being of the Human is constituted through actualizing His 'natural' supremacy in relation to others; following intersectionality, this has different manifestations: axes of power produce dogs as 'privileged' beings (above Black people) in their proximity to Whiteness, but at the same time as non-agential, as objects for Whiteness's ownership and use. Indeed, there is no moment in the story when Monty or Malan are shown to respond to Mrs Plum's affection, or have any response whatsoever (save one, which I address below). Crucially, this is not a moment of identification with Malan, but opens up Karabo's empathy towards Malan, as a creature who "has no choice", no capacity for resistance.

This extends to motifs of silence and voice throughout the novella. In a dream where Karabo wonders if Dick will poison the dogs and urges him not to do it, she says "[t]hey cannot speak do not kill things that cannot speak." He responds "Madam can speak for them she always does" (164). Dogs are thus invested with merely symbolic power; they are silent and unable to resist their roles within Whiteness's self-instantiation. In contrast, Black characters show defiance in the face of a system that enforces their negation. Karabo is perplexed as to why Mrs Plum would

go to meetings on behalf of "her people". She says: "My people… have got mouths… Why does she [Mrs Plum] want to say something for them?" This shows resistance to Mrs Plum's supposedly benign ventriloquism. In view of this, I want to consider the 'White practice' of addressing dogs. When Mrs Plum asks the dogs, after they've just eaten, "Did Dick give you food sweethearts?" Karabo relays Dick's response: "Dick was blowing up like a balloon with anger. These things called white people! he said to me. Talking to dogs!" (145). Addressing the dogs in Dick's presence affords them a form of acknowledgement that he is denied; at the same time, the address acts performatively to chastise Dick, to make sure he's taking proper care of the dogs. The following scene then reads ambiguously, but significantly:

> Malan came sniffing at my legs. I put my foot under its fat belly and shoved it up and away from me so that it cried tjunk - tjunk - tjunk as it went out. I say to it I say Go and tell your brother what I have done to you and tell him to try it and see what I will do. Tell your grandmother when she comes home too.
> When I lifted my eyes he was standing in the kitchen door, Dick. He says to me he says Hau! Now you have also begun to speak to dogs!
> I did not reply. I just looked at him, his mouth ever stretched out like the mouth of a bag, and I passed to my room. (155)

While it may also be performative, that she would address a dog, even disparagingly, reflects some kind of shift in Karabo's relation: she engages with Malan. Further, where other instances show actions being done to Malan (walked, groomed, fed, held), this is the only time in the story when Malan is responsive.

There is also a separation of dogs from the oppressive system. In response to the rumour of Black people poisoning dogs, Dick says "It is wrong this thing they want to do to kill poor dogs. What have these things of God done to be killed for? Is it the dogs that make us carry passes? Is it dogs that make the laws that give us pain?" (160). Here, dogs become innocent, themselves undeserving victims of violence. The phrase "things of God" indicates an inherent value, by virtue of being part of God's creation. However, when the police arrest scores of Black people and Mrs Plum grows suspicious of Dick, he says "I had been thinking before that I did not stand with those who wanted to poison the dogs… But the police have come out, I do not care what

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happens to the dumb things now" (161). Dick's sympathy for the dogs is nullified by their deployment to justify structural violence.

4.3 Relation towards a new Humanism

This illustrates the ambivalence and tension with which Black people come into relation with animals which are so imbricated in Whiteness. I want to emphasize that there is no point in the novella where Karabo identifies or connects with the dogs; rather, she is in a relation with them. She resents them, in their being given privileges that Black people are not, yet protests against Dick's intention to kill them in her dream. She feels not only pity and horror at Malan's subjugation, but also sees this as part of Whiteness's domination. At the same time, the hierarchy of value which places dogs over Black people is one that limits the recognition of Black human life. When Karabo's friend Chimane falls pregnant, she is forced to have an abortion because she cannot afford to raise a child, making visible the necropolitical violence of apartheid. In contrast, Karabo hears that the dogs have been bought allotments in a dog cemetery, so that they may be buried when they die. Simultaneously, Mrs Plum refuses Karabo paid leave to go home, following the death and burial of her uncle: she cannot understand why Karabo needs to go, seeing as she has already missed the funeral. Karabo says "I must go Madam, that is how we do it among my people, Madam." To this, Mrs Plum says: "I, and not your people pay you" (162), prompting Karabo's resignation. Here, Mrs Plum illustrates Whiteness's inability to see the violence of its mode of Being, an inability echoed in the inhumanity of the apartheid system and the failure of White "love".

For Wynter, "[p]lanetary… humanism" calls for a *making conscious* of the "symbolically coded and prescribed terms we inscript and thereby experience ourselves as an *I* and *we*" (in Scott 207). In view of this, Wynter asks: "How can we think *outside* the terms in which we *are?"* (Ibid 206). Being cast already outside the hegemonic terms of Humanity, and being made privy to its intimate and social space (working in the White household as a Black person) incites an awareness for Karabo of two sets of terms: her own and those she is made subservient to. When Karabo says "I think Dick is right when he says What is a dog!" (144) I read her reflection

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on definitive impossibility as indicative of the understanding that dogs are one of the primary symbols and relations through which human difference (and power) is instituted.

This is significant when considering the final scene of the novel. Mrs Plum drives to Karabo's village to ask her to return; Karabo agrees, but only if Mrs Plum will make the request to Karabo's parents, and increase her wages and holidays. Waiting for Mrs Plum to collect her the following day, she reflects: "I felt sure of myself, more than I had ever done." (166). Mrs Plum in turn, is "pleased and looked kinder than [Karabo] had ever known her" (Ibid). When they leave Mrs Plum says that Monty and Malan are not at home; they have been stolen and she believes they are dead. In this final moment of the story, Karabo reflects a deep sympathy for Mrs Plum, in spite of everything, wondering: "[D]id this woman come to ask me to return because she had lost two animals she loved?" (Ibid). This is the first time she uses the term "animal", not their names, dogs, "it", "things", and the phrasing carries a sincerity that acknowledges the affective relation between Mrs Plum and her animals. I read Karabo's response as a step towards ecumenical humanism, in her recognition of Mrs Plum's *being* in relation to her dogs, even though this is not Karabo's own experience of *being*. Relations across race and species yield not only violence, but, from Karabo's side, understanding.

In "Re-Enchanting humanism" Wynter emphasizes the importance of moving away from a "universal" history of Man and creating a history of the human "whose narrative will enable us to co-identify ourselves each with the other, whatever our local ethnos/ethnoi" (Scott 198). Wynter argues that solving the problems of gross inequality, climate change and health epidemics can only be achieved through "*experience[ing]* ourselves… *as* human" (Ibid 197), rather than a specific genre of the human. This is "a new mode of experiencing ourselves in which every mode of being human, every form of life that has ever been ever enacted, is a part of us. We, a part of them" (Ibid 197). I suggest this is what Karabo reflects, in her compassion towards Mrs Plum. This is not a suggestion of "friendship" between master and servant, but an experience of humanness that comes from relation across difference and recognition of the subjective experience of the other. This does not disavow the violence of White dominance, but functions to show, not only its violence, but its limitation of the humanness of White subjects. Indeed, this is a mode of relation, into which Mrs Plum, despite her White liberal beliefs, is

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unable to enter, as seen in the final lines:

> Mrs Plum says to me she says, You know, I like your people, Karabo, the Africans.
> And Dick and me? I wondered. (166)

Mrs Plum is unable to see Karabo beyond her membership in a category of signification – Africans in need of liberation – against which Mrs Plum defines herself. Whiteness disavows the agency of others so that they become objects for Whiteness's own definition. The novella reflects the lack of humanity of White people and the impotency of White liberalism, as more human(e) in contrast.

Significantly this understanding is also related to Karabo's personal-political consciousness, which gives her a sense of autonomy from Mrs Plum's influence, in spite of their power dynamic. Karabo's empathetic thought towards Mrs Plum comes after a definitive moment of agency in setting new terms for her employment. I propose that it is from this position, through relations with Mrs Plum and her dogs, that Karabo reflects the "more human face" that Biko calls for. While for Biko the relation with White people was of secondary importance to the development of Black consciousness, it also seems that this "human face" would not only entail Black empowerment, but, along with this, the development of a society in which racialized subjugation and exploitation would no longer be possible, necessitating a transformation in racial relations and biopolitical structures. Indeed, Wynter reads Biko's call for a "new humanity," as one that is "ecumenically inclusive" (Wynter and McKittrick 73).

Finally, I return to the idea of recognition through vulnerability. Ten Have writes: "Vulnerability is the basis for exchange and reciprocity between human beings. We cannot come into being, flourish and survive if our existence is not connected to the existence of others" (in Snyman, 282). I want to consider what this might mean for interspecies relations, noting Mphahlele's assertion of himself as an "African Humanist"[15]. In recognizing Malan's

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[15] African Humanism is underwritten by the the philosophy of *ubuntu*, which emphasizes that being human is contingent on recognizing and respecting the humanity of others (Gaylard 273). This "we" entails a mode of "relational and interrelational being, extend[s] not only across

subjugation and seeing Mrs Plum's vulnerability when coming to her, Karabo experiences affective relation across power asymmetries. The novella evokes Claire Jean Kim's assertion that "[b]eing embodied, being vulnerable, being mortal—these are shared conditions, common denominator conditions, which might provide a basis for recognizing each other, but they are also unevenly experienced conditions" ("Introduction: Dialogue" 467). Kim suggests that in a politics of mutual disavowal, Black activists and animal activists dismiss the oppressions of the other group and deny connection between forms of injustice (*Dangerous Crossings* 19). She advocates instead a mutual avowal, which entails "an opening, a recognition, a turning toward" (Ibid 20). Thus, for Kim, the best way to address injustice is to practice this mode of relation which acknowledges the connection between forms of subjugation, without making them equivalent. As previously stated, I do not understand Karabo's relation to Malan as a moment of co-identification, but rather, one of empathy, an understanding of the violence of Whiteness on another. From Mphahlele's work, I intimate that a 'more human' society would produce dog-human relations different to those instituted by Whiteness, which infantilizes and objectifies dogs and disavows the humanity of Black people in subservience to them.

Conclusion

In *Mrs Plum*, there is an inversion of the moral hierarchy presented in Chapter 1: White people are depicted as less human in their prioritizing of dogs and their inability to see the humanity of the Black people who work for them. The story appears as an indictment of Whiteness's value of animals, dogs in particular, over Black humans. The novella shows the racialization of dogs, so that they become both invested with power and, at the same time, non-agential in their relation to Whiteness. While dogs are given privileges above Black staff, Karabo sees the dogs' incapacity to resist their instrumentalization. Their voicelessness, a recurring theme in the story, stands in contrast to the ability of Black people to speak in spite of their subjugation. In spite of Mrs Plum's White liberalism and condescension towards her, at the end of the novel Karabo shows a compassionate understanding for Mrs Plum's vulnerability in losing

human subjectivity and humans' inherently social characteristics, but also to the entire interconnected living system of the universe" (Phalafala).

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her dogs. Here Karabo sees how Mrs Plum's personhood is defined by relation to her dogs, even though this is not Karabo's own mode of personhood. I suggest *Mrs Plum* reflects the possibility for "a new humanity made to the measure of the world", a humanity which does not avow a singular master code of Being, but instead requires an awareness of different forms of humanness, vulnerability and reciprocity, and an avowal of multiple agencies in building the terms of relation. This seems to reflect the "more human face" that Biko speaks of: a society not only in which Black people no longer face subjugation, but a more deeply transformed society, one that is not, and could not be, post-racial (collapsing difference), but in which humanity entails relation across difference.

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5 Conclusion

This thesis has shown the violence that has thus far characterized H/human becomings with dogs in South Africa, in the hope of allowing for becomings otherwise. Such a project is onto-epistemological, proposing new ways of being with dogs by first thinking through the ways in which they are part of violent structures of differentiation and racialization to uphold White Humanness. Indeed, liberal Humanism's construction of the 'humane' alongside the mutable co-construction of race and animality shows the way in which the conceptualization of animal-being is made to work in various forms for Human domination. At the same time, Jackson points out that present animal studies scholarship tends to presume a humanity secured within the logic of this same humanism (16), that of universal rights and justice, which overlooks the effects of imperialism, racism and ongoing neoliberal domination. She calls instead for "a critical and accountable humanism" which would "*would interrogate the epistemology of "the human," as an idea, [to] guide its ethico-political practices rather than reify the presumptuous conceit of a received notion of the humane*" (Jackson 15, original emphasis). This is what I have aimed to do, through sites of human-dog relationality. In Chapter 2, I showed how the notion of Human(e) morality is used to narrate racialized interspecies violence and condemn Black humanity, *through* the inclusion of Black subjects in the category of 'human', while absolving animals.

I have also looked at the roles and agency of dogs in order of the Human, yielding racialized processes of bonding and separation. The history of dogs in apartheid and colonial systems 'sticks' so that dogs pose a threat to Black people, yielding affective, biopolitical and (possibly) sociogenic violence. Dogs, in turn, respond to and reproduce the systems of which they are a part, often acting aggressively towards Black people and thus functioning to make White spaces inimical to Black bodies. These dogs' registering of Blackness as threatening otherness reflects the need for a deeper consideration of the affective movements, systems of meaning and inscriptions of consciousness at work in our interspecies autopoiesis. That such behaviour would become naturalized, or taken for granted – as Mila says, when I ask about whether there is a racial pattern in dogs' responses: "this is South Africa" – reflects an even more urgent need for re-imagining the way we become human with dogs. Our current modes of relation not only perpetuate White domination and defensiveness, but also colonial racial-gendered systems. As

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someone who is afforded protection by this, advocating for ‘vulnerability’ can feel empty, disingenuous, or unrealistic. However, I do believe that dogs act as barriers to interpersonal recognition; indeed, dog-human relations show how difference and fear are co-produced with power to create a thoroughly violent social order.

Thus, in delineating the biopolitics of intimacy with dogs, I show how these relations uphold the naturalized dominance and sociogenic power of Whiteness. In view of this, I echo Jackson who, in contrast to many animal studies scholars, observes that the problem of our current time is not anthropocentrism but rather “a failed praxis of being” human (15). This requires, not shifting the focus away from humanity while leaving that humanity uncontested, but forging a new praxis of being. Such a praxis involves thinking the world anew. Extending Baderoon’s analyses of Ndebele and Coetzee’s work, I have suggested how interspecies autopoiesis can function as a means for opening up different narratives of humanness. For Ndebele, reclaiming humanity involves an altered relation to dogs, which would induce an altered relation of Black people to themselves. Changing the terms of their relation requires the imaginative practice of resignification, by thinking through the violent proximities between Blackness and dogness, challenging the Human’s expulsion of human and nonhuman others. Further, while Ndebele’s invocation of “love” could be read as a rehabilitation towards the (tacitly White) ‘humane’, Baderoon's insights imply that this affective relation would come from a different moral framework to that of superior benevolence. Such shifts might then transform our relations to animals and to animality.

This would simultaneously entail different modes of relation to one another. In the final section of Chapter 3, I suggest that, in Blackness’s refusal of self-negation, Whiteness is forced to see its own violence, its dependence on such negation, material and metaphysical, in the endurance of apartheid’s structuring of life. Might this be another reason that Whiteness is so extremely defensive, so avid in reinstating itself through relational narratives of love, belonging and racialized persecution? *Disgrace*, in turn, challenges the dominant mode of being enacted by Whiteness through a relation with dogs: an ontological defendedness coupled with an at once excessive and limited “love”. In Baderoon’s understanding, *Disgrace* proposes an altered mode

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of being for White people in South Africa through vulnerability, which involves a recognition of responsibility. Such vulnerability emerges in changed material and symbolic proximity to dogs.

Finally, in Mphahlele's *Mrs Plum,* relation across difference yields a glimpse of a new kind of humanism, "a more human face". Karabo's insight functions to make clear the different modes of being human in relation to animals: Karabo's sensitivity to Mrs Plum, in view of this, reflects an *experience* of being human in a broader conception than that of a particular ethno-class, while not homogenizing humanity. The awareness of this is what Wynter believes a planetary humanism calls for. Thus, *Mrs Plum* reflects an awareness of difference, which, rather than translated into one master code of being Human, becomes a foundation for ecumenical humanism, while condemning the violence and hypocrisy of this dominant narrative's exclusive Humanity. Further, Karabo recognizes in Malan's lack of agency the domination that Whiteness enacts on nonhumans others, and in this experiences an empathetic response to the subjugation of another being. With these insights, it becomes clear that addressing the exclusions of the Human would not entail a marginal broadening of its privilege to select beneficiaries, but rather, "to radically restructure our relationships with each other, animals, and the earth outside of domination" (Kim *Dangerous Crossings* 21).

For Wynter, it is in language and storytelling, through "*representation*" (Erasmus 65), that meanings of the human are made. I have turned to literature to consider the possibility of re-creating humanness in dog-human relations, as from these relations both Human power and human and nonhuman subjugation emerge. In the face of historic and ongoing violence, these works offer means for imagining new modes of being. Here, I foreground the relationality through which we create the worlds we experience and share, an awareness which is necessary in forging a humanism made to the measure of such ecumenical worlds.

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