

○ FELINE DIVINANIMALITY

DERRIDA AND THE DISCOURSE OF SPECIES IN GENESIS

Matthew Chrulew

Matthew Chrulew is a PhD student in the Centre for Studies in Religion and Theology at Monash University. His essays have recently appeared in PAN: Philosophy Activism Nature and Concentric: Literary and Cultural Studies.

Correspondence to Matthew Chrulew: mnchr1@student.monash.edu

Jacques Derrida's most sustained intervention in questions of human-animal relations, 'The Animal That Therefore I Am (More to Follow)', seeks to recast the relation of Western subjectivity to the animal Other(s) on whose sacrifice it has hinged. In particular, Derrida offers an insightful reading of the early chapters of Genesis, a central text for the construction of Judaeo-Christian species humanism, which intertwines thematically with the autobiographical scene he insistently evokes of being seen naked by his cat. As opposed to the logic of the fall, which marks humanity's uniqueness and dominance, Derrida seeks to tie his cat's gaze to the story of Adam's prelapsarian naming of the animals in Genesis 2:19-20. Derrida interrupts the scene to transpose the curious and finite gaze of God onto his responding cat's otherness. But beyond this domesticated relationship, the text of Genesis itself suggests a more radical relation to animals ultimately identifiable with Derrida's own insistence on unconditional obligation.

I therefore admit to my old obsession with a personal and somewhat paradisaic bestiary (Derrida 2002: 405; Derrida 1999b: 287).

Jacques Derrida's (2002) recent work on animals attempts to provide the groundwork for nothing less than a sustained rethinking of Western culture's institutional and philosophical exclusion and sacrifice of nonhuman animals. As elsewhere, his intervention is dense, erudite and extremely rewarding. Derrida meditates extensively on his nakedness under the gaze of his pet cat, as well as offering an intermittent reading of Genesis 1-4. What is most intriguing is the connection he makes between his human-feline face-to-face and Adam's naming of the animals under the expectant gaze of God. I will illustrate the importance of this interspecific vis-à-vis, but will also maintain that it can only be a step toward a more radical understanding of human-animal relating that lies implicit in Derrida's commitment to unconditional obligation as well as in the text of Genesis itself.

CARNOPHALLOGOCENTRISM

The work in question stems from an extended address Derrida gave at a conference entitled 'L'Animal autobiographique', of which only a selection has yet been published (Derrida 1999b; Derrida 2002; Derrida 2003).¹ Notes suggest that this work includes comments on Descartes, Kant, Heidegger, Levinas and Lacan's (Derrida 2003) positions on animals. Derrida aims to demonstrate that each of these philosophers, as part of a complex thread running through Western philosophy – however much they otherwise contest this tradition – in fact elaborates a metaphysical humanism on the border of species: that is, each institutes a fundamental divide between the human subject and the animal which grounds their ultimate exclusion of nonhuman creatures from the domain of ethical concern. My focus here is on the complex first section of

that address, ‘The Animal That Therefore I Am (More to Follow)’.² This wide-ranging essay prefigures those arguments through an intricate reassessment of Western humanism as encountered in particular biblical (Abrahamic) and mythic (Greek) sources, refigured in modern philosophy, and institutionalised (most frighteningly) in industrial modernity.

As Derrida is at pains to point out, the ‘question of the animal’ has long preoccupied him. It was as early as 1967 that he argued, in *De la grammatologie*, that the trace (and thus iterability, supplementarity, *différance*, i.e. the general structure of archi-writing) ‘must be thought before the opposition of nature and culture, animality and humanity, etc.’ (Derrida 1976: 70, see also, for example, 9, 47, 65, 70, 84, 183, 244–245) This logic lies behind Derrida’s many attempts to relativise the long list of supplementary criteria that are said to distinguish, in opposition to the animal, what is proper to man: self-presence, language, being-towards death, freedom to respond, faciality, the secret, the question, a relationship to the other – indeed supplementarity itself.³ Aside from a few asides or footnotes (for example Derrida 1986: 25–27; Derrida 1987c: 474 n. 51; Derrida 1988: 134; Derrida 1989b: 16–18; Derrida 1990: 950–953), Derrida first followed this question through systematically in work on Heidegger’s ‘violent and awkward’ (Derrida 1991: 111) approach to animality. Derrida argued across a number of essays that despite Heidegger’s *Destruktion* of metaphysical humanism, from which Derrida himself draws many ethico-philosophical tools, Heidegger’s thought preserved a species humanism in its dogmatic distinction of human *Dasein* from all other life.⁴ Derrida’s (2003) later deconstruction of Lacan’s Cartesian distinction of human (free) response from animal (instinctual) reaction follows in this vein. At work throughout this discourse is the classic Derridean move of situating what is seen as an absolute oppositional limit within the play of *différance*, in order not to blur but multiply differences (Derrida 1987b: 173, 183–184; compare Hochman 1998); as he explains, ‘we are not concerned with erasing every difference ... My hesitation concerns only the purity, the rigor, and the indivisibility of the frontier that separates’ (Derrida 2003: 127) human and animal. He finds that in particular the word ‘animal’ serves only to efface and obscure the ‘heterogeneous multiplicity of the living’ (Derrida 2002: 399; Derrida 1999b: 282), and proposes instead the neologism *animot* in which he hopes ‘to have the plural of animals heard in the singular’ (Derrida 2002: 415; see also 405, 409, 415–416; Derrida 1999b: 298; see also Baker 2000: 74–76; Fudge 2002: 159–165).

In the much-discussed interview “‘Eating Well’”, Derrida extended the ethico-political dimension of his analysis by proposing that these various humanistic dogmas form part of a schema of subjectivity dominant in Western culture. He spoke of relating his critique of ‘phallogocentrism’ – that hegemony which privileges the male over the female and speech over writing – to ‘the *sacrificial* structure’ (Derrida 1991: 112, emphasis in original) whereby the animal, too, is subordinated to the dominant subject, who is not only human and male but also virile and carnivorous. This ‘carnophallogocentric’ exclusion of nonhumans from the linguistic and thus ethical realms leaves them vulnerable to ‘a noncriminal putting to death’ (Derrida 1991: 112), allowing their symbolic and material incorporation in an alimentary regime. It is this hierarchy of subjectivity and the attendant sacrificial logic which underlies our culture and law, and the institutional regime of carnivory that has reached such sinister proportions since the industrial revolution (see further Derrida 2002: 392–395). And, as he argued, it continues to infiltrate our philosophy, no matter how radical. Here he tied Heidegger’s anthropocentrism to the radical ethics of another thinker

close to Derrida, Levinas, arguing that while the discourses of both ‘disrupt, of course, a certain traditional humanism ... they nonetheless remain profound humanisms *to the extent that they do not sacrifice sacrifice.*’ (Derrida 1991: 113, emphasis in original)

What exactly such a sacrifice of carnophallogocentric sacrifice might look like is another matter, and one that Derrida only approached with any real depth in his later work when, in ‘The Animal That Therefore I Am’, the tenacity and volume of his attention to animals reached a critical mass. In taking seriously our obligations to animals, and tracking the ramifications for thought, he sought to speak of the animal in a manner (and the audacity of these remarks is unavoidable) heretofore unknown in the history of philosophy, thereby reconfiguring deconstruction as the quintessential (anti-)philosophy of animality (Derrida 2002: 382–383, 402–409). As he asks so insistently the question of the animal, we can witness the changes that come over his own thought – for example, when we find that the animal, in its infinite otherness, is also a very real, small and close at hand cat.⁵

IN THE BEGINNING WAS A LITTLE CAT

Derrida admits that the animal question demands innovation: ‘I find myself about to embark upon the most *chimerical* discourse that I have probably ever attempted, or that has ever tempted me’ (Derrida 2002: 392; Derrida 1999b: 274, emphasis in original). And reading his essay, one of the things that is most striking is its somewhat uncharacteristic earnestness, particularly with regard to the central themes of nakedness, shame, and the gaze of the animal other. He opens by expressing the following desire: ‘To begin with [*Au commencement* – we might render this ‘In the beginning’], I would like to entrust myself to words that, were it possible, would be naked. Naked in the first place’ (Derrida 2002: 369; Derrida 1999b: 251). Of course, deconstruction hinges on precisely the impossibility of naked words that would bring to presence the experience of their speaker. And while Derrida does not ultimately admit this possibility, the desire for un-supplemented directness behind these opening remarks grows throughout the essay.⁶

It is not only Derrida’s words that are naked. He offers up a single, distinct image which comes to pervade the discussion: the naked, aging philosopher apprehended in his bathroom by his cat. It is this ‘zoo-auto-bio-biblio-graph[ical]’ (Derrida 2002: 402; Derrida 1999b: 285) encounter which provokes (he assures us) the question of ‘who I am (following) [*qui je suis*] at the moment when [I am], caught naked, in silence, by the gaze of an animal’ (372; 253). For unlike the philosophers who ‘have never been seen seen by an animal that addressed them’ (382; 264), it is in being regarded by his cat that Derrida is provoked to think through the alterity and multiplicity of *animot*.

Communicating the autobiographical basis of his encounter brings about great apprehension: ‘I must make it clear from the start, the cat I am talking about is a real cat [*un chat réel*], truly, believe me, *a little cat*’ (Derrida 2002: 374; Derrida 1999b: 255, emphasis in original). Though it is not that Derrida has suddenly become convinced that, were he only to speak ‘from the heart’ (369; 251), this naked purity of speech might give us direct access to the scene to which he refers; the very fervour of his attempts at indication demonstrate its impossibility. And in large part, his discourse is as apophatic as ever. Seeking to avoid the twin dangers of anthropo- and mechanomorphism, he spends many pages excluding what he does not mean when he mentions his little cat. He meanders his way through a series of negations of animal tropes, denying in

turn different literary and philosophical fabulations of the animal – Kafka, Montaigne, Carroll, and many others – against which he distinguishes his own, real cat: ‘It isn’t the *figure* of a cat’ (374; 255, emphasis in original).

But for all the negativity of his discourse, it is vitally important to Derrida that he establish the ‘reality’ of his scene, in which he is ‘seen seen’ by his cat. And so when later he lists many examples of how animals have figured in his previous work, it is only to efface them before *this* cat, the first ‘real’ animal, ‘[t]he cat that looks at me naked and that is *truly a little cat*, *this* cat I am talking about’ (374–375; 255); again: ‘the one *I am talking about here*’ (376; 257, all emphases in original). Finally: ‘No, no, my cat, the cat that looks at me in my bedroom or in the bathroom’ (378; 260). Steve Baker comments parenthetically on Derrida’s compulsion: ‘After over thirty years of his making sophisticated deconstructive moves in his writing, it is both instructive and extremely funny to observe Derrida’s desperation to assure his readers that there really is nothing like irony, double-bluff or hidden significance behind his references to this “real” cat, “his” cat’ (Baker 2000: 185–186).

If this seems a *via negativa* with the ultimate goal of basking in animal presence, Derrida seeks explicitly to reject this interpretation when he refers to ‘the cat that looks at me, and to which I seem—but don’t count on it—to be dedicating a negative zootheology’ (Derrida 2002: 374; Derrida 1999b: 255; see also Derrida 1989b). But nor does he name (without naming) the denuded spacing of *khōra*, for his language, however apophatic, does seek to situate ‘a *determined* existent, distinct from another ... [through] acts which aim at it ... via acts of language, designations or sign postings. All of these acts appeal to generalities, to an *order* of multiplicities: genus, species, individual, type, schema, etc’ (Derrida 1995b: 96, emphasis in original). Of course, Derrida identifies this determined locus of bodies and gazes in order to bring into view the true endpoint of his negative path, the irreducible alterity of this specific other who calls him to responsibility: ‘If I say “it is a real cat” that sees me naked, it is in order to mark its unsubstitutable singularity. When it responds in its name ... it doesn’t do so as the exemplar of a species called cat, even less so of an animal genus or realm ... I see it as *this* irreplaceable living being’ (Derrida 2002: 378–379; Derrida 1999b: 260, emphasis in original). But in order to do so, his intertwined negations and designations follow a path not *beyond* but *into* (his experience of) the artifactual reality of human-animal relations in everyday life, one attained only via the unfamiliarly urgent pleas that we accept his naked words when they refer to a real, singular little cat. This is far from the habitual mode of deconstruction.

It seems that such gestures are necessitated by the prevailing context of carnophallogocentrism, in which the ethical relevance and singularity of the human is a deep-seated assumption – and likewise the ethical insignificance and invisibility of the nonhuman. If it was under the gaze of his cat that his responsibility to animals was impelled, affecting an audience not yet so convinced – bearing in mind, on a social frame, our differentiated and often marginalised contact with animals – requires textually prompting them to take seriously such experiences which occur outside of this particular (con)text or occasion of speech.

It is not until the last page of his essay that Derrida questions the conceit he has allowed himself from the beginning, sounding a familiar note of skepticism regarding the possibility of naked words: ‘Nudity perhaps remains untenable’ (Derrida 2002: 418; Derrida 1999b: 301). But until then, before that time, he maintains his chimerical discourse, in which his naked words are hoped to refer to his real cat; an address made stranger by its closeness to the garden of Eden.

REGENESIS

Derrida turns to Genesis in his interrogation of what Wills calls ‘the mythological and philosophical “prehistory” of conceptualizations of the animal’ (Derrida 2002: 372) and the human that follows. In doing so, he enters (wittingly or not) into a prolific recent debate over the ecological and zoological impacts of this text. This discourse has its own mythic origin in the reading by White (1967) of the despotic role given to man by God. Numerous others have emphasised, on the contrary, humanity’s divine commission to stewardship, or even an attitude of equal citizenship of the earth (Callicott 1999). Developments in the field of ecocriticism have furthered such anti-anthropocentric readings of Genesis (Newsom 2000; Brett 2000a), while (without being ecocritical as such) other interpretations also meditate on the theological place of the human vis-à-vis the animal (see Magonet (1992) and Sawyer (1992), and the interconnected commentaries of LaCocque (1998) and Ricoeur (1998)).⁷

Most seem to agree that the early chapters Genesis comprise a universalistic etiology which describes the origins of humanity, situating man between God and the animals (see, for example, Gunkel 1997: xiii). Man’s uniqueness spans the regular criteria: self-consciousness, mortality, language and so on. Derrida likewise identifies a story of the origin of the human subject as the ‘animal lacking in itself’ (Derrida 2002: 372; Derrida 1999b: 253). Building on the sacrificial structure described in “Eating Well”, he outlines ‘a certain “state” wherein ‘what is proper to man, his superiority over and subjugation of the animal, his very becoming-subject ... would derive from this originary fault’ (Derrida 2002: 413; Derrida 1999b: 295; see also Derrida 2002: 389, 412) at the occurrence of which animals are conspicuously present. The fall of original sin is the fundamental lack which is unique to humanity and which animals as a whole lack; man’s knowledge of his nakedness is opposed to ‘the cruel innocence ... of a living creature ... living anterior to the difference between good and evil’ (Derrida 2003: 132; see also Derrida 1976: 188; Derrida 1989a: 102–104; Derrida 2002: 373; Derrida 1999b: 254).⁸ And he finds that this Hebraic schema is also articulated in the Greek myths of Prometheus and Bellerophon, and is proper to the metaphysical humanism of philosophy.

It is precisely this myth of fundamental difference that Derrida evokes in so insistently foregrounding his nakedness and shame under the gaze of his cat, a shame at being naked that is said to be ‘proper to man’ and ‘foreign to animals’ (Derrida 2002: 373; Derrida 1999b: 254).⁹ But although Derrida might seem to participate in this humanism, it is clear that he in fact seeks ultimately to refigure it. His translator David Wills captures something of this when he notes that ‘Derrida implies a recasting of the Genesis myth whereby it is an animal that brings man to consciousness of his nakedness and of good and evil rather than being the cause (via woman) of his fall’ (Derrida 2002: 372 n. 3). Derrida certainly seeks to centralise the position of the animal vis-à-vis the human subject: rather than hiding from *God* like Adam and Eve (even if it is only a trace of his presence (the rustle of his footsteps) to which they respond (Gen 3:8)) it is his *cat*’s gaze that provokes his shame. But this is only one part of Derrida’s shift, for this shame might only confirm his humanity, proving his difference from the naked-without-knowing-it animal – thus his surprise at his shame (390; 271). Derrida accentuates this intersection of gazes in order to highlight that man’s ‘consciousness of his nakedness and of good and evil’ is in fact integral to the humanism of the fall that is the central target of his critique. His recasting of Genesis turns not on his early evocation of his shame in the face of a cat, but rather on his later account of a

wholly more unsettling experience of an animal gaze (see also Baker 2000: 184–186; Wolfe 2003: 216–217 n. 26; Wood 2004: 139).

If to begin with Derrida's cat seems to be playing something of the part of the serpent from Genesis – though doing its best to make the character its own – it later sheds this skin to take on a much more contradictory role. There is, certainly, much of consequence in the interplay of Adam and Eve with the serpent for any reconsideration of the position of animality in relation to the fallen humanity of the Abrahamic traditions. For example, Paul Ricoeur (like others such as Harold Bloom (Rosenberg and Bloom 1990: 175–187)), following the widespread reading of a 'fall upwards', plays down the interpretation of the fall as 'curse' and finds it to be a much more ambiguous event in which humanity gains responsibility and self-knowledge of finitude. Writing of the 'insinuations of the serpent' and 'the hermeneutics of suspicion that it began' (Ricoeur 1998: 45), he argues that '[t]his partial remythologization of the serpent as the other of the human calls into question the boundary between humanity and animality established in the episode of the naming of the animals. A fabulous character, an animal who talks, was required as a basis for the narrative of a human—all too human—drama.' (42 n. 20) But though he too is interested in 'call[ing] into question the boundary between humanity and animality', Derrida's pathway is the exact reverse. The speaking serpent, a central figure of 'the cunning [*malin*] genius of the animal' (Derrida 2002: 414; Derrida 1999b: 297), seems for Derrida, I suspect, to be too anthropomorphised, too much a 'fabulous character' in precisely 'too human' a drama to unsettle the human/animal border, as here it in fact represents (as for LaCocque (1998: 13)) all of 'animality' against which man can define his uniqueness.¹⁰ In order to contest such fabulation, Derrida emphasises the real gaze of his cat in its specificity and difference. Though he does allude to a later section of his address in which he discusses the serpent (Derrida 2002: 385; Derrida 1999b: 267) (whose publication we await with interest), for Derrida it is the naming scene that has the potential to undermine the boundary later established in the encounter with the serpent and – as Derrida continues to read it – the subsequent 'fall'.

Thus Derrida delves into the text of Genesis 2, the Yahwist's tale of the garden. He distinguishes the events of this (second) creation narrative from those of the first and, after discussing the Priestly account, concentrates his attention on the curious moment of Adam's naming of the animals. This scene follows humanity's placement in the Garden, and is followed by the creation of the woman, and then the temptation by the serpent. Its immediate context is the need for a helper ('ezer) suitable for the human (*ha'adam*).

So out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for the man there was not found a helper fit for him. (Gen 2:19-20)

Though Derrida finds that this scene in large part confirms the sacrifice of the animals to God by man elaborated throughout Genesis, he is initially fascinated by two elements of the passage with the potential to disrupt that carnophallogocentric schema. The first is that in this account Adam names the animals before the creation of Eve, and before the fall; before, that is, consciousness of good and evil provoked in the humans awareness of their nakedness. In the Yahwist tale

of Eden, Adam names the animals, is before them naked, *without shame*. The second is that the naming ritual is both ‘free *and* overseen, under surveillance, under the gaze of Jehovah who does not for all that intervene’ (Derrida 2002: 385; Derrida 1999b: 267, emphasis in original). Derrida emphasises that God brought the animals to Adam *in order to observe* what Adam would call them, to *find out* what would happen between the man and the animals: the supposedly all-knowing creator God is captivated by the unknown possibilities of that scene of interaction.

Then, despite his recognition that God wants to watch ‘the *power* of man in action’ (Derrida 2002: 386; Derrida 1999b: 267, emphasis added), Derrida links his own bathroom scene to that of Genesis 2:

God’s exposure to surprise, to the event of what is going to occur between man and animal, this time before time has always made me dizzy ... I often wonder whether this vertigo before the abyss of such an “in order to see” deep in the eyes of God is not the same as that which takes hold of me when I feel so naked in front of a cat, facing it, and when, meeting its gaze I hear the cat or God ask itself, ask me: is he going to call me, is he going to address me? ... For so long now it is as if the cat had been recalling itself and recalling that, recalling me and reminding me of this awful tale of Genesis, without breathing a word (387; 268).

Having been asked, first of all, to imagine Derrida regarded by his real pet cat and ashamed of his nudity, as if having eaten of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, we are now invited to consider this scene as closer to Adam’s unashamed nakedness as he names the animals under the expectant eye of God.

Within the ambit of deconstructive thought, it is customary to oppose the speech, presence and purity of (Adam’s prelapsarian state in) the garden to the writing, absence and fallenness of (humanity banished to) the desert.¹¹ ‘The sign is always a sign of the Fall’ (Derrida 1976: 283); but if, for Derrida, we cannot access the full presence of origin, it is no more acceptable simply to situate oneself (or the human subject) within the framework of a privileged ‘fall’; it is through the elucidation of a *generalised* ‘fall’ which has always already occurred that Derrida typically deconstructs the metaphysical desire to (re)attain an unfallen purity of signification (Hart 2000: 3–21). Thus he again (Derrida 1985: 175) declines to discuss Benjamin’s (1997) meditation on the language of naming, here because it is oriented within the time of salvation history, from the perspective of a human subject requiring redemption, and thus assumes a fundamental lack in humanity, opposed to a ‘wounded’ animality with its own (inferior) lack (Derrida 2002: 388–389). Although he normally erases the prelapsarian state, Derrida is clear that as an alternative, even if only temporary, chimerical and somewhat paradisaic, he here wishes to speak ‘[f]rom the vantage of that time [*Depuis le temps*] when the animals were named, *before original sin*’ (Derrida 2002: 387, see also 390; Derrida 1999b: 269, emphasis in original).¹²

It is not that he does not recognise the hierarchy implied by the text even at this unfallen moment. For Derrida, Gen 2:19-20 precisely establishes the classical Judeo-Christian pecking order: God, who watches; Man, who names; the Animals, who are named. He in fact situates the naming scene in a series with the command to subdue the earth in 1:26-28 and Yahweh’s favouring of Abel’s animal sacrifice in 4:1-16. Thus although this animal encounter occurs pre-

fall, and thus before the curses establish enmity between species (3:14-19), and before also the post-deluge concession to carnivory and the literal dietary sacrifice of the animal (9:1-17), it nonetheless exhibits a certain carnocentric dimension: naming, simplistically understood, 'would be a means of sacrificing the living to God' (Derrida 2002: 410, see also 386; Derrida 1999b: 293) – a means, indeed, of 'eating', if not 'eating well' (Derrida 1991; see also Wood 1999).¹³ But given that for Derrida this schema of domination is tied so strongly to the metaphysics of the fall, the vantage of this 'time frame' before the fall allows him the opportunity to subvert the sacrificial logic of the text from within.

If 'the finitude of a God who doesn't know what he wants with respect to the animal' (Derrida 2002: 386; Derrida 1999b: 268) enables Derrida to rethink the production of the human subject through the sacrifice of the animal, then the gaze of his cat demands that he do so. Together, they allow recognition of the irreducible alterity of the animal other. Derrida thus reconfigures this naming scene as a countersite to the besieging 'imperturbable logic' (390; 271) of species humanism. His appropriation of Genesis offers another way of situating ourselves in relation to the text and (more so) to animals. This encounter is not, he seems to suggest, simply an event that has already occurred, once and for all, in a time before time; rather it is an event that is always to come, that we are obliged to revisit, again and again, in order to see what we can make of it, in order to ask, What is going on between the humans and the animals? Derrida simultaneously connects with and dislocates the scene, repeats and repeals it, seeking a new beginning, a new Genesis, a non-anthropocentric scene of naming, with a view to a non-sacrificial engagement with the question of animality. Here, self-consciousness would not be self-centredness but consciousness of the other. The 'knowledge of good and evil' gained under the gaze of the nonhuman other would not demarcate our fundamental difference and superiority but awaken us to pity for and responsibility towards *animot*.¹⁴

THE CAT OR GOD

It is important that when Derrida links this scene with his own bathroom encounter, it is *God's gaze* through which the connection and shift is made: 'meeting its gaze I hear *the cat or God* ask itself, ask *me*: is he going to call me, is he going to address me?' (Derrida 2002: 387; Derrida 1999b: 268, first emphasis added) The divine gaze from Genesis becomes the animal's gaze in his bathroom scene, in which the man is faced by an animal capable (unlike those of Eden) of responding in its name. Much turns on that phrase, 'the cat or God', that disjunction that is also a connection, a substitution: it is the fulcrum by which the humanism of the Genesis scene is dislocated. It is, it seems, a step simultaneously necessary, powerful and dangerous.

We can understand something of Derrida's strategy from his proximate reference to a certain instability internal to humanism itself. Midway through his essay on Lacan's unresponsive animals, Derrida pauses to hypothesise that a certain 'ahuman' or 'theo-zoomorphic' location – 'an instance of the animal, of the animal-*other* ... in short of the ahuman combining god and animal' (Derrida 2003: 133) – serves as the excluded ground of the discourses of both Lacan and Levinas on ethics and fraternity: 'the figure of some – in a word – *divinanimality*, even if it were to be felt through the human, would be the quasi-transcendental referent, the excluded, foreclosed, disavowed, tamed, and sacrificed foundation of what it founds, namely, the symbolic order, the human order, law, and justice' (134).¹⁵ If, likewise, the Judaeo-Christian mythology of Genesis performs the

gesture of animal taming and sacrifice in order to found the divinely ordained realm of the human, then an illicit pact between the excluded figures of God and animal threatens the stability of this whole order. By aligning the animal gaze with that of God, Derrida effects a short-circuit of the enclosed space of sacrificial humanism.

Derrida's ultimate and impossible aspiration is, as elsewhere, much more radical: a truly unconditional hospitality that 'say[s] yes to *who or what turns up*, before any determination, before any anticipation, before any *identification* ... whether or not the new arrival is ... a human, animal, or divine creature, a living or dead thing, male or female' (Derrida and Dufourmantelle 2000: 77, emphasis in original). The name of God can express this denuded alterity, stripped of predicates, the unsubstitutable singularity of any other (see, for example, Critchley 1999: 113–114). With his disjunction of '*le chat ou Dieu*' (Derrida 1999b: 268), Derrida seeks to extend this trace of God to a cat or any other, irrespective of species.¹⁶

But as Derrida well knows, the step from this initial 'theo-zoomorphic' short-circuit towards the irreducible alterity of every other is not that simple. If God and Animal are both excluded from the Human, they are still situated at opposite ends of a hierarchy, whose anthropocentric order God in fact grounds. If the name of God grants the singularity and alterity of the other, it also delimits his humanity: for He gives His image to man to the exclusion of the animals. The *imago Dei* (or *tselem elohim*) is directly connected to the domination of the animals and nature in Genesis 1:26–28 and 9:1–17, and in Psalm 8,¹⁷ as well as throughout philosophy, up to and including Levinas, for whom the other is always man: 'it is the analogy between the face and God's visage that, in the most classical fashion, distinguishes man from animal' (Derrida 1978: 142). Given that the image of God traditionally bestows (and thus demands as criteria of ethical relevance) the self-presence of reason and speech, and so on, the risk is that in extending it to his cat this anthropotheocentrism be repeated, reinstating (among the animals) a humanistic limit to the sphere of ethical concern.

Thus maintaining the use of this *imago Dei* requires its deconstruction. Only a thoroughly de-anthropomorphised trace of God – indeed a radically theriomorphised one – could figure the otherness of every other, particularly of *animot*. Such a trace of God, unburdened of human predicates, would comprise not the 'knowledge of good and evil' that results in the enmity between men and animals but only the irreducible singularity of another point of view. But given that it is defined by reference to the human, the initial 'theo-zoomorphic' site remains close to a traditional exclusion of animals which takes them to share the ahumanity of a deathless divinity.¹⁸ Derrida recognises this risk that, if one over-interprets the cat (for example, in projecting on to it a speaking voice), 'the anthropo-theomorphic reappropriation would already have begun' (Derrida 2002: 387; Derrida 1999b: 269). Thus he employs his stringent zoo-apophatics, denying various anthropomorphisms that would demand of the animal a human form of reason and language.¹⁹ But, enabled by his longstanding deconstruction of the Other whose absolute alterity would safeguard the human by situating ethics beyond epistemological concerns (see Beardsworth 1996; Wolfe 2003: 62–78), he combines this discourse of negativity with an empiricism of the animal other through which he stridently affirms the animal's reality, life, point of view, responsive gaze, 'ability to' suffer and so on.

Thus Derrida's reconfigured Genesis scene demonstrates a human-animal encounter framed otherwise than according to the carnophallogocentric determinations of a God who has 'created

man in his likeness so *that* man will *subject* ... the animals' (Derrida 2002: 386; Derrida 1999b: 267, emphases in original). While originally God wanted to see man's power and authority as he named without being seen, Derrida rather shows his passivity and nudity – indeed his vertigo – as he is regarded by the animal who now both responds and questions. The gaze of God is not an omniscient viewpoint whose objective third-person perspective would arrest the human/animal encounter but, as Derrida recognises (pursuing an important theme in his work) a finite God subject to time. It is this less-other-otherness that allows God to figure any other other without humanistic exclusion, as God's finitude and passivity are translated into all of those made in his likeness, human and animal; every other, therefore, is as other as God (see Derrida 1995a: 87).

This shift has profound philosophical consequences. While for example (and to move far too quickly) Heidegger excluded animals from *Mitsein* (Derrida 1989a: 57), Derrida proposes that '[b]eing *after*, being *alongside*, being *near* [*près*] would appear as different modes of being, indeed of *being-with*. With the animal' (Derrida 2002: 379; Derrida 1999b: 261, emphases in original).²⁰ While Levinas excluded animals from the vis-à-vis (Levinas 1988; Levinas 1990; Llewelyn 1991; Clark 1997; Atterton 2004), Derrida insists he is face-to-face with his cat who 'has its point of view regarding me. The point of view of the absolute other, and nothing will have ever done more to make me think through this absolute alterity of the neighbor than these moments when I see myself seen naked under the gaze of a cat' (Derrida 2002: 380; Derrida 1999b: 261).²¹

Thus despite his insistence that his cat 'does not appear here as representative, or ambassador, carrying the immense symbolic responsibility with which our culture has always charged the feline race' (Derrida 2002: 378; Derrida 1999b: 260), he cannot avoid speaking of the 'original experience of ... the insistent gaze of the animal' (372; 253–254). And when he later lambasts philosophers as such for their disavowal of the nonhuman, it is through a generalised version of his encounter: they 'have never been *seen seen* by *the animal*' (382/264, second emphasis added). If he does momentarily drop his guard against this homogenising term, it is only in inching towards a logic radically at odds with its violence, an excessive responsibility whose substitutive character is evident when, in the course of another disclaimer, he writes: 'I will do all I can to prevent its being presented as a primal scene: this deranged theatrics of the *wholly other that they call animal, for example, a cat*' (380; 262, emphasis in original). His cat is an example of what is not 'the Animal' but is nonetheless '[w]holly other, like the (every) other that is (every bit) other [*tout autre qui est tout autre*]' (381; 262; see also Derrida 1995a; Derrida 1995b and elsewhere). This 'hetero-tautological' formula (Derrida 1995a: 83) broaches a logic that, as he describes elsewhere, 'permits and forbids at once what could be called exemplarism. Each thing, each being, you, me, the other, each X, each name, and each name of God can become the example of other substitutable X's. A process of absolute formalization. Any other is totally other. [*Tout autre est tout autre.*]' (Derrida 1995b: 76). For example, his cat, who precisely because she is an 'unsubstitutable singularity' (Derrida 2002: 378, see also 417–418; Derrida 1999b: 260) also marks the site of *any other*, including those *animot* called 'animal'.

ECCE ANIMOT

Derrida's face-to-face with his cat is the lever with which his chimerical discourse destabilises the carnophallogocentric regime: from the effacement of different animals under 'Animal', to recognising the point of view of another animal, to seeing and thinking the living multiplicity.

We cannot doubt that for Derrida these *animot* linger from the first behind the (godly) eyes of his singularly real cat (whether ultimately understood in terms of the ‘third’ or otherwise; see Derrida (2002: 379)); its gaze prompts in him ‘a fictitious tableau ... a taxonomy of the *point of view of animals*’ (Derrida 2002: 382; Derrida 1999b: 264). But outside of Derrida’s own, autobiographical pathway, how effectively does this intersection of gazes in fact provoke this shift? Has he in fact sufficiently stripped the *imago dei* with which he blesses his cat from anthropomorphic characteristics? Is it a sufficiently zoomorphic gaze in which we might ‘have the plural of animals heard in the singular’ (415; 298)?

The Yahwist narrative of Genesis from which Derrida requisitions the divine gaze for his cat in fact inadvertently provides extraordinary support for this position. For the naming does not occur, as Wills translates, ‘under the gaze of Jehovah’ (Derrida 2002: 385), but ‘sous le regard de Iahvé Elohim’ (Derrida 1999b: 267).²² This curious gaze, whose owner orchestrates the man-*animot* encounter ‘in order to see [pour voir]’ (Derrida 2002: 386, 410; Derrida 1999b: 267, 293, emphasis in original), already combines the singular ‘He’ (*YHWH*) and plural ‘we’ (*elohim*) in the remarkable Yahweh-Elohim (‘Lord God’).²³ There is perhaps no better figure than this rare combination to indicate the singular-plural trace of infinity in the gaze of the other.²⁴

Nonetheless, there is some evidence that Derrida’s emphasis on being regarded face-to-face by the gaze of a domesticated cat represents only a partial challenge to the anthropo-theocentric nature of the *imago Dei*, and threatens to once again exclude the ‘irreducible living multiplicity of mortals’ (Derrida 2002: 409; Derrida 1999b: 292). For in the course of his essay, Derrida does give particular emphasis to the efficacy of the animal gaze. What begins as his ‘*animalséance*’ (372; 253) of shame at his nudity later becomes an apocalypse of the subject (381) before emerging in the ‘vertigo before the abyss’ of ‘the cat or God’ (387; 268). His cat bears the task of interrupting the closed circuit of humanism by impressing on him its absolutely other point of view; it is thereby an other of whom something is required.

What is required is that it regard the human: ‘it can look at me. It has its point of view regarding *me*’ (Derrida 2002: 380; Derrida 1999b: 261, emphasis added).²⁵ Had they only looked, the philosophers too would have found that ‘an animal could, facing them, look at them, clothed or naked, and in a word, *without a word, address them*’ (382; 264, first emphasis added). Indeed, one can be addressed and obliged ‘from the basis of a life called animal, *and not only by means of the gaze*’ (383; 265, emphasis added). This is an extremely de-anthropomorphised trace of God; the address requires neither language (‘without a word’) nor even necessarily (though Derrida does on the whole privilege it) a gaze. But the becoming-animal of God is still incomplete; what it does require is, it seems, a certain human-directedness: not just the capacity to respond, but to respond to the human, to exhibit itself in an exchange of glances.

But perhaps only a cat (or other exceptional animal) can offer the abyss of its ‘insistent gaze’ (Derrida 2002: 372; Derrida 1999b: 254) to us so dependably. Certainly the domesticity of the scene and the animal in question enables the human-directedness of the gaze and threatens to limit its opening toward *animot*. We have seen that Derrida is concerned with the risk that ‘the anthropo-theomorphic reappropriation would already have begun ... that domestication has already come into effect’ (387; 269). And he does successfully avoid the domestication that would consist in projecting a humanised ‘voice’ onto the little cat who, before being ‘his’, is an unsubstitutably singular other, countering thereby the prevailing tendency of philosophers to disparage

pets (Baker 2000: 166–190). But he can not avoid the domestication that had already come into effect long before they ever crossed glances, the whole genetic and cultural history of human-feline relations that furnishes the conditions of their encounter, that is, that gives this species of animal the behavioural capacity to enter his bathroom and, wielding a singularly godlike gaze, to demand its breakfast. This is a modality of looking not widely practiced by other animals – ‘wild’ or otherwise – who would bite or flee as soon as look at you.

It is also a rare and privileged modality of being-with the human. In the case of the animal/cat who ‘one day enters my space, enters this place where it can encounter me’ (Derrida 2002: 379; Derrida 1999b: 260), the comings and goings have already been determined. If we ask with Derrida ‘what happens to the fraternity of brothers when an animal enters the scene’ (381; 262), the answer, in the case of a cat, would be ‘very little’: such an already humanised animal does little to disturb the anthropocentric determination of the ethical sphere, does little on behalf of the other animals with whom it has little in common. Indeed this is an animal to whom he is already legally and morally obliged, who participates with him in the carnophallogocentric sacrifice of other animals who are systematically excluded from the chance to respond to the human.²⁶ In repeating this sacrificial schema, pet-keeping immunises itself against the potentially subversive effects of human-animal contact. As many have argued, pets come easily to delimit our responsibility to other animals, to purify the human realm at the expense of the excluded *animot*.²⁷ But surely an unconditional hospitality would have us not only ‘say yes to *who or what turns up*, before any determination’ (Derrida and Dufourmantelle 2000: 77, emphasis in original), but also say yes to who or what does not turn up, is not able to or is prevented from turning up – to those animals not possessed of a godly gaze, not trained to so powerfully regard the human, and also to that enormous majority of *animot* denied bathroom privileges but who are, as Derrida would insist, as wholly other as his cat?

Inspired by his cat, Derrida does move beyond this ultimately human-concerned gaze to a broader concern with the mortality of the living, the powerlessness and suffering shared by creatures of the ground, human and animal, in their nakedness (see Magonet 1992: 42–44). He seeks to question the ‘nonpower at the heart of power’ that is provoked by Bentham’s famous question: “‘Can they suffer?’ amounts to asking “can they *not be able*?”” (Derrida 2002: 396; Derrida 1999b: 278, emphasis in original). Other questions follow: Can they not be able to regard us? Can they not be able to respond to us? As Llewelyn (1991: 273) puts it, ‘my advocacy may be one of its [the other’s] primary needs’.

In fact it is this very passivity which inhibits our recognition of other animals and necessitates Derrida’s dangerous emphasis on his cat’s powerful gaze, precisely so that it might attest to those who do or can not turn up. Rupturing the human sphere perhaps requires nothing less than a *real* cat with the gaze of God to come into his home and demand it. But we do not allow this of *animot*, and thus can not require it. This animal encounter must be an episode for thought, a step in the deconstruction of humanism and towards thinking the absolute alterity of every other *animot*.²⁸ Its task is to short circuit the ‘human order’ in a first step (not) beyond the ends of man. Our task is to ensure that this provocative gaze does not itself obstruct the movement toward *animot*; having been regarded by the animal, we must efface even the necessity of this attention in favour of those animals who remain outside. Just as we should erase the voice, we should erase the gaze, in order to think to call to responsibility beyond not only language but also beyond

the ability of any creature to in fact impinge itself, through its own power, upon our often mis-directed attention. While we might be provoked to thought by an animal who ‘has its point of view regarding me’ (Derrida 2002: 380; Derrida 1999b: 261), what this must provoke us *to* is to behold the tableau of *animot* points of view *regarding the world*.²⁹

A SCENE OF NAMING

While other commentators have found many elements to support an earth-centered reading of the Genesis text itself – such as the common origin of the human and the animals in the ground (Newsom 2000: 65–66; Brett 2000a: 82), or the ‘creaturely proximity of man and beast to each other’ (von Rad 1972: 83; see also Callicott 1999: 205) in the search for a partner – Derrida forgoes these possibilities in choosing to disturb the scene with his own intervention.³⁰ For all his avoidance of the fabulous serpent, Derrida still insists on an animal capable of provoking the human to a certain knowledge, unlike those less crafty animals named by Adam of whose response to the human nothing is said. It is not enough that in order to break through the institutional boundaries to interspecific compassion, Derrida resorts to naked pleas from within the garden; in order to break through the silence of the animals in Eden, he requisitions the penetration of God’s gaze to figure an animal that might respond in its name, his domesticated and (thus) unusually forthright cat. Derrida requires God’s gaze because, like that of his cat, it regards the human expectantly – which makes it, though finite and singular-plural, still anthropocentric. In fact domestication already occurs in the naming scene when, after God creates ‘every beast of the field and every bird of the air’ (2:19), Adam introduces the further category of ‘cattle’ (2:20) (see Magonet 1992: 40–41), inaugurating a restricted domain of human-animal relationships. Still, none of these animals (birds, beasts or cattle) were found to be suitable partners for the human – which perhaps retains for them the freedom of a right not to respond. We might, however, say that beyond even the ‘cattle’ (translated elsewhere as ‘livestock’ and ‘domesticated animals’) the cat has in many ways in fact been found to be an ‘*ezer*. It bears a very humanised likeness of God.

Brett argues that Genesis is subversively anti-monarchic in having all of humanity (rather than only kings) made in the likeness of God: ‘the first creation story deconstructs a royal “image of *Elohim*” by democratizing it’ (Brett 2000a: 84, emphasis in original). Derrida, then, repeats this in his anti-anthropocentric extension of the trace of God beyond the human to the animal; with him, we must ensure that this includes not only the ‘kingly’ animals (such as cats), the ‘*ezer*, not only the ‘cattle’, ‘beasts’ or ‘birds’ but ‘every living creature’, a democracy-to-come of the silent and excluded *animot*, all made *be-tselem* (*YHWH*) *elohim*. I want to suggest that beyond Derrida’s focus on the human-directed gaze, this radical potential already inhabits this Genesis scene that he approaches with the question of naming in mind.

Derrida frames his discussion of Genesis with the questions: ‘Why rename that appellation? Why say “the wholly other they *call* ‘animal,’ for example ‘cat?’” In order to recall a scene of name-calling ... and at least a type of new beginning’ (Derrida 2002: 383; Derrida 1999b: 265, emphasis in original). Throughout Western history, this scene has been a focal image of human-animal relations. Its juxtaposition of the named animals and the naming man is generally taken to convey the uniqueness of humanity. According to the traditional reading, the act of naming is an act of subordination, signalling human privilege: ‘Man named all the animals, thus estab-

lishing his dominance over them' (White 1967: 1205).³¹ A number of readings have since questioned this claim, arguing that naming, for the Yahwist, was not necessarily an act of power: 'When *ha'adam* names the animals, it is more appropriate to understand this as an act of his *discerning* something about these creatures—an essence which had already been established by God' (Ramsey 1988: 34–35).³² But as part of his initial reading of the consonance of Genesis with sacrificial humanism, Derrida in fact affirms the classical assessment of Adam's naming of the animals, which he performs 'without allowing himself to be seen or named by them' (Derrida 2002: 386; Derrida 1999b: 268). This would be the quintessential primal scene of carnophallogocentrism: 'the *first* convention, which would relate *immediately* to the order of natural and universal signification [i.e. the animals arrayed before Adam], would be produced as spoken language' (Derrida 1976: 11, second emphasis added; see also 89, 109–110, 278–280). According to this myth of metaphysics, mankind first exercises his unique capacity for mimesis by incorporating the animals into his abstract linguistic and representational systems, thereby sacrificing life (see Lippit 2000). Man alone possesses language, and indeed the ability to give names (Derrida 2002: 385; see also Derrida 1981: 5), while the animals, mute and unresponsive, can only receive (388; 270; see also Derrida 1987a: 174–176; Derrida 1989a: 53).³³ As we have seen, the foremost example of this linguistic hubris is the word 'Animal' (see Fudge 2002: 161).

Against this effacement, Derrida deploys his negative-zootheology-that-is-not. We ought no longer to see *animot* only as a literary figure (which would be to project our speech) or a philosophical theorem (which would be to disavow their gaze) (Derrida 2002: 383). It is not this figure, not any figure, and certainly not 'the Animal', but (for example) a real cat who, rather than being named in silence, 'responds in its name' (Derrida 2002: 378; Derrida 1999b: 260). But we have seen that in relation to the domestication of his cat, precisely this emphasis on the *animals' response* to *our* naming might reintroduce a certain restriction: this sense of naming corresponds to that outlined by Vicki Hearne when, in her book *Adam's Task: Calling Animals by Name*, she describes how, through training and careful attention, certain animals are able to enter the human sphere of moral expectations and responsibilities in which they respond to their names (Hearne 1986: 46–49, 166–171, 228, 264–265).³⁴ But Derrida is attempting to go beyond such an exclusive and delimited sphere of responsibility or mode of being-with animals to a wholly other naming that includes all *animot*.

Along the way, the vicissitudes of the animal question do call for strategic acts of naming (see Wood 2004: 135). Derrida's negative critique of the word 'animal' and its profoundly arrogant enclosure of the life that swarms around us gives way to an *assertion* of species difference that relies (in at least a minimal sense) on biological taxonomy, and we encounter our own Derridean 'scene of naming'. We persist with 'this catch-all concept' of 'the Animal', he insists:

in spite of the infinite space that separates the lizard from the dog, the protozoon from the dolphin, the shark from the lamb, the parrot from the chimpanzee, the camel from the eagle, the squirrel from the tiger or the elephant from the cat, the ant from the silkworm or the hedgehog from the echidna. I interrupt my nomenclature and call Noah to help insure that no one gets left on the ark (Derrida 2002: 402; Derrida 1999b: 284).

The ark, that is, of the concept and term ‘Animal’. The ark is of course a repetition of Eden, Noah (the favoured figure of modern-day friends of the animals) a new Adam. But rather than the biblical and postmodern Noah who gathers the animals amid the (environmental) apocalypse, Derrida’s Noah flings open the doors to the Ark that Yahweh shut with his own hand and offers in opposition to these gatherings his own quasi-Adamic naming of the animals that we are encouraged to view not as taming or domination but rather the deconstructive attention to multiple limits and differences.³⁵ While this act of naming might refer ‘via acts of language ... to an *order* of multiplicities: genus, species’ (Derrida 1995b: 96, emphasis in original), and thus itself be open to erasure, beyond the (species) name, in order to render us responsible to each singular animal – nonetheless as a pragmatic intervention against the enclosure of that asinine word, it provokes awareness of the plurality of animals.

We are invited to consider Derrida, alone among philosophers, as a new Adam, an anti-Adam, in this philosophical event of openness to the alterity and multiplicity of *animots*. Derridadam, for whom this attention to the living multiplicity is provoked by being ‘seen seen’ by an animal – his real ‘little cat’ – under whose gaze ‘a fictitious tableau is played out in my imagination, a sort of classification after Linnaeus, a taxonomy of the *point of view of animals*’ (382; 264, emphasis in original). Interestingly, Derrida does not name his cat, but, in denying with his appeals to its reality all of the appropriations that necessarily accompany its appearance in his essay, he seeks to retain only the untranslatable pro-noun that marks its individuality: ‘It is a matter ... of rendering oneself to the truth of the name, to the thing itself such as it must be named by the name, *that is, beyond the name*. The thing, save the name’ (Derrida 1995b: 68, emphasis in original; see also 58, 89; see also Derrida 1995a: 67). What ultimately guides these (un)namings is the ‘paradisaic bestiary’ (Derrida 2002: 405; Derrida 1999b: 287) that haunts Derrida’s philosophy, the vision of an unfallen language more paradisaic even than the Priestly creation account, which naturalised from the first (1:24-25) the cultural distinction between wild animals and livestock that Adam introduces in 2:20. In seeking, chimerically and impossibly, naked words in Eden, he evokes a spectral naming to haunt our relationships with animals: a truly Adamic naming in which man would not differentiate himself (through his shame) from ‘the Animal’ as such,³⁶ but rather be (unashamedly) in relation to *all of the animot* in their multiplicity, according to their differences: as species, but also as unsubstitutable singularities with their own point(s) of view, every singular existent called by his/her/its proper name.³⁷ Through this prophetic and profoundly anti-anthropocentric vision, we might approach an unconditional hospitality open to the absolute exemplarity of the unsubstitutable other, in which *tout autre est tout autre*. Such a naming-to-come would erase the name in search of ‘the proper name in its pure possibility (it’s to you, yourself, that I say “come,” “enter,” “whoever you are and whatever your name, your language, your sex, your species may be, be you human, animal, or divine...”)’ (Derrida and Dufourmantelle 2000: 137–139).³⁸ It would be in this sense, mythic and nude, that we should inhabit Eden, where ‘whatever the man call[s] each living creature, that [is] its name’ (Gen 2:19).

ENDNOTES

- ¹ With only parts of that work yet available, the arguments in this paper can only be provisional.
- ² Derrida (2002). This essay is a translation of Derrida (1999b). (Citations often give page numbers of both.) It has been partially reprinted in Calarco and Atterton (2004: 113–128, 212–213), though the failure to include the biblical discussions in this excerpt dulls many of the intratextual themes.
- ³ In one list he gives ‘speech or reason, the *logos*, history, laughing, mourning, burial, the gift, and so on’ (Derrida 2002: 373, see also 395–396; Derrida 1999b: 254), to which he adds nudity. Thirty years earlier, he had first outlined this structure in Rousseau: ‘We thus see two series working themselves out: (1) animality, need, interest, gesture, sensibility, understanding, reason, etc. (2) humanity, passion, imagination, speech, liberty, perfectibility, etc. ... these two series always relate to each other according to the structure of supplementarity. All the names in the second series are metaphysical determinations ... of *supplementary difference*.’ He then added ‘the master-name of the supplementary series: death. Or rather, for death is nothing, the relationship to death, the anguished anticipation of death’ (Derrida 1976: 183, emphasis in original).
- ⁴ Thus Derrida deconstructed Heidegger’s notorious division of human world-formation (*Weltbildung*) from animal poverty-in-world (*Weltarmut*) (Derrida 1989a: 47–57), his differentiation of the human hand from the grasping organs of animals such as apes (Derrida 1987a) and his distinction of human dying from animal perishing (Derrida 1993: 35–38, 74–76; see also Derrida 1995a: 20; Calarco 2002).
- ⁵ For secondary scholarship on Derrida and animals, see Glendinning 1998; Hochman 1998; Wood 1999; Baker 2000; Lippit 2000; Briggs 2001; Calarco 2002; Fudge 2002; Wolfe 2003; Calarco 2004; Wood 2004.
- ⁶ The desire for ‘naked words’ does signify a more personal and autobiographical mode (as in Derrida 1999a: 1); and indeed, autobiography is a central theme in this essay. But although elsewhere he shows the impossibility of complete ‘self-expression’ assumed by traditional autobiography, he nonetheless seeks here to inhabit an (albeit non-confessional) autobiographical mode: nudity as passion and passivity, ‘the involuntary exhibition of the self.’ (Derrida 2002: 380; Derrida 1999b: 262)
- ⁷ An important concern of this debate is how to situate the text of Genesis in relation to its anthropocentric afterlives: ‘We continue today to live ... very largely in a context of Christian axioms’ (White 1967: 1205; see also Callicott 1999: 216).
- ⁸ Many have conveyed the humanism and logocentrism of the fall, without necessarily subjecting this logic to deconstructive critique. For example, LaCocque understands the fall to be one from full communication with the presence of God to a state of lack and signification: ‘now they *know* something they did not know—that they are naked, in the proper and the figurative sense. What they know is the surface of things, their *bare* materiality, not the inside of things or their meaning, not their reference. They are self-centred, incapable from now on of true communication’ (LaCocque 1998: 19, emphases in original). Callicott takes a somewhat Heideggerian line, agreeing with what he sees as the portrayal in Genesis that death ‘is clearly but subtly connected to self-consciousness’, while animals (like pre-humans) die organically but ‘do not and did not die phenomenologically speaking’ (Callicott 1999: 211). Others find a greater ambiguity in the Yahwist’s portrayal of the fall than Derrida seems to suggest: Newsom (following Callicott (1999: 208–209), who follows Muir) argues that ‘the story is about the origin of anthropocentrism itself’ (Newsom 2000: 62; see also LaCocque 1998: 20). Here original sin is read as a fall into hubris, which the narrator presents ‘not as a triumph but as a deeply ambiguous event’ (Newsom 2000: 63).
- ⁹ For von Rad, also, shame is tied to the fall and the uniqueness of humanity: it ‘always has to be seen as the signal of the loss of an inner unity, an unsurmountable contradiction at the basis of our existence’ (von Rad 1972: 85, see also 91; see also LaCocque 1998: 15–17; Newsom 2000: 67–69).

- 10 Concerned here with real animals, Derrida vigorously rejects fables: ‘We know the history of fabulation and how it remains an anthropomorphic taming, a moralizing subjection, a domestication. Always a discourse of man, on man, indeed on the animality of man, but for and as man’ (Derrida 2002: 405; Derrida 1999b: 287).
- 11 For example, Derrida deconstructed the metaphysical nostalgia in Rousseau’s narrative of the emergence of human language from the state of nature, in which animality plays a traditional foil (Derrida 1976: 165–268). See pages 247–255 in particular on Rousseau’s connection of the origin of language to the fall of man in Genesis. This metaphoricity is particularly strong in his essay on Jabès, where ‘Reb Rida’ writes that we ‘must entrust ourselves to traces ... because we have ceased hearing the voice from within the immediate proximity of the garden ... The *difference* between speech and writing is sin, the anger of God emerging from itself, lost immediacy, work outside the garden. [He quotes Jabès:] “*The garden is speech, the desert writing*” (Derrida 1978: 68, emphases in original). Likewise, numerous postmodern, feminist and postcolonial thinkers (often inspired by *Of Grammatology*) have critiqued the ideology of Eden.
- 12 On this ‘time before time’, see Derrida (2002: 370 n. 1).
- 13 Derrida’s reading of the text is somewhat curious here. Though he distinguishes the two creation accounts, speaking of a new beginning in Gen 2, he still understands them to occur sequentially, and reads the Yahwist narrative under a strong shadow from Gen 1 (in particular the earth’s subjection to man’s authority and command). For example, he does not take the Yahwist text to describe the creation of the animals a second time, speaking of the animals ‘that came into the world before him [man] but were named after him’ (Derrida 2002: 386; Derrida 1999b: 268). Here, in order to play on the ambiguity of ‘to follow’ and ‘to be’ – ‘to be after’ [*je suis*] – he seems to resort to a reading of 2:19 favoured by creationists (who read the verb *wayyitser* as pluperfect ‘had formed’ rather than plain past ‘formed’ in light of its repetition of the creation of the animals in 1:20–25).
- 14 Compare Callicott, who sees the knowledge of the fall as precisely anthropocentrism, and argues for a ‘new’ overcoming of fallenness through reconfiguring the nature of the self: ‘we can return to Eden at a higher level of consciousness’ (Callicott 1999: 213), recognising our ecological interrelatedness and identifying with all of life. (Callicott opposes this to what he misreads as the J narrative’s atavism (211–215), arguing that Gen 2–3 ‘urges a return to innocence, to immersion in nature’ (212).)
- 15 He continues: ‘That is one of the reasons why it is so difficult to utter a discourse of mastery or of transcendence with regard to the animal and to simultaneously claim to do it in the name of God ... Must not one recognize Father, Law, Animal, and so on, as being, in the final analysis, the same thing—or, rather, indissociable figures of the same Thing? (Derrida 2003: 134) Compare Dufourmantelle’s report that for Derrida ‘the essences of animal and god perhaps have some unknown correspondences’ (Derrida and Dufourmantelle 2000: 142).
- 16 On the notion of a universal community, beyond ‘anthropocentric’ determinations and approached through a *via negativa*, see Derrida (1995b: 80–81). For an extension of Levinasian proto-ethical responsibility to the nonhuman on the basis of the category of ‘need’, see Llewelyn (1991). For a consideration of deconstruction in relation to environmental ethics (and ‘universal consideration’), see Briggs (2001).
- 17 Sawyer shows that ‘a God who created men and women in his own image is a God capable of suffering as men and women suffer’ (Sawyer 1992: 70), but it is clear that this likeness is purchased at the expense of the animals. For many commentators, it is as a direct consequence of being made in God’s image that mankind rules over the earth: ‘man is placed upon earth in God’s image as God’s sovereign emblem ... summoned to maintain and enforce God’s claim to dominion over the earth’ (von Rad 1972: 60; see also White 1967: 1205; LaCocque 1998: 10; Callicott 1999: 202). For Brett, the text in fact undermines these tropes of dominance by juxtaposing them with alternatives (Brett 2000b: 43–44). Nonetheless, it is to God that animal sacrifices are made. Or is that to man? Derrida describes

how according to humanism ‘Man would be the only one to have invented a garment to cover his sex’ (Derrida 2002: 374; Derrida 1999b: 255). But though in 3:7 the humans do ‘invent’ clothing (fig leaf aprons), it is God who in fact clothes Adam and Eve ‘properly’, in animal skins, sacrificing the unknowingly naked animals in order to cover man’s nakedness (Gen 3:21).

18 The collocation of animal otherness with angelic or divine alterity has a long history in Western thought, and often does not undermine but supports the human regime. For Heidegger, animals do not have access to the world and death as such. Meditating on this, Krell asks whether they are ‘deathless because they are immortals or simply because they are animals? Are they gods or dogs? With such questions we are perhaps at the very nerve of Western ontotheology’ (Krell 1993: 100).

19 Derrida does suppose there to be another path than the ‘negative zootheology’ that he denies: ‘The other apophasis, the other voice, can remain readily foreign to all desire, in any case to every anthropo-theomorphic form of desire’ (Derrida 1995b: 37).

20 For Derrida, Heidegger’s existential analytic of *Dasein* still occupies somewhat the place of the fallen subject as it ‘retains certain essential traits’ including ‘responsibility [and] primordial imputability or guilt [*Schuldigsein*]’ (Derrida 1991: 98) but most importantly the ability to name, that is to access entities as such, that animals are denied (Derrida 1989a: 53).

21 Likewise, while both Heidegger and Levinas excluded animals from the awareness of death, for Derrida both humans and animals are subjected to a mortality they cannot access as such.

22 This usage contrasts with his commentary on Gen 4 (Cain and Abel) where he appropriately refers to (simply) ‘Iahvé’ (Derrida 1999b: 294) (which also is translated as ‘Jehovah’ (Derrida 2002: 411)); otherwise, unless quoting, Derrida reverts to ‘Dieu’.

23 The only other occurrence of this construction in the Pentateuch is in Exodus 9:30.

24 Even in the creation of man in the image of God in Gen 1:26-28 – the traditional support for the concept of the *imago Dei* – God is referred to using the plural of *Elohim* (see also Psalm 8:5). For von Rad, ‘[t]he extraordinary plural (“Let us”) prevents one from referring God’s image too directly to God the Lord. God includes himself among the heavenly beings and thereby conceals himself in this multiplicity’ (von Rad 1972: 58).

25 He moves quickly from the need to be aware of an animal’s ‘power[s] of manifestation’ to witnessing its ‘desire to manifest *to me* ... *its* experience of *my* language, of *my* words and of *my* nudity’ (Derrida 2002: 387; Derrida 1999b: 269, emphases in original).

26 This is enough to give us pause when faced with Derrida’s question in *The gift of death*: ‘How would you ever justify the fact that you sacrifice all the cats in the world to the cat that you feed at home every morning for years, whereas other cats die of hunger at every instant?’ (Derrida 1995a: 71, see also 69) Is Derrida describing, here, a quasi-transcendental condition of sacrifice inseparable from every ethical decision (one ‘inscribed in the structure of our existence to the extent of no longer constituting an event’ (85)), or a historically specific carnophallogocentric regime of human-animal relations – far from the least violent – in which pets serve as a consolation for those animals we choose to unnecessarily sacrifice, whose suffering we do not even register in our everyday avoidance of responsibility?

27 Compare the mediating work which Bobby does for Levinas; see Clark (1997: 167, 193–194). Wood also argues that ‘being able to “address the human,” in the personal way available to Derrida’s cat, might be too high a bar for being protected by violence’ (Wood 2004: 141, see also 136–137, 140–141, 143, 215 n. 43).

28 This gaze, as a means to transgress the limits of the human, is (still) ‘felt through the human’ (Derrida 2003: 134). This extrahuman location is visible when Derrida writes of ‘a benevolent or pitiless gaze, surprised or cognizant. The gaze of a seer, visionary, or extra-lucid blind person.’ (Derrida 2002: 372; Derrida 1999b: 254) This anthropomorphism indicates that the animal does not, first of all,

appear simply as the gaze of an other but appears in order to undermine the human, and does so in virtue of its non-humanity (animal or seer): an assimilation with the potential to blur rather than multiply differences. ‘As with every bottomless gaze, as with the eyes of the other, the gaze called animal offers to my sight the abyssal limit of the human: the inhuman or the ahuman, the ends of man’ (Derrida 2002: 381, see also 371–372, 377; Derrida 1999b: 263). Similarly, Wood (2004) suggests that Derrida is to a certain extent following his own human footsteps.

29 There is abundant evidence, in this essay and elsewhere, that Derrida would ultimately also erase the face-to-face with his cat, or the mode of address of any animal living in a privileged form-of-life with humans, in order to think a call to responsibility incapable of expressing itself: ‘For if one wants to appeal to a call that is not even recognized, that does not recognize itself, as a call, one can, at least to think it, do without any response’ (Derrida 1999a: 25). Also, ‘we have come to wonder whether absolute, hyperbolic, unconditional hospitality doesn’t consist in suspending language, a particular determinate language, and even the address to the other’ (Derrida and Dufourmantelle 2000: 135).

30 One could argue that, in an entirely Derridean fashion, the Yahwist puts forward humanistic schemas only to undermine them: the punning on ‘*arom* and ‘*arum* (2:25) indicates some affinity between the nakedness and shrewdness of the human and the animal, while that on *ba’adam* and *adamah* (2:7) suggests that, like the animals (2:19), the human is of the ground. Both are tied to their environments, and both alienated from them.

31 Likewise, for von Rad ‘name-giving in the ancient Orient was primarily an exercise of sovereignty, of command’ (von Rad 1972: 83; see also Davidson 1973: 37; Vawter 1977: 74; Westermann 1984: 228–229).

32 Likewise, Newsom argues that ‘for the Yahwist language is not about power but about identity’ (Newsom 2000: 66). For Brett, ‘the naming of the animals seems rather to be a celebration of diversity’; it can also express a ‘fresh experience’ or resist ‘ideological dominance’ (Brett 2000a: 81; see also Ricoeur 1998: 41; Simkins 1998: 45–46).

33 Of course, for Derrida, the naming subject could never fully wield this mastery: ‘if the name never belongs originarily and rigorously to s/he who receives it, it also no longer belongs from the very first moment to s/he who gives it’ (Derrida 1995b: 84).

34 Hearne writes that ‘most of animate creation doesn’t answer as loyally and with as much respect for the details of the human landscape as dogs, cats and horses do. It is then the sacredness of answering, for a tribe as lonesome and threatened most of the time as ours is, that makes animals matter. The animal trainer’s version of Genesis ... ends with a picture of Adam and Eve leaving Eden accompanied by the few species who chose to share their lot, to accept the human fate and all of the uneasiness and dis-eases that implies’ (Hearne 1986: 264–265). For Hearne Genesis is a story of ultimate obedience, of the priority of the command: ‘One may say that before the Fall, all animals were domestic, that nature was domestic’ (48). Thus the Edenism of Derrida’s bathroom scene.

- 35 While Derrida insists that this discrimination of difference should avoid (reducing to) calculation, he also recognises the importance of taking into account scientific (e.g. ethological) knowledge (for example Derrida 1991: 116; Derrida 2003: 135). Indeed, it is often the case that to combat the liquidation and invisibility of animals requires strategies which affirm their difference in its empirical specificity. It would be worthwhile comparing the insistence by Baker (2000) – against common contemporary valorisations of hybridity and monstrosity – that we allow animals to ‘hold-to-form’.
- 36 This is not, however, man in an ‘animal’ state (as for Carmichael (1992: 48)); as Derrida vigorously states, it is not a matter of erasing difference. Adam is present *as mankind*, as a user of language, in a relationship with all animals from whom he differs variously but not absolutely and to whom he relates in a nonsacrificial mode.
- 37 Considered thus, as the names not of concepts but existents, creatures who demand hospitality, there is no contradiction between Derrida’s earlier critique and later use of Eden, naming and the name of God. If Derrida’s philosophy of language has always maintained the impossibility of an Adamic language with a faultless relation of signifier to signified – as Hart puts it, ‘deconstruction is the demonstration that Babel precedes Adam’s naming day in Eden’ (Hart 2000: 129) – Derrida’s ethics requires that we maintain an openness to the (im)possibility of a directly referring name. Likewise, while Derrida earlier deconstructed the name of God to show its necessary Babelian contamination (Derrida 1985), he is not afraid later to retain it as the name for the absolute singularity of the other (Derrida 1995a).
- 38 This sense of naming in its pure possibility is always, of course, contaminated, as we only ever experience a trace of the other who is dissimulated in their presentation; but nonetheless we must keep open the demand of this unconditional hospitality.

REFERENCES

- Atterton, Peter. 2004. 'Ethical cynicism'. In *Animal philosophy: Essential readings in continental thought*, edited by Calarco, Matthew; Atterton, Peter. London: Continuum. 50–61, 206–207.
- Baker, Steve. 2000. *The postmodern animal*. London: Reaktion Books.
- Beardsworth, Richard. 1996. *Derrida and the political*. Thinking the Political. London: Routledge.
- Benjamin, Walter. 1997. 'On language as such and on the language of man'. In *Walter Benjamin: Selected writings, volume 1: 1913–1926*, edited by Bullock, Marcus; Jennings, Michael W. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press. 62–74.
- Brett, Mark G. 2000a. 'Earthing the human in Genesis 1-3'. In *The earth story in Genesis*, edited by Habel, Norman C.; Wurst, Shirley. The Earth Bible, 2. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press; The Pilgrim Press. 73–86.
- Brett, Mark G. 2000b. *Genesis: procreation and the politics of identity*. London: Routledge.
- Briggs, Robert. 2001. 'Wild thoughts: A deconstructive environmental ethics?' *Environmental ethics* (23): 115–134.
- Calarco, Matthew. 2002. 'On the borders of language and death: Derrida and the question of the animal'. *Angelaki* 7 (2): 17–25.
- Calarco, Matthew. 2004. 'Deconstruction is not vegetarianism: Humanism, subjectivity, and animal ethics'. *Continental philosophy review* (37): 175–201.
- Calarco, Matthew; Atterton, Peter, eds. 2004. *Animal philosophy: Essential readings in continental thought*. London: Continuum.
- Callicott, J. Baird. 1999. 'Genesis and John Muir'. In *Beyond the land ethic: More essays in environmental philosophy*. New York: State University of New York Press. 187–219.
- Carmichael, Calum M. 1992. 'The paradise myth: Interpreting without Jewish and Christian spectacles'. In *A walk in the garden: Biblical, iconographical and literary images of Eden*, edited by Morris, Paul;

- Sawyer, Deborah. Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series, 136. Sheffield: JSOT Press. 47–63.
- Clark, David. 1997. 'On being "the last Kantian in Nazi Germany": Dwelling with animals after Levinas'. In *Animal acts: Configuring the human in western history*, edited by Ham, Jennifer; Senior, Matthew. New York: Routledge. 165–198.
- Critchley, Simon. 1999. *The ethics of deconstruction: Derrida and Levinas*. 2nd ed. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Davidson, Robert. 1973. *Genesis 1-11*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1976. *Of grammatology*. Translated by Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. First American ed. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press. (Original edition, *De la grammatologie*, Les Editions de Minuit, 1967.)
- Derrida, Jacques. 1978. *Writing and difference*. Translated by Bass, Alan. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1981. 'Economimesis'. Translated by Klein, R. *Diacritics* 11 (2): 2–25.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1985. 'Des tours de Babel'. Translated by Graham, Joseph F. In *Difference in translation*, edited by Graham, Joseph F. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. 165–207.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1986. *Glas*. Translated by John P. Leavey, Jr.; Rand, Richard. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1987a. 'Geschlecht II: Heidegger's Hand'. Translated by Leavey, John P., Jr. In *Deconstruction and philosophy: The texts of Jacques Derrida*, edited by Sallis, John. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. 161–196.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1987b. 'On reading Heidegger: An outline of remarks to the Essex colloquium'. *Research in phenomenology* (17): 171–185.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1987c. *The post card: From Socrates to Freud and beyond*. Translated by Bass, Alan. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1988. *Limited Inc*. Edited by Graff, Gerald. Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1989a. *Of spirit: Heidegger and the question*. Translated by Bennington, Geoffrey; Bowlby, Rachel. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. (Original edition, *De l'esprit*, Editions Galilée, 1987.)
- Derrida, Jacques. 1989b. 'How to avoid speaking: Denials'. Translated by Frieden, Ken. In *Languages of the unsayable: The play of negativity in literature and literary theory*, edited by Budick, Sanford; Iser, Wolfgang. New York: Columbia University Press. 3–70.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1990. 'Force of law: The mystical foundation of authority'. *Cardozo law review* (11): 919–971.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1991. "'Eating well," or The calculation of the subject: An interview with Jacques Derrida'. Translated by Connor, Peter; Ronell, Avital. In *Who comes after the subject?*, edited by Cadava, Eduardo; Connor, Peter; Nancy, Jean-Luc. New York: Routledge. 96–119.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1993. *Aporias: Dying – awaiting (one another at) the 'limits of truth'*. Translated by Dutoit, Thomas. MERIDIAN: Crossing Aesthetics. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1995a. *The gift of death*. Translated by Wills, David. Religion and Postmodernism. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. Original edition, 1992.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1995b. *On the name*. Edited by Thomas Dutoit. Translated by Wood, David; John P. Leavey, Jr.; McLeod, Ian. MERIDIAN: Crossing Aesthetics. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1999a. *Adieu: To Emmanuel Levinas*. Translated by Brault, Pascale-Anne; Naas, Michael. MERIDIAN: Crossing Aesthetics. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1999b. 'L'animal que donc je suis (à suivre)'. In *L'animal autobiographique: Autour de Jacques Derrida*, edited by Mallet, Marie-Louise. Paris: Galilée. 251–301.
- Derrida, Jacques. 2002. 'The animal that therefore I am (more to follow)'. Translated by David Wills. *Critical inquiry* (28): 369–418.

- Derrida, Jacques. 2003. 'And say the animal responded?' Translated by Wills, David. In *Zoontologies: The question of the animal*, edited by Wolfe, Cary. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. 121–146.
- Derrida, Jacques; Dufourmantelle, Anne. 2000. *Of hospitality: Anne Dufourmantelle invites Jacques Derrida to respond*. Translated by Bowlby, Rachel. Cultural Memory in the Present. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press.
- Fudge, Erica. 2002. *Animal*. Focus on Contemporary Issues (FOCI). London: Reaktion Books.
- Glendinning, Simon. 1998. 'The human animal'. In *On being with others: Heidegger, Derrida, Wittgenstein*. London: Routledge. 61–75, 156–157.
- Gunkel, Hermann. 1997. *Genesis*. Translated by Biddle, Mark E. Mercer Library of Biblical Studies. Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press. (Original edition, 1901.)
- Hart, Kevin. 2000. *The trespass of the sign: Deconstruction, theology and philosophy*. 2nd ed. Perspectives in Continental Philosophy. New York: Fordham University Press.
- Hearne, Vicki. 1986. *Adam's task: Calling animals by name*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.
- Hochman, Jhan. 1998. 'An environmental impact report: *Of grammarology*'. In *Green cultural studies: Nature in film, novel, and theory*. Moscow, Idaho: University of Idaho Press. 159–170, 216–218.
- Krell, David Farrell. 1993. 'Where deathless horses weep'. In *Reading Heidegger: commemorations*, edited by Sallis, John. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. 95–106.
- LaCocque, André. 1998. 'Cracks in the wall'. Translated by Pellauer, David. In *Thinking biblically: Exegetical and hermeneutical studies*, by LaCocque, André; Ricoeur, Paul. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. 3–29.
- Levinas, Emmanuel. 1988. 'The paradox of morality: An interview with Emmanuel Levinas'. Translated by Benjamin, Andrew; Wright, Tamra. In *The provocation of Levinas: Rethinking the other*, edited by Bernasconi, Robert; Wood, David. London: Routledge. 168–180.
- Levinas, Emmanuel. 1990. 'The name of a dog, or natural rights'. Translated by Hand, Seán. In *Difficult freedom*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press. 151–153.
- Lippit, Akira Mizuta. 2000. *Electric animal: Toward a rhetoric of wildlife*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Llewelyn, John. 1991. *The middle voice of ecological conscience: A chiasmic reading of responsibility in the neighborhood of Levinas, Heidegger and others*. New York: St. Martin's Press.
- Magonet, Jonathan. 1992. 'The themes of Genesis 2-3'. In *A walk in the garden: Biblical, iconographical and literary images of Eden*, edited by Morris, Paul; Sawyer, Deborah. Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series, 136. Sheffield: JSOT Press. 39–46.
- Newsom, Carol A. 2000. 'Common ground: An ecological reading of Genesis 2-3'. In *The earth story in Genesis*, edited by Habel, Norman C.; Wurst, Shirley. The Earth Bible, 2. Sheffield; Cleveland, Ohio: Sheffield Academic Press; The Pilgrim Press. 60–72.
- Ramsey, George. 1988. 'Is name-giving an act of domination in Genesis 2:23 and elsewhere?' *The Catholic biblical quarterly* (50): 24–35.
- Ricoeur, Paul. 1998. 'Thinking creation'. Translated by Pellauer, David. In *Thinking biblically: Exegetical and hermeneutical studies*, by LaCocque, André; Ricoeur, Paul. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. 31–67.
- Rosenberg, David; Bloom, Harold. 1990. *The book of J*. New York: Grove Weidenfeld.
- Sawyer, John F. A. 1992. 'The image of God, the wisdom of serpents and the knowledge of good and evil'. In *A walk in the garden: Biblical, iconographical and literary images of Eden*, edited by Morris, Paul; Sawyer, Deborah. Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series, 136. Sheffield: JSOT Press. 64–73.
- Simkins, Ronald A. 1998. 'Gender construction in the Yahwist creation myth'. In *Genesis: A feminist companion to the Bible (Second Series)*, edited by Brenner, Athalya. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press. 32–52.
- Vawter, Bruce. 1977. *On Genesis: A new reading*. London: Geoffrey Chapman.

- von Rad, Gerhard. 1972. *Genesis: A commentary*. Translated by Marks, John H. Revised ed. The Old Testament Library. London: SCM Press Ltd.
- Westermann, Claus. 1984. *Genesis 1-11: A commentary*. Translated by Scullion, John J. Minneapolis: Augsburg.
- White, Lynne, Jr. 1967. 'The historical roots of our ecologic crisis'. *Science* 155 (3767): 1203–1207.
- Wolfe, Cary. 2003. *Animal rites: American culture, the discourse of species, and posthumanist theory*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Wood, David. 1999. 'Comment *ne pas manger* – Deconstruction and humanism'. In *Animal others: On ethics, ontology, and animal life*, edited by Steeves, H. Peter. Albany: SUNY Press. 15–35.
- Wood, David. 2004. 'Thinking with cats'. In *Animal philosophy: Essential readings in continental thought*, edited by Calarco, Matthew; Atterton, Peter. London: Continuum. 129–144, 213–216.

Cite this article as: Chrulw, Matthew. 'Feline divinity: Derrida and the discourse of species in Genesis', *The Bible and Critical Theory* 2 (2): pp. 18.1–18.23. DOI: 10.2104/bc060018.