

DISSERTATION PROSPECTUS

DON'T TELL THE HYENA HOW WELL YOU CAN BITE Performance, Race and Animality in Eastern Africa

Joshua Williams

The Project – Overview & Importance

An increasingly important corpus of contemporary social, political and critical theory is concerned with questions of precarity, animality and what Giorgio Agamben calls “bare life.”¹ I am interested in reading this discourse with and against the history of “wildness” in the late colonial and early postcolonial history of Eastern Africa – where the animal is not, and never has been, an abstraction. As a student of performance, I am intrigued by the dramaturgy surrounding contending claims on the human. How did colonial governmentality mobilize discourses of the (in)human in order to expropriate native peoples’ land? Conversely, how did black anti-colonialists stage their counter-claim – not only on the land that they had lost but on the very category of the human itself? How did discourses of animality and wildness impinge on these performances?

Of course, animals have been part of the political and cultural landscape of Eastern Africa for millennia. In my dissertation, I will attempt to account for the ways of being with and thinking the animal that structured precolonial sociality. But the story my dissertation tells begins after the epistemic break occasioned by colonial incursion in the nineteenth century – that is, after indigenous understandings of ecology and animality began to be subjected to sustained and transformative pressure. This is not to say that indigenous ways of being with and thinking the animal have ever been ahistorical. Close study of Maasai or Turkana pastoralism, to name but one obvious example, shows unmistakable evidence of historical change – occasioned by ethnic rivalries, pre-colonial trade with the Arab world, and so on – that cannot be reduced to colonial disruption. But the large-scale European incursion of the 1880s through to the second World War did radically reorient indigenous lifeways in Eastern Africa, and it would be foolish to underestimate that reorientation. The very fact that most of the published ethnographic and oral-historical accounts of cultural dispositions towards animals in the region date from the 1930s onwards² points to the logic of my periodization. The utopian vision of human-animal relationships that Western observers of Africa impute to African societies is often more a testament to the epistemological and political imperatives of colonial governmentality than to the reality of indigenous lifeways. I seek to read through these (post)colonial animal fantasies while at the same time plumbing the depth of their impact.

¹ Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford: Stanford

² See, for instance, E. E Evans-Pritchard, *The Nuer: A Description of the Modes of Livelihood and Political Institutions of a Nilotic People* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969); J. Terrence McCabe, *Cattle Bring Us to Our Enemies: Turkana Ecology, Politics, and Raiding in a Disequilibrium System* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2004).

My dissertation touches on three nodes of social and political history in the East African (post)colony. The first of these concerns the complex repertory of performance practices with which late colonialism sought to master “the wild” and its beasts. I am particularly interested in big game hunting and its various cultural-industrial auxiliaries as a modality of colonial performance between the turn of the century and the Mau Mau War in the 1950s. I set this matrix of performance and power alongside the efforts of early evolutionary biologists like Louis Leakey to establish the pre-history of humankind in the East African fossil record. I argue that both of these performance practices hinged on a subsumption of black life into animality, which in turn legitimated the colonial expropriation of native land in the name of science, wildlife conservation and agriculture. The legacy of these practices is still with us today: East Africa is still both “safari country” and the “cradle of humankind.”

The second and third nodes of social and political history that I consider mark the transition from colonial to post- and neocolonial registers of governmentality. The second concerns the efforts of black anti-colonialists like Ngugi wa Thiong’o, Ebrahim Hussein and Julius Nyerere in the 1960s and 1970s to de-animalize and re-humanize space that had been expropriated by colonialism. I read avowedly aesthetic performances, like Ngugi’s efforts towards a Gikuyu-language peasant theatre at Kamiriithu, with and against performances of state power, like Nyerere’s program of forced villagization in rural Tanzania. I argue that this humanist ecology – tied to the political imperatives of black liberation and majority government – sought to distinguish itself from its colonial predecessor by evacuating the animal from social space.

The third node of socio-historical analysis concerns the return of the animal in the 1980s and 1990s under the sign of postcolonial wildlife conservation and tourism. I am interested in the discourses surrounding wildlife poaching and the “family resemblance” between early hominids, charismatic non-human animals and contemporary human beings as indexical of the shifting relationship between blackness and beastliness. I set Dian Fossey, Jane Goodall and Richard Leakey’s work with primates and pre-human hominids – and the complex interplay of empathy and exploitation that their work required – against the activist practice of Michael Werikhe, the so-called Rhino Man, whose campaign to raise international awareness of rhinoceros poaching hinged on his willingness to claim animality as his own.

In general, then, my dissertation provides a genealogical account of questions of race and animality in late colonial and early postcolonial East Africa. These questions open up, almost immediately, onto broader questions of belonging. Who belongs in East Africa – animals or people? If people belong in East Africa – and it is not at all obvious that they do, given the profoundly non-human register of Western safari fantasies – are they black or white? How does a black person belong – can a black person belong – in a (post)colony? What exclusions, violent or otherwise, are necessary to sustain belonging? The key to answering – or at least beginning to answer – these and other questions is scrupulous attention to the ways in which the various claims on space that they index were staged. Where did the colonial state build game parks and why? What does it mean to local communities when “our” pre-human ancestors are dug out of the dirt beneath their houses? What sort of politics allows for which kinds of ecology? I believe that a broad-spectrum performance

studies approach is best suited to this form of analysis. It is necessary here to think the politics of performance and the performance of politics together – and then in a deeply historical way.³

Here, too, the question of the (in)human asserts itself; as scholars like Colin Dayan have shown, the figure of the animal is at the very heart of the law and crucial to the exercise of state power.⁴ In a persuasive critique of Carl Schmitt's concept of the sovereign state of exception,⁵ Jacques Derrida notes that the animal (the beast), the state (the sovereign) and the criminal (the terrorist) share “a troubling resemblance” because all three of them are central to and yet outside the law; “there is between sovereign, criminal, and beast a sort of obscure and fascinating complicity, or even a worrying mutual attraction, a worrying familiarity, an *unheimlich*, uncanny reciprocal haunting.”⁶ My research suggests that the history of late colonial and early postcolonial politics in Eastern Africa bears out the truth of this statement. Strange affinities bind animals to the state, the state to those who would transgress against it, and those who would dare criticize the state to the animals whose cause they champion or to whose status they are reduced. My dissertation concerns itself extensively with this becoming-animal of East African political life.

The moral and conceptual difficulty posed by the relationship between human beings and non-human animals opens onto a broader set of discussions currently underway in cultural criticism and social theory. My dissertation will enter into dialogue with exciting new scholarship in political ecology,⁷ postcolonial ecocriticism,⁸ eco-performance studies⁹ and animal studies.¹⁰ I find Derrida's late work – best exemplified by his 2001-2003 seminar, *The Beast and the Sovereign* – especially

³ I find the recent historiographical turn in the performance studies literature – exemplified most notably by Charlotte Canning and Thomas Postlewait's edited collection *Representing the Past* – a useful, and inspiring, model of this approach to scholarship. Charlotte M. Canning and Thomas Postlewait, eds., *Representing the Past: Essays in Performance Historiography* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2010). See also Samera Esmeir's outstanding new book on the concept of “juridical humanity” in colonial Egyptian jurisprudence: Samera Esmeir, *Juridical Humanity: A Colonial History* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2012).

⁴ Colin Dayan, *The Law Is a White Dog: How Legal Rituals Make and Unmake Persons* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013).

⁵ See Carl Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political*, trans. George Schwab, expanded ed. (Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 2007) and elsewhere.

⁶ Jacques Derrida, *The Beast and the Sovereign, Volume I*, ed. Geoffrey Bennington and Peggy Kamuf, trans. Geoffrey Bennington (Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 2011), 17.

⁷ See Rob Nixon, *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011); Jane Bennett, *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010); Timothy Morton, *Ecology Without Nature: Rethinking Environmental Aesthetics* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009); Timothy Morton, *The Ecological Thought*, Reprint (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2012); Felix Guattari, *The Three Ecologies*, trans. Ian Pindar and Paul Sutton (London: Continuum Books, 2008).

⁸ See Helen Tiffin and Graham Huggan, *Postcolonial Ecocriticism: Literature, Animals, Environment* (New York: Routledge, 2010); Elizabeth DeLoughrey and George B. Handley, eds., *Postcolonial Ecologies: Literatures of the Environment* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

⁹ See Wendy Arons and Theresa J. May, eds., *Readings in Performance and Ecology* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).

¹⁰ See Jacques Derrida, *The Animal That Therefore I Am*, ed. Marie-Louis Mallet, trans. David Wills, 3rd ed. (New York: Fordham University Press, 2008); Donna J. Haraway, *When Species Meet* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007); Peter Singer, *Animal Liberation: The Definitive Classic of the Animal Movement*, updated ed. (New York: Harper Perennial, 2009); Stanley Cavell et al., *Philosophy and Animal Life* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009). South African Nobel Laureate J.M. Coetzee's work on animals, notably J. M. Coetzee, *The Lives of Animals* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), is a particularly interesting case study here. I feel that it still skirts the issue.

inspiring;¹¹ his deep reading of the relationship of animality to sovereignty – which anticipates in significant ways some of Giorgio Agamben’s more recent work¹² – has deeply informed my approach to this project. Derrida’s own doubled, outsider-insider status as an Algerian Jew lionized as the leading voice of contemporary theory is fascinating to me in and of itself, particularly given my interest in the historicity of animality as a figure of racialized discourse. Bringing these different, and increasingly hybrid, literatures together will allow me to break new ground in the scholarship. I have yet to read anything that draws questions of performance, race, animality, ecology and politics together in a deeply historical way. I think, therefore, that my project will be of interest to a relatively broad spectrum of readers.

Another theoretical touchstone of my dissertation will be human rights discourse, particularly as it pertains to colonial and postcolonial histories and geographies.¹³ I am fascinated by the ways in which my various case studies seem to both exceed and be trapped by the ideas that structure the human rights approach to political life. The Leakeys’ campaign to secure land for archeological digs and wildlife preserves was based on the assumption that access to nature was a human right, and that the evolutionary history of the human race was part of our universal patrimony. At the same time, their efforts were blatantly exclusionary and often culturally chauvinist. When Ngugi was detained by Kenyatta’s and then Moi’s government because his plays marked him as an enemy of the state, he became an international human-rights cause célèbre – one of Amnesty International’s first “prisoners of conscience” – but the participation of hundreds, if not thousands, of Gikuyu peasants in his artistic and political project went unremarked. If these two case studies point to the difficulty – following Arendt¹⁴ – of conceiving of human rights apart from political rights, Michael Werikhe’s complicated legacy as the famous “Rhino Man” points to the uneasy interface between animal rights and human rights. How are an animal activist’s human rights compromised when he begins to be thought of as an animal himself? Given the longstanding conscription of black bodies into racist theories of pre-, sub- and non-humanity, this question is extremely pressing.

There is no doubt that my dissertation will engage with a great deal of Western-orientated scholarship. That being said, it is important to note that I have been deeply inspired by, and look forward to entering into conversation with, specifically Africanist scholarship – including Jane Plastow and Laura Edmondson’s pioneering work on postcolonial theatre in East Africa.¹⁵ I also plan to engage with the large and important corpus of critical material on East African performance and politics in Swahili and Gikuyu, much of which will remain inaccessible to me until I can access key archives in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam. Throughout, the anti-colonial praxis of Frantz Fanon and

¹¹ Derrida, *The Beast and the Sovereign, Volume I*, and Jacques Derrida, *The Beast and the Sovereign, Volume II*, ed. Geoffrey Bennington and Peggy Kamuf, trans. Geoffrey Bennington (Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 2011).

¹² See, in particular Giorgio Agamben, *The Open: Man and Animal*, trans Kevin Attell (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003).

¹³ See, for instance, Antony Anghie, *Imperialism, Sovereignty and the Making of International Law*, Cambridge Studies in International and Comparative Law (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Samuel Moyn, *The Last Utopia: Human Rights in History* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 2010) and Mark Mazower, *No Enchanted Palace: The End of Empire and the Ideological Origins of the United Nations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009).

¹⁴ Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (San Diego: Harvest Books, 1968), 279.

¹⁵ Jane Plastow, *African Theatre and Politics: The Evolution of Theatre in Ethiopia, Tanzania and Zimbabwe: A Comparative Study* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1996); Laura Edmondson, *Performance and Politics in Tanzania: The Nation on Stage* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007).

Ngugi wa Thiong'o will remain a touchstone,¹⁶ as will more recent scholarship by African critical theorists like Achille Mbembe on violence, life and death.¹⁷

I believe that this project is worthwhile, and that it will contribute something of importance to a number of ongoing debates both within and outside of African Studies and Performance Studies. I also believe it is feasible to undertake within the expected time frame, as I explain in the following sections.

Methodology

I have been doing research in East Africa since 2005, and in the process have made a number of lasting connections with individual artists and scholars and the cultural institutions that sustain them. I therefore fully expect to hit the ground running as I begin my fieldwork in the fall of 2013. I plan to spend all of the 2013-2014 academic year in Kenya and Tanzania, where I have secured research affiliations with the Wangari Maathai Institute for Peace and Environmental Studies at the University of Nairobi and the Department of Swahili at the University of Dar es Salaam. These affiliations – and my broader network of contacts – will serve me well as I undertake field research along the following methodological tracks:

- 1.) *Archival Research.* As my dissertation is deeply invested in historical questions, I expect to devote significant time to archival work. For the purposes of my project, key repositories include the Kenyan and Tanzanian National Archives, the Universities of Nairobi and Dar es Salaam Libraries, the National Museums of Kenya, and the company records of the National Theatre in Nairobi, the Players' Theatre in Nakuru, and the Little Theatre in Dar es Salaam. My experience with working in the University of Dar es Salaam Library in 2011 has led me to expect that progress in the archive will be slow; consequently, I plan to spend most of my time in the field on this aspect of my dissertation research. I do not anticipate having much trouble gaining access to these archives, however, given the affiliations I have established.
- 2.) *Oral History & Ethnographic Work.* Many of the individuals who figure prominently in my dissertation – including Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Ebrahim Hussein, Jane Goodall and Richard Leakey – are still alive and working in East Africa or the United States. I plan to conduct in-depth interviews with them in order to expand on what I have learned from their published work. Given my pre-existing relationship with Hussein, continuing to work with him will not be a problem; as both Ngugi and Leakey are professors at American universities, I don't think it will be too difficult to get to meet with them. (I have not yet established how difficult it will be to interview Goodall, but given her position as a public intellectual, I doubt she will be inaccessible.) I will also conduct interviews with other artists, scientists and government officials who are less prominent than Ngugi, Hussein, Goodall and Leakey but nonetheless have a great deal

¹⁶ See Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, trans. Richard Philcox (New York: Grove Press, 2005); Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, trans. Richard Philcox (New York: Grove Press, 2008) and Ngugi wa Thiong'o, *Decolonising the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literatures* (Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers, 1986).

¹⁷ See Achille Mbembe, *On the Postcolony* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001).

to contribute to an oral history of ecology and performance in East Africa. My contacts in East Africa should be able to make introductions. They may also help to arrange visits to Goodall's research station in Gombe, Leakey's field site in Lake Turkana and Dian Fossey's gorilla sanctuary in the Virunga Mountains. I expect that these field visits will open up onto a larger ethnographic engagement with the vociferous debates about wildlife tourism, conservation and poaching that continue to mark East African political life.

- 3.) *Translation and Artistic Collaboration.* I am already engaged in a number of promising collaborative projects with Kenyan and Tanzanian artists – chief among them my effort to translate the mature plays of the Tanzanian writer Ebrahim Hussein from Swahili into English and my work towards developing a number of devised theatre pieces with the Dar es Salaam-based Lumumba Theatre Group. I plan to keep up with these projects while in East Africa for fieldwork, as my creative work has always – and likely will always – inform my academic work, and as I believe that collaborative and mutually beneficial research models (like performance ethnography) are decidedly more ethical than other approaches. As one of the projects I am developing with the Lumumba Theatre Group is premised on a deep engagement with the prospect of climate-change-driven disaster at Mount Kilimanjaro, I have no doubt that it will intersect with my ongoing ethnographic work on wildness and ecology.

Research & Writing Schedule

June – September 2013:	Background reading, research and writing
September 9 th , 2013:	Interview with Ngugi wa Thiong'o in Irvine, California
September – December 2013:	Archival research in Nairobi, Nakuru and Mombasa
January – May 2014:	Field visits to Gombe and Virunga; ongoing archival research; interviews and translation work with Hussein in Dar es Salaam
May – August 2014:	Field visit to Lake Turkana; performance work with Lumumba Theatre Group; prepare Hussein translations for publication
August – December 2014:	Write 1 chapter; 5 th year talk; additional archival research in the U.K. and Canada if necessary
January – May 2015:	Write 2 chapters; revise earlier work
May – August 2015:	Write 2 chapters; revise earlier work; return to East Africa for follow-up research if necessary
August 15 2015:	Submit as much material as possible to Committee to prepare them for writing recommendation letters

August – December 2015:	Write 1 chapter; revise earlier work; go on job market
January – March 2016:	Write introduction; finish complete draft by March 2016
March – May 2016:	Revise and file

Provisional Chapter Outline

- 1.) *The Colonial Wild*. In the 1930s, white amateur actors working for the Kenyan colonial government dressed up as animals in order to stage a number of parables – supposedly drawing on “African folklore” – that aimed at convincing black peasants to adopt “progressive” farming practices. I begin this chapter with a reading of these performances, or at least the traces of them that remain in the archive. I consider them emblematic of the disposition of colonial governmentality towards “the wild” and the human and non-human animals that lived in it. Consequently, I read these performances – and the cultural work sustained in and by institutions like the National Theatre in Nairobi, the Players’ Theatre in Nakuru and the Little Theatre in Dar es Salaam more broadly – against practices like big game hunting and the safari. I argue that this entire repertoire can be read as a diffuse but nonetheless coherent attempt to make “the wild” safe for human – that is to say, white – leisure and habitation. That this required the death or removal of native human and non-human animals is notable, if not surprising.

- 2.) *The Leakeys*. In this chapter I read the Leakey family’s adventures in tourism, science, politics and war as a series of performances of belonging and expropriation characteristic of a certain type of settler-colonialist whiteness. On the one hand, Louis, Mary and Richard Leakey’s work on archeology, human evolution and wildlife conservation – efforts which, not incidentally, often involved a strict delimitation of otherwise open space – laid claim to land on the basis of supposedly universal patrimony. The various archeological digs they conducted in Tanzania, Kenya and Ethiopia were justifiable because they were in the service of discovering “our” ancestors; insofar as East Africa was “the cradle of humanity,” it belonged to all humankind. At the same time, however, the Leakeys were obliged to perform their claim of natal belonging in increasingly complex ways in order to avoid alienating themselves from either hardline white settlers or the black nationalist bourgeoisie. Louis Leakey’s ambivalent status as a white missionary’s son and Kikuyu initiate made his task the hardest, as the semi-conciliatory role he played during the Mau Mau War makes clear. I am interested, broadly speaking, in the shifting registers of these performances of belonging and the shadow they cast over the subsequent eco-history of the region. In particular, I am interested in how the Leakeys’ fossil finds were racialized as black – thus confirming the equation of blackness with non- and sub-humanity on which the entire colonial project was based.

- 3.) *The People’s Theatre*. In the 1960s and 1970s, black artists posed what I consider to be a humanist challenge to both the evacuated universalism typical of the Leakeys and the neo-colonial disposition towards land use exemplified by kleptocrats like Kenyan presidents Jomo Kenyatta and Daniel arap Moi. A great deal of the re-humanization of newly postcolonial space hinged on the commemoration and theatrical re-performance of anti-

colonial war. Plays like *Kinjeketile*, by Ebrahim Hussein, *Tewodros* and *Petros at the Hour*, by the Ethiopian poet laureate Tsegaye Gabre-Medhin, and *The Trial of Dedan Kimathi*, by Ngugi, celebrated attempts by historical (and sometimes legendary) black partisans to defend their land against colonial incursion. But Ngugi took the project of the black humanist reclamation of colonized space still further by helping to conduct the infamous experiments towards a Gikuyu-language people's theatre at Kamiriithu. The plays Ngugi staged at Kamiriithu (*Maitu Njugira*, *Mother Sing for Me*, and *Ndaahika Ndeenda, I Will Marry When I Want*) made him persona non grata in independent Kenya because they – literally – staged the claim of local Gikuyu peasants on land that had been taken from them by white settlers and kept from them by black landowners and multinational corporations. Ngugi's popular theatre was, in this respect, a radical attempt to re-humanize space that had been de-humanized by expropriation and violence. (It is notable that in his critique of colonial writers like Karen Blixen / Isak Dinesen, Ngugi excoriated what he perceived to be the racist subsumption of black characters into tropes of animality.) In this chapter I will analyze Ngugi's efforts and the government's – especially Moi's – response as two sides of the same coin; when Moi sent government troops to raze the open-air theatre Ngugi had built at Kamiriithu to the ground, he too was attempting to legislate the question of land and its fair use.

- 4.) *The National as Domestic*. In Tanzania, postcolonial questions of land tenure revolved around the 1964 union of Zanzibar with the mainland, which prompted a bitter fight as to the future disposition of the massive and essentially feudally administered spice plantations on the island, and Nyerere's 1967 Arusha Declaration, which called on Tanzanians to embrace a policy of villagization for the sake of national cultural cohesion and economic development. The iconoclastic Swahili-language playwright Ebrahim Hussein tackled both of these epoch-making events in his mature plays *Mashetani*, *Ngao ya Jadi*, *Jogoo Kijijini* and *Arusi*. In this chapter, I explore how Hussein – increasingly marginalized by a university and government culture he found oppressive – turned inward; in his plays, the radical reorganization of Tanzanian political life after 1964 is metastasized into a series of increasingly fraught domestic encounters. By remapping the union of Zanzibar and the mainland onto a disintegrating friendship in *Mashetani* and Nyerere's villagization policy onto a failed engagement in *Arusi*, for instance, Hussein reduced the political ecology of independent Tanzania to an array of local micro-aggressions. I will set this profoundly pessimistic view of the re-humanization of ex-colonial space alongside Hussein's contributions to *Tanzania: Year Sixteen*, a documentary film series that presents a far more favorable view of Nyerere's experiments with socialism. I am also interested in how animality remains in the background of plays like *Mashetani* and *Ngao ya Jadi* as a disavowed, often spiritualist, remainder. What space is there for the animal in black human domestic space?
- 5.) *The Apes*. When Michael – the Cameroonian signing gorilla – performed the murder of his mother at the hands of “bush meat poachers” for the assembled press, his story of loss and displacement was readily comprehensible to a Western public accustomed to African misery. Great apes, particularly those “rescued” by white conservationists, are often cast as victims of the ongoing, senseless violence that is supposed to structure African sociality. In this chapter, I turn to the work of Dian Fossey, Jane Goodall and Richard Leakey on apes and pre-human hominids as indexical of a nexus of compassion and “family resemblance”

that works to bind these animals to white people at the expense of black people – who are often figured as murderous antagonists. I am particularly interested in the claim on a kind of natal belonging that Leakey, Fossey and Goodall advanced in and through their animal Others. Violence is a key term of analysis here, as Fossey was murdered in 1985, and Leakey was targeted for assassination after he and then-President Moi cracked down on the illegal ivory trade in 1989. There's considerably more in play here than paternalism, as Leakey's complex relationship with Turkana Boy – the supposedly disabled hominid whose remains Leakey's team found in 1984 – makes clear. After the attempt on his life in 1993 cost Leakey his legs, he began to speak of Turkana Boy as a fellow “cripple” whom the compassion of his fellow hominids had rescued from certain death. What is the nature of compassion here, across race and species lines? What forms of belonging does it enable?

- 6.) *The Rhino Man*. The centerpiece of this last chapter is Michael Werikhe, Kenya's so-called Rhino Man, who earned a fair amount of notoriety in the 1980s and early 1990s for what I consider to be acts of solo endurance performance. Werikhe walked – sometimes for months – across Africa, Europe, the United States and Asia to raise international awareness of the threat posed to Africa's population of black rhinoceros by illegal poaching. I am interested in the historical conjuncture of Werikhe's campaigns in the 1980s and the more or less contemporaneous rise to worldwide dominance of Kenyan and Ethiopian marathon runners. How had the politics of wildlife conservation changed from the days of the elder Leakeys to Werikhe's Goldman Environmental Prize in 1990? And what are we to make of the subsumption of Werikhe – the Rhino Man – into the animal he sought to protect at the same time that East African athletes were animalized – as cheetahs, lions, and privileged pre-humans “born to run” – on the world stage? How is the purported animality of these performances marked? What registers of violence does the label “animal” index when inscribed on black bodies? And what does this new genre of ecological performance tell us about the end of the Cold War period and the afterlife of colonialism in East African cultural production?

WORKS CITED

- Agamben, Giorgio. *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*. Translated by Daniel Heller-Roazen. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998.
- . *The Open: Man and Animal*. Translated by Kevin Attell. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003.
- Anghie, Antony. *Imperialism, Sovereignty and the Making of International Law*. Cambridge Studies in International and Comparative Law. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- Arendt, Hannah. *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. San Diego: Harvest Books, 1968.
- Arons, Wendy, and Theresa J. May, eds. *Readings in Performance and Ecology*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012.
- Bennett, Jane. *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2010.
- Canning, Charlotte M., and Thomas Postlewait, eds. *Representing the Past: Essays in Performance Historiography*. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2010.
- Cavell, Stanley, Cora Diamond, John McDowell, Ian Hacking, and Cary Wolfe. *Philosophy and Animal Life*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2009.
- Coetzee, J. M. *The Lives of Animals*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001.
- Dayan, Colin. *The Law Is a White Dog: How Legal Rituals Make and Unmake Persons*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013.
- DeLoughrey, Elizabeth, and George B. Handley, eds. *Postcolonial Ecologies: Literatures of the Environment*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.
- Derrida, Jacques. *The Animal That Therefore I Am*. Edited by Marie-Louis Mallet. Translated by David Wills. 3rd ed. New York: Fordham University Press, 2008.
- . *The Beast and the Sovereign, Volume I*. Edited by Geoffrey Bennington and Peggy Kamuf. Translated by Geoffrey Bennington. Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 2011.
- . *The Beast and the Sovereign, Volume II*. Edited by Geoffrey Bennington and Peggy Kamuf. Translated by Geoffrey Bennington. Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 2011.
- Edmondson, Laura. *Performance and Politics in Tanzania: The Nation on Stage*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007.
- Esmeir, Samera. *Juridical Humanity: A Colonial History*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2012.

- Evans-Pritchard, E. E. *The Nuer: A Description of the Modes of Livelihood and Political Institutions of a Nilotic People*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1969.
- Fanon, Frantz. *Black Skin, White Masks*. Translated by Richard Philcox. New York: Grove Press, 2008.
- . *The Wretched of the Earth*. Translated by Richard Philcox. New York: Grove Press, 2005.
- Guattari, Felix. *The Three Ecologies*. Translated by Ian Pindar and Paul Sutton. London: Continuum Books, 2008.
- Haraway, Donna J. *When Species Meet*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007.
- Mazower, Mark. *No Enchanted Palace: The End of Empire and the Ideological Origins of the United Nations*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009.
- Mbembe, Achille. *On the Postcolony*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001.
- McCabe, J. Terrence. *Cattle Bring Us to Our Enemies: Turkana Ecology, Politics, and Raiding in a Disequilibrium System*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2004.
- Morton, Timothy. *Ecology Without Nature: Rethinking Environmental Aesthetics*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009.
- . *The Ecological Thought*. Reprint. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2012.
- Moyn, Samuel. *The Last Utopia: Human Rights in History*. Cambridge: Belknap Press, 2010.
- Ngugi wa Thiong'o. *Decolonising the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literatures*. Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers, 1986.
- Nixon, Rob. *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011.
- Plastow, Jane. *African Theatre and Politics: The Evolution of Theatre in Ethiopia, Tanzania and Zimbabwe: A Comparative Study*. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1996.
- Schmitt, Carl. *The Concept of the Political*. Translated by George Schwab. expanded ed. Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 2007.
- Singer, Peter. *Animal Liberation: The Definitive Classic of the Animal Movement*. updated. New York: Harper Perennial, 2009.
- Tiffin, Helen, and Graham Huggan. *Postcolonial Ecocriticism: Literature, Animals, Environment*. New York: Routledge, 2010.