

‘No Humans Involved’

The race-animal connection and its importance for Western philosophy

Nina Johanna Elisabeth Tesselaar

S1043144

Dr. Anya Topolski

14785 words (excluding footnotes and bibliography)

2-06-2021

Thesis for obtaining a “Master of arts” degree in philosophy

Radboud University Nijmegen

I hereby declare and assure that I, Nina Tesselaar, have drafted this thesis independently, that no other sources and/or means other than those mentioned have been used and that the passages of which the text content or meaning originates in other works - including electronic media - have been identified and the sources clearly stated.

Place: Utrecht, date: 2-6-2021

Abstract

This thesis explores the connection between Western concepts of race and animality in the history of colonialism, transatlantic slavery and Enlightenment thought. Drawing on the work of Zakiyyah Iman Jackson and Sylvia Wynter, I show that the Western category of 'the human' that emerged from this history is predicated on the abjection of blackness and animality. I argue that Western philosophy has contributed to the emergence and perpetuation of this category of the human. Up until now, efforts to dismantle this category have been insufficient because they neglect the antiblackness that is central to the Western concepts of humanity and animality. Thus, to truly challenge the category of the human and end its antiblack and animal violence, Western philosophy should acknowledge and address the race-animal connection.

Content

Abstract	2
Content.....	3
Introduction.....	4
I. The intersection of critical animal studies and Black studies.....	8
Critical animal studies.....	8
Black studies	10
The race-animal connection	11
II. Racialized animalization and the formation of Man.....	16
Liberal humanism	16
Racialization is animalization	22
III. Thinking with the race-animal connection.....	27
Problematizing the human-animal binary	27
The erasure of race	31
Theory, praxis and academic responsibility	33
Conclusion	37
Bibliography.....	40

Introduction

After the trial of the policemen who beat up Rodney King in 1991, it came to light that police officers and public officials in Los Angeles routinely used the acronym N.H.I. to refer to cases involving young unemployed Black men (Wynter 1994).¹ The acronym N.H.I. stands for “No Humans Involved”. This means that public officials did not consider these Black men to be human. It also means that they did not treat them as such: the acronym N.H.I. was shorthand for the legitimization of police brutality. More than just an incident, the acronym N.H.I. is a blatant example of how institutional dehumanization and violence are related: if you are not considered to be human, you will not be protected from police brutality. Furthermore, it is not a coincidence that the acronym N.H.I. was used for Black men. Since the Los Angeles riots in 1992, police brutality against Black people has not ended. In 2020, the murder of George Floyd led to worldwide protests against police brutality and systemic racism. The acronym N.H.I. is perhaps not in use anymore, but antiblack racism, violence and dehumanization are still very prevalent today.

In *Becoming Human: Matter and Meaning in an Antiblack World*, Zakiyyah Iman Jackson argues that the dehumanization of Black people in Western history is actually a form of animalization. Published in 2020, the same year as the worldwide Black Lives Matter protests, Jackson’s argument is urgent and original. For a long time, the connection between antiblack racism and animality was “either unquestioningly reified or criticized for reinforcing antiblack racism and quickly dismissed” (Jackson 2020, 59). To avoid reestablishing the racist connection between blackness and animality, the centrality of animalization in antiblack racism has received little academic scrutiny.

However, since the past decade, a change is underway – albeit in marginalized fields. Books like *Animacies: Biopolitics, Racial Mattering, and Queer Affect* (Chen 2012), *Habeas Viscus* (Weheliye 2014), *Race Matters, Animal Matters* (Johnson 2017), *Afro-Dog: Blackness and the Animal Question* (Boisseron 2018), *Colonialism and Animality* (Montford and Taylor 2020) and *Becoming Human* (Jackson 2020) address the connection between race, racism, (anti)blackness and concepts of animality. Still, this research is mostly done by scholars of Black studies. In this thesis I argue that it should receive a central role in Western philosophy as well.

¹ Following many scholars of Black studies, I have chosen to capitalize ‘Black’. According to Crenshaw, “Blacks, like Asians, Latinos and other ‘minorities’, constitute a specific cultural group and as such, require denotation as a proper noun” (Crenshaw 1988, 1332). I do not capitalize the word ‘white’ because it does not refer to a shared sense of history and identity in the same way. Furthermore, ‘white’ is already capitalized by white supremacists, which is why there cannot be an equal capitalization of the words Black and white.

In Western philosophy and the humanities more generally, there is an increasing interest in the relationship between humans and animals (Boisseron 2018; Weil 2012; Wolfe 2009). There is also a growing consensus that this relationship needs to change. For instance, Matthew Calarco (2008) argues in *Zoographies: The Question of the Animal from Heidegger to Derrida* that much of the Western philosophical tradition is anthropocentric. Anthropocentrism is the belief that humans are superior to animals and nature. Calarco argues that philosophy should challenge its anthropocentrism and conceptualize ways of thinking about humans and animals that does not re-establish the alleged superiority of humans. However, there is little philosophical interest in the connection between animals and race. Although Enlightenment philosophers Hegel, Kant and Hume wrote about the superiority of the white ‘race’ and compared African peoples to animals, their writings on race have often been considered as incidental instead of central to their philosophies (Mills 2018). In general, race is a neglected topic in mainstream philosophy (Zack 2018, 3).

This is problematic, because the connection between race and animality still influences antiblack racism today (Kim 2017). To understand how antiblack racism functions, racism in philosophy should not be dismissed or considered to be incidental but rather thoroughly examined. Jackson takes up this task in *Becoming Human*. She investigates the connection between race and animality in the Western history of colonialism, transatlantic slavery, philosophy and science. This history shows that the inferiority and abjection of Black people is established through an alleged likeness to animals.² Another important argument in *Becoming Human* is that the concepts of ‘the human’ and ‘the animal’ are not two homogeneous groups in opposition to each other. Rather, humans are humanized or animalized on the basis of their gender and the color of their skin. Thus, the human-animal binary that seemingly separates humans and animals into two opposing categories is actually *racial*.

This racial human-animal binary influences how animals and racialized humans who are excluded from the category of the human are treated in Western society. The category of the human is generally reserved for white, educated and wealthy people, whereas Black people and

² ‘Abject’ means that which is rejected and cast off, debased, humiliated, and unworthy. The abjection of blackness is a central concept in Jackson’s book. ‘The abject’ and ‘abjection’ are also investigated in the works of Black studies scholars like Christina Sharpe, Saidiya Hartman and Darieck Scott. In *Extravagant Abjection: Blackness, Power, and Sexuality in the African American Literary Imagination* (2010), Scott explains that abjection denotes “the defeat suffered by African people in a distant past” (14). Scott also evokes philosopher Julia Kristeva’s use of the term. For Kristeva, abjection interferes in subject-object relations: the abject is that which has to be rejected in order for a subject to retain a coherent idea of itself as subject (Scott 15). Although Kristeva meant to develop the term for psychoanalysis, Black studies scholars historicize the term, referring to the abjection of blackness throughout Western history. For Jackson, the abjection of blackness is an inherent part of the Western notion of the human (Jackson 2020).

other minority groups in both American and Western-European societies are dehumanized through institutionalized and everyday racism such as racial profiling, discrimination in the labor market and police brutality (Chaney and Robertson 2015; Mulder and Bol 2020). However, this is not to say that violence against Black people and animals should be compared, or that animalization plays a role in all instances of racism. It is rather to say that antiblack racism in Western societies has to be understood in relation to the inferiorization of animals. The argument is that it is not possible to truly challenge antiblack racism if the connection to animality is not taken into account, because concepts of animality inform antiblack racism. As Jackson (2020) writes: “as long as ‘the animal’ remains an intrinsic but abject feature of ‘the human’, black freedom will remain elusive and black lives in peril” (28).³

The connection between race and animality, henceforth the ‘race-animal connection’, has important consequences for philosophical reflections on the Western category of the human. These consequences are currently most relevant for the emerging and interdisciplinary field of critical animal studies, which aims to challenge the alleged superiority of humans over animals and nature. Jackson criticizes this field for misunderstanding the connection between racialization and animalization. She argues that critical animal studies scholarship wrongfully assumes that racialization is an effect of the human-animal binary rather than its central organizing principle. By not taking racialization into account, critical animal studies fails to truly challenge the category of the human. In this thesis, I argue that Jackson’s criticism of this field extends to Western philosophy as well, in particular philosophies that challenge the Western notion of the human.

Furthermore, Jackson argues that academic fields that aim to challenge the category of the human often end up reestablishing liberal humanism. This term refers to the combination of Enlightenment humanist and liberal values. Its basic premise is that the human is free, autonomous, rational and equal. However, the humanist values of rationality, equality and autonomy were predicated on the abjection of blackness (Wynter 2003) and the liberalist values of freedom, rights and ownership on the enslavement of Black people (Hartman 1997). Therefore, Jackson argues that liberal humanism is fundamentally antiblack. This is why she is critical of scholarship that challenges the category of the human without questioning its underlying liberal humanist values.

³ Arguably, challenging the abjection of animality leads to liberation of other oppressed and marginalized groups as well. For instance, critical animal studies challenges the inferiorization of animals in order to liberate them, and ecofeminism explores the relationship between the abjection of animals and the oppression of marginalized genders. Jackson shows that the abjection of animality intersects with gender, sexuality and race. From an intersectional perspective on oppression, challenging the abjection of animality could thus lead to liberation more generally. However, this question is a topic for further research.

Why is it important to displace the category of the human in philosophy, and how can the race-animal connection contribute to this? These are the two central questions of this thesis. To answer these questions, I mainly draw on work of Jackson and philosopher and writer Sylvia Wynter. Through an analysis of Western history, Wynter demonstrates how the category of the human, which she calls 'Man', is informed by colonialism and racism. She argues that this category depends on biocentric and evolutionary narratives, which advance the idea that Man is the most natural and superior way of being human. Jackson deepens Wynter's analysis by addressing the dimension of gendered, sexualized and racialized animalization in the formation of 'the human'. Furthermore, Jackson explores the ways in which African diasporic literature and art imagines humanity and animality and challenges liberal humanism.

Before answering the central questions of this thesis, it is necessary to set the theoretical context and methodological ground. I start by introducing the disciplines of Black studies, critical animal studies and the research that happens at the intersection of these fields. I do so in the first chapter. I explain important terms like 'race' and 'blackness' and elaborate on anthropocentrism and the human-animal binary. Drawing on Bénédicte Boisseron's *Afro-Dog*, I also address the difference between an approach of comparative analogy versus intersectionality. I argue that the connection between race and animality should not be approached by comparing antiblack racism with animal violence but rather by investigating in which way antiblack racism and animal violence are connected in systems of oppression. The approach of this thesis is therefore intersectional.

To understand why the Western notion of the human should be displaced in philosophy, I discuss the concept of liberal humanism in chapter two. To explain this concept, I discuss Jackson and Wynter's historical analyses of colonialism, slavery and liberalism. Through a reconstruction of their historical analyses, I show why liberal humanism and the Western notion of the human are fundamentally antiblack. I then move on to discuss Jackson's central argument that dehumanization is racialized animalization and the ways in which this animalization is gendered and sexualized.

In the third and final chapter, I argue why the race-animal connection is important for Western philosophy. By drawing on Calarco's *Zoographies*, I first show how Jackson's criticism of critical animal studies extends to the discipline of philosophy. Then, I present both theoretical and practical arguments for why the race-animal connection is important for philosophical reflections on the human. If Western philosophy continues to reflect on the human without asking who and what is excluded from this category, philosophy will continue to contribute to antiblack and animal violence.

I. The intersection of critical animal studies and Black studies

Critical animal studies

Critical animal studies is an interdisciplinary field that emerged in the mid-70's out of the animal rights and liberation movements. The field studies animals and human-animal relationships from the perspective of the natural and social sciences and the humanities. The 'critical' in critical animal studies (CAS) denotes the urgency of animal suffering and ecological crises: "CAS is concerned with the nexus of activism, academia and animal suffering and maltreatment" (Taylor and Twine 2014, 2). CAS distinguishes itself from the fields of animal studies and human-animal studies, but this difference is not widely recognized. This is because many scholars simply do not know of the distinction, but also because scholars of animal studies and human-animal studies sometimes have values that align with CAS (Taylor and Twine 2014). Nonetheless, Anthony J. Nocella II and Steve Best, founders of the Institute for Critical Animal Studies, argue that CAS distinguishes itself through its radical activist stance. Scholars of CAS believe that their research should actually improve animal lives and not just remain within academia. They are not only against the torture and killing of animals, but also against apolitical theories on animals (Nocella II et al. 2014, xxiv).

The activist and political position of CAS results, in part, from its criticism of anthropocentrism. This entails that human lives are considered to be the most superior, valuable and meaningful, and that all non-human life is measured by the standard of human values and knowledge. Moreover, anthropocentrism as a belief system marginalizes non-human perspectives (Weitzenfeld and Joy 2014, 4). Anthropocentrism therefore not only expresses itself in violence against non-human lives and nature but also in the complete disregard for non-human perspectives. A certain degree of anthropocentrism is unavoidable because humans are corporeally bound to their human perspective. However, the problem is not necessarily the human perspective itself, but rather the supremacy that is assigned to it. Scholars of CAS thus try to be aware of their anthropocentric attitudes and beliefs in their research.

Another important pillar of CAS is intersectionality. Intersectionality starts out from the idea that all systems of oppression are entangled with each other. Different forms of oppression cannot be treated in isolation: to end all forms of oppression against humans and animals, it is important to analyze where and how different forms of oppression intersect. CAS is therefore against capitalism, sexism, racism, ableism and classism (Nocella II et al. 2014). Furthermore, CAS is heavily influenced by the field of ecofeminism (Taylor and Twine 2014). Both fields agree that the rational, masculine and liberal category of the human is the locus of oppression against both women and animals. Finally, the intersectional approach is important because CAS and animal

activism run the risk of reinforcing racism, sexism and classism. One prominent example is that veganism is not a cultural option or affordable choice for everyone.

Besides studying animals themselves, scholars of CAS also investigate the human-animal binary in Western thought. The history of this binary is divided into two main strands of thought: dualism and continuity (Calarco 2008; Weitzenfeld and Joy 2014). According to a dualistic understanding, humans and animals are two separate ontological beings. Many philosophers, like Descartes, Kant, Hegel and Heidegger have argued that humans have a variety of exceptional qualities that make them distinct from and superior to animals (Calarco 2008). In contrast, Darwin's theory of evolution gave rise to the idea of a biological continuity between humans and animals. The idea of continuity served as an inspiration for contemporary animal rights and liberation philosophers such as Peter Singer and Tom Regan (Boisseron 2018). However, the problem with continuity is that it still organizes humans and animals along hierarchical lines, as arguments for the rights of animals are based on their likeness to humans. Therefore, the idea of continuity between humans and animals still reinforces the human-animal binary.

Critical animal studies tries to dismantle the human-animal binary by exploring new and non-anthropocentric ways of thinking about human-animal relationships. A seminal text is Jacques Derrida's *The Animal That Therefore I Am*, in which he deconstructs the human-animal binary. His deconstruction starts with an encounter with his cat in the bathroom. Derrida, who just washed himself, is naked and feels shame when meeting the gaze of his cat. The shame upon feeling this shame leads him to argue that in such real encounters, it is impossible to tell who is 'the animal' and who is 'the human'. Ultimately, he argues that it is only *after* or *alongside* animals that we can think of what it means to be human, because ideas about animality are always already present in our conceptions of humanity (Derrida 2002, 379). Furthermore, Derrida replaces the word 'animal' with *animot* (*mot* meaning 'word' in French) to emphasize that there is no such thing as a singular 'animal' (Derrida 2002, 409). Instead, there is a multiplicity of living beings that all differ as much from each other as humans differ from other living beings. Thus, the word 'animal' itself is already an instantiation of anthropocentrism, through which a multiplicity of beings is categorized solely through their non-humanity.

As we will see in this thesis, Jackson criticizes the field of critical animal studies for not sufficiently addressing the raciality of the human-animal binary. Furthermore, the field's understanding of anthropocentrism is problematic because CAS scholarship universalizes the alleged superiority of humans over animals. Jackson argues that anthropocentrism is not a universal problem, but rather a problem of liberal humanism. These criticisms will be addressed in more detail in chapter three.

Black studies

The transdisciplinary field of Black studies has its origins in 1968, when Black student activists occupied a university campus building and demanded a Black studies department and a center for Black studies at the University of California. After years of activism, the first Department of Black studies was found in 1969 (Bobo, Hudley and Michel 2004). Since then, the field of Black studies has evolved into different names and research areas, such as ‘Afro-American studies’, ‘African-American studies’ and ‘Africana studies’. Lewis Gordon (2006) explains that the field is now called ‘Africana studies’ to refer to the African diaspora more generally (xxi). Nonetheless, various scholars use the terms interchangeably. I have chosen to use the term ‘Black studies’, because most scholars discussed in this thesis use this term as well. Gordon (2006) defines the field as follows:

African-American Studies is an academic program that produces knowledge about Africana peoples – their cultures, politics, history, thought, artistic expression – and the unique problems posed by such study, which include discourses on Africana peoples by non-Africana peoples, while negotiating its political relationships with such communities and the nation. (xxii)

This definition is not to say that the knowledge produced in Africana studies did not already exist before its institutionalization. For instance, Robert L. Harris Jr. (2004) traces the roots of Black studies back to the 1890s, when various organizations and important people such as Carter G. Woodson and W.E.B. DuBois began to document the history and lives of Africana peoples in the United States (15-16). The last part of Gordon’s definition emphasizes Africana Studies’ “political relationships with such communities and the nation”. This draws attention to the fact that Black studies constantly has to negotiate its place in (American) universities and society, as the education system is still predominantly Eurocentric (Gordon 2006 xxii).

However, Black studies entails more than the production of knowledge about Africana peoples. Black studies is also an “education for liberation” and aims at the transformation of Eurocentric methodologies and academic norms (Andrews 2020). As universities only considered Western knowledge production to be valid (Bhambra et al. 2018; Grosfoguel 2013), Black studies broadens what counts as knowledge and rejects the ivory tower by engaging in activism and grassroots organizations. Another important aspect of Black studies is research into the processes of racialization, dehumanization and animalization. For instance, Weheliye (2014) writes that Black studies “has made humanity an avowed ideological and ontological battleground” (21). This is because the field challenges the category of the human by showing that racialization is a sociopolitical process that categorizes people into “full humans, not-quite-humans and nonhumans” (Weheliye 2014, 4).

As many scholars of Black studies argue, antiblack racism (and thus dehumanization and animalization) has a specific relationship to Western Europe and the United States (Andrews 2020; Césaire 1950; Jackson 2020; Mbembe 2001; Wynter 2003). Wynter writes that throughout the Western history of colonialism, racial slavery and scientific racism, “[...] it was to be the peoples of Black African descent who would be constructed as the ultimate referent of the ‘racially inferior’ Human Other” (Wynter 2003, 266). This racially inferior Other was a negation of “generic normal humanness”, which as Wynter writes, is “expressed by and embodied in the peoples of the West” (idem). This racially constructed relationship between West/Other and white/Black is one of the key areas of research in the field of Black studies.

Finally, a fundamental part of Black studies is to show how ideas about race are interwoven in society and institutions and to separate them from the concept of ‘blackness’ (Andrews 2020, 703; Weheliye 2014, 17). Although it is general knowledge in academia that race is a social construct invented in pre-colonial Europe, racism still pervades Western societies, politics and institutions (Keaton 2018). The fact that race is socially constructed does not mean that it does not exist in society or does not have a real material effect on racialized bodies and lives. Black people in the United States “have the highest rates of morbidity and mortality for almost all diseases; the highest disability rates; the shortest life expectancies; the least access to health care; and startlingly low rates of use of up-to-date technology in their treatments” (Jackson 2020, 193). An understanding of race as a social construct can thus not be a dismissal of the material effects of racism or a recourse to color or race-blindness (Jackson 2020; Keaton 2018). The difficulty for Black studies is that it aims to retain a concept of blackness as a source of identity and academic methodology, while at the same time navigating the danger of understanding race as a biological and social construct. In the next section, I will discuss the concept of ‘blackness’ in more detail.

The race-animal connection

Bénédicte Boisseron (2018) argues in *Afro-Dog* that the race-animal connection is deeply ingrained in Western society. For example, Barack Obama and French politician Christiane Taubira have been compared to monkeys in popular media (Boisseron 2018, x). Similar racist expressions are found in the Netherlands as well. In 2017, a Dutch soccer commentator called Surinamese-Dutch politician Sylvana Simons a ‘little monkey’ on live television, claiming it was just a joke (“Twintig mensen vervolgd”).⁴ However, the comparison between Black people and animals is never a

⁴ The examples given here and in the second chapter can be painful or discomfoting for both for readers who experience racism and readers unacquainted with the history of the race-animal connection. As Jackson already mentioned, this thesis can be criticized for reinforcing antiblack racism by highlighting these examples. By emphasizing that the aim of this thesis is to discuss the intersectionality and history of the

coincidence or an innocent joke (Chen 2012; Kim 2017). Instead, this subtext in Western-Europe and the United States can be traced all the way back to colonization and Black slavery, in which the racialization of Black people coincided with animalization. In the recent ‘animal turn’ in the humanities, the race-animal connection has often been used by animal ethicists to make an argument for the animal cause (Boisseron 2018, 1). In these debates, scholars compare Black slavery to animal violence and argue that animal liberation should follow the same path as the abolition of slavery. For example, Jeremy Bentham, Peter Singer and Tom Regan have all argued for animal liberation on the basis of this analogy.

However, this comparative analogy between Black slavery and animal violence is problematic. First of all, it invites a discussion over whose suffering is worse. This can, for instance, be seen in PETA’s 2005 exhibit called “Are Animals the New Slaves?”. This exhibit was heavily criticized because of its racial insensitivity and trivialization of the horrors of slavery (Boisseron 2018, x). Generally, a comparative analogy between Black slavery and animal suffering runs the risk of trivializing and instrumentalizing suffering. Second of all, Weheliye (2014) points out that the comparative analogy gives the impression that the dehumanization and animalization of blackness is a thing of the past and that ‘we’ can shift our focus to animal suffering (10). This discourse is thus not only insensitive to racial issues but also makes current day racial violence and injustice less visible. Finally, Boisseron (2018) argues that the comparative analogy between Black slavery and animal violence is a “perverted form of recompartmentalization where the black is once again removed from the human species” (xiii). If Black slavery or antiblack racism is discussed solely to make a point about animal liberation, this only reinforces the abjection of Black people instead of critically interrogating it.

That being said, research into the race-animal connection is still important because the oppression and violence against racialized people and animals follow a similar logic. However, Boisseron (2018) stresses that this research should be approached from the perspective of intersectionality, and not by way of comparative analogies. She aims to “reorient the discussion on black-animal relations toward an empowering frame of reference” by investigating how “the history of the animal and the black in the black Atlantic is *connected*, rather than simply comparable” (x, *emphasis in original*). Boisseron thus focuses on empowerment instead of suffering. Her approach is comparable to Jackson’s, who focuses on the ways in which African diasporic culture offers alternative ways of thinking about the human-animal binary. The research of Boisseron and Jackson thus not only focuses on the violence and oppression of antiblackness, but also explores

race-animal connection rather than instrumentalizing it for comparative reasons, I hope to avoid this reinforcement while at the same time making clear why it is important that these examples of racism are discussed and properly addressed.

how the concept of blackness and African diasporic culture can transform ways of thinking about humanity and animality.

The position that blackness can be transformative and empowering relates to a larger debate over the meaning of blackness. Because blackness is a central concept in this thesis, it is useful to briefly reflect on this debate within Black studies. For some leading Black studies scholars, the concept of blackness is invented by white people to ensure the subjugation of Black people (Patterson 1982; Wilderson III 2020). This position is called Afropessimism.⁵ Afropessimists define blackness as a unique condition that is created by racial slavery. Blackness “emerges as the violent technology and discourse to pulverize, subject, and eviscerate African being” (Warren 2017, 222). Frantz Fanon (1952), who is often mentioned as an inspiration to Afropessimists, writes in *Black Skin, White Masks* that “the black soul is a white man’s artifact” (16). For Afropessimists, blackness is per definition not empowering; it carries no (positive) value.

Philosopher and activist Fred Moten (2013) aims to find a way to both celebrate blackness and acknowledge its history of racial slavery. His position is characterized as ‘Black mysticism’, as he aims to think about blackness alongside ontology, which is called ‘paraontology’. This is because Moten (as well as Afropessimists) view ontology as fundamentally antiblack. It therefore does not make sense to reconceptualize blackness in terms of ontology, or in other words, to re-define the being of blackness. Furthermore, Moten criticizes Afropessimists for conflating blackness as a concept with Black people. His critique of Afro-Pessimism is that it “collapses this distinction, confusing blackness with black things, and once this distinction is collapsed, or obliterated, blackness and black things are presented as pathological, wanting, inadequate, and deathly” (Warren 2017, 225). To avoid this, Moten tries to think of ways to celebrate blackness without resorting to the realm of ontology. This results in a kind of mysticism, in which Moten experiments with concepts like ‘nothingness’ and ‘non-relationality’ while referring to poetry, art, music and literature. To illustrate his artistic expression, I quote Moten (2013) in full:

Blackness, lived both as the denial of and the incapacity for worldliness, is properly understood as constraint when constraint is improperly understood as undesirable, as a radical undesirability in the face of the belligerent fantasy of the freedom of, or of freedom in, the world. Blackness, in and as a kind of fleeting, prior persistence, resists these bad thoughts. It’s the good trip before the bad trip that good trips can induce. Blackness is midnight blue as midnight comes again. (28)

In this citation, Moten writes about blackness as a denial of freedom and existence in the world, while at the same time this denial is an affirmation of, or condition for “prior persistence”, or prior worldliness and freedom. For Moten, this tension – the good trip before the bad trip that good

⁵ For a comprehensive overview and critique of Afropessimism, see Gloria Wekker 2021.

trips can induce – is always present in blackness. Thus, Moten’s idea is not to define or delineate what blackness ‘is’. He instead tries to think about blackness in a way that cannot be fully grasped by ontology.

In both Jackson and Boisseron’s work, there is a similar ambiguity regarding the concept of blackness. Both acknowledge the centrality of the history of colonialism and Black slavery for this concept, but the unique ontological position of blackness also creates ways to think about humanity and animality that other disciplines are not able to. Following Boisseron and Jackson, the aim of this thesis is not to make a comparative analogy between blackness and animals but rather to explore this connection – its history of inferiorization, animalization, torture and killing, the defiance that arose from this shared history of oppression, the challenges African diasporic thought poses for the Western human-animal binary – and to demonstrate what they mean for Western philosophy more generally.

Importantly, the intersectional approach also has its own problems. Intersectionality starts out from the idea that categories like race, class, gender, sexuality, religion and ability are interconnected in systems of oppression. This means that, for instance, white women face a different form of discrimination than black women because of the intersections of race and gender (Crenshaw 1989). Instead of treating these categories in isolation, an intersectional approach analyses how these various categories are related to each other. However, Boisseron (2018) argues that intersectionality runs the risk of privileging general categories over particularities (25). These particularities are the very real and singular experiences of oppression and discrimination that people and animals face. For instance, the focus on the intersectionality of Black women in Black feminism (and recently in critical animal studies) runs the risk of essentializing Black women and turning them into a ‘category’. As Jennifer C. Nash (2008) argues, “black women’s race and gender are treated as trans-historical constants that mark *all* black women in similar ways” (198, *emphasis in original*).

Thus, intersectionality attempts to avoid essentialism by analyzing oppression from the intersection of multiple categories, but in doing so, possibly ends up essentializing these categories. This can be seen as a pitfall of Jackson’s *Becoming Human*, in which she singles out the position of Black women in the formation of the human-animal binary. But it is also a pitfall of this thesis. I focus on the intersections of race, gender and species, but I do not discuss any singular experiences of people or animals. For instance, many scholars of critical animal studies ensure that they include a singular animal and a particular experience in their work. Ecofeminist Donna Haraway (2008) and animal studies scholar Eva Meijer (2019) do not write of ‘dogs’ or ‘cats’, but they include stories of their very own Cayenne and Putih in their work. They attempt to work with real living

beings who are situated in time and space. The animals in my thesis remain *animots*. Furthermore, the category of gender is underprivileged in this thesis. There is a rich body of literature in (eco)feminism that explores the intersections of animals and gender that I do not discuss. Nonetheless, Boisseron argues that it is impossible to address all intersections equally. The shortcomings of intersectionality should therefore be addressed but cannot always be solved.

In this chapter I have discussed the fields of critical animal studies and Black studies. In doing so, I have elaborated on important concepts like the ‘human-animal binary’, ‘anthropocentrism’, ‘race’, ‘racialization’ and ‘blackness’. I also discussed the various problems of research into the race-animal connection, such as the dreaded comparison and essentialism. In the next chapter, I will focus on Jackson’s research into the race-animal connection in her book *Becoming Human* and elaborate on the central role of gendered and sexualized racialization in the formation of the human-animal binary.

II. Racialized animalization and the formation of Man

Liberal humanism

In this chapter I elaborate on Jackson's *Becoming Human* to ultimately argue how research into the race-animal connection can contribute to dismantling the Western notion of the human in philosophy. Before I elaborate on her arguments regarding racialization and animalization, it is important to understand the concept of liberal humanism, as Jackson criticizes this concept throughout her book. Her central argument is "that the normative subject of liberal humanism is predicated on the abjection of blackness" (18). But what is liberal humanism? The concept is quite underdefined in academia. Jackson (2020), Wynter (2000) and Calarco (2008) all criticize the concept of liberal humanism without defining it.⁶ The term is mostly used in literary theory, either referring to a set of beliefs or a literary approach.

Considered separately, liberalism and humanism are very broad concepts that include a variety of moral, historical, political and economic beliefs. According to Alan Ryan (2007) and Duncan Bell (2014), the concept of liberalism is essentially contested, which means that attempts to define it will always be met with disagreement. In their articles alone, they write of social, conservative, classical, modern, libertarian and economic liberalism. There is disagreement on its origins as well as its founding fathers. According to some, liberalism emerged in the 17th century, while others emphasize that it only came to fruition in the 20th century. Some compartmentalize liberalism by arguing that it is a political philosophy or form of governmentality, whereas others argue that it is an ideology that represents all of Western modernity (Bell 2014). However, it is possible to distill various core elements of liberalism which reappear in liberal theories. Liberalisms generally agree that humans are entitled to freedom and that this freedom should be protected through rights. The value of liberty, human rights, autonomy and rationality are important for almost all strands of liberalism, regardless of their implementation.

These values can for instance be found in the theories of notable liberal philosophers such as John Locke, John Stuart Mill and John Rawls. Locke, who is associated with classical liberalism, argued that men had natural rights that were based on freedom, equality, and ownership of their own bodies (Ryan 2017). The task of the government was to protect these natural rights by adhering to what Locke called the 'natural law'. This law is distinct from divine law and can only be discovered through reason (Locke 1689). Mill argued for the protection of individual freedom

⁶ Calarco (2008) writes that "Whereas pro-animal discourse is often presented as an extension and deepening of liberal humanism, I attempt to recast this discourse as a direct challenge to liberal humanism and the metaphysical anthropocentrism that underlies it"(8). He refers here towards the extension of the human rights discourse to animals, but he does not define liberal humanism in his book.

for utilitarian reasons. For Mill, all humans capable of reason have a right to self-development, as this would ultimately be beneficial to everyone. He also developed the harm principle, which means that men can act freely as long as they do not harm others: “the only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilized community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others” (Mill 1859, 22). The most well-known liberal philosopher of the 20th century is Rawls. His argument that “each person has an equal claim to a fully adequate scheme of equal basic rights and liberties” is foundational to his theory of justice (Rawls 1993, 5). Although I can not expand on the differences between these philosophers here, Locke, Mill and Rawls all emphasize the inviolability of individual rights and freedom.

Humanism might be even more overly defined than liberalism. Humanism can refer to the specific tradition of Renaissance humanism, but it can also refer to secular or religious approaches to life that are centered around human values (Copson 2015). In any case, liberal humanism denotes a conflation of humanist and liberal ideas. Jackson does not specify how she understands humanism, but her use of liberal humanism more generally refers to attitudes toward and theories on the human in Western history. Liberal humanism thus shifts the emphasis from politics and economics to a liberalist theory about what it means to be *human*. This is also evident in Hans Bertens’ (2001) definition of liberal humanism. In *Literary Theory: The Basics*, he writes that “liberal humanism assumes that all of us are essentially free and that we have – at least to some extent – created ourselves on the basis of our individual experiences” (8). Furthermore, Bertens explains that this assumption about human nature is found in cultural, legal and political institutions. Bertens’ definition of liberal humanism corresponds with what Jackson (2020) describes as the “touchstones” of liberal humanism: sovereignty, agency, choice, diplomacy, reciprocal obligations, and self-determination (142). These touchstones are indeed necessary for law, democracy and liberal economy to function. However, whereas Bertens writes that liberal humanism assumes that “all of us” are free, Jackson’s analysis compels her readers to ask: who is all of us?

According to Jackson, liberal humanism generally assumes a white, Western and male subject. Her understanding of liberal humanism builds on Wynter’s theory of the human as well as her analysis of Western history. Jackson (2020) writes that “liberal humanism’s basic unit of analysis” is Man (12). ‘Man’ is Wynter’s term for the current Western category of the human. In “Unsettling the Coloniality of Being/Power/Truth/Freedom”, Wynter (2003) analyses the emergence of Man from the 15th century to our current era. Central to her argument is that there is no essence to being human: there are different *genres* of being human that are accompanied by narratives or ‘descriptive statements’ about what it means to be human. The problem with Man is that it has naturalized itself as if it is static and universal. In order to decolonize ways of living and

knowing, Wynter argues that we need to challenge this overrepresentation of Man. She writes that “one cannot ‘unsettle’ the ‘coloniality of power’ without a redescription of the human outside the terms of our present descriptive statement of the human, Man, and its overrepresentation” (Wynter 2003, 268). Importantly, this means that the notion of the human is not inherently wrong; the problem is that the Western notion is overrepresented. To understand the emergence of liberal humanism, I will concisely summarize Wynter’s analysis of the invention of Man.

Wynter situates the first invention of Man in the period from the Renaissance to the 18th century. Before the intellectual revolution of the Renaissance, the descriptive statement of the human was Christian and theocentric (Wynter 2003, 275). During the Renaissance, several major events changed this descriptive statement from theocentric to a political and rational conception of the human. European colonization, the Renaissance humanism of Pico della Mirandola and others, the Copernican revolution, the Valladolid trial – all of these events and more were central to the shift from a theocentric to a political and rational conception Man, as the epistemic authority of God and the church shifted to men themselves.⁷ Furthermore, the colonial voyages and Copernican revolution gave rise to the natural, objective sciences.⁸ The Christian distinction between heaven and earth collapsed, and the biblical idea that certain parts of the world were made uninhabitable by God was disproved (Wynter 2003, 280). This caused Man to look at the world as a collection of undiscovered facts instead of believing that the world could only be understood through the church and Bible.

The colonial voyages of the Dutch, Spanish and Portuguese in particular were crucial to the emergence of the rational and political Man, as this new understanding of being human coincided with the genocide of Indigenous peoples of the Americas and the enslavement of African peoples.⁹ Initially, colonialism was legitimized according to a Christian narrative. African peoples were considered to be sinful descendants of Ham who were condemned to slavery (Wynter

⁷ For more information on the significance of the Valladolid trial, see Grosfoguel 2013.

⁸ Following Wynter, I use the term ‘voyages’ here to specifically refer to the change brought about by the actual voyages themselves. The idea of ‘discovering’ new land was at odds with the biblical idea that the Atlantic Ocean was non-navigable because it was outside of “God’s providential Grace” (Wynter 2003, 275). However, I do not wish to suggest that the colonial voyages were just ‘voyages’. From the outset, the goal of these voyages was slavery, genocide and epistemicide. Epistemicide is a term by Ramón Grosfoguel (2013) that denotes the systematic destruction of knowledge, in this case Native American and African knowledge.

⁹ I differentiate between ‘people’ and ‘peoples’ to refer to people from the same group or people from different groups. For instance, Indigenous and African peoples refer not to *one* group but to a wide variety of countries and cultural backgrounds. I follow Jackson and many other Black studies scholars in their choice of the term ‘peoples’, and Indigenous professor Linda Tuhiwai Smith for her use of the term Indigenous ‘peoples’. Smith explains that the use of ‘peoples’ emerged in the 1970’s through Indigenous activism. It helped to unite Indigenous communities, put them on the international political agenda, and stresses the Indigenous peoples’ rights to self-determination (Smith 1999).

2003, 302). However, the encounter with Indigenous peoples of the Americas created a problem for colonialists, as they could not be considered as enemies of Christianity. In order to legitimize colonial expansion, they needed an understanding of humanity that was not explicitly cast in biblical terms. In combination with the emergence of humanist values and the natural sciences, Indigenous and African peoples were now cast as irrational and less-than-human animals.¹⁰ Wynter (2003) writes that, “the projected ‘space of Otherness’ was now to be mapped on phenotypical and religio-cultural differences between human variations and/or population groups, while the new idea of order was now to be defined in terms of degrees of rational perfection/imperfection” (316). The idea of the ‘Other’ was understood in terms of phenotype (color of skin) and rationality.¹¹ In this history of humanism, colonialism and the natural sciences, we thus see the emergence of a rational and antiblack notion of the human.

During the second invention of Man from the 18th century onwards, the notion of Man shifted from political and rational to biocentric and economic. Darwin’s ideas on evolution and natural selection had a profound impact on this new construction of Man and the Other. Humans were understood as purely biological beings, and the link between phenotype and rationality was mapped onto a scheme of evolutionary selection or deselection. In other words, the irrational and less-than-human status given to African peoples was now fully reified in scientific and evolutionary terms. As Wynter (2003) writes, “it was now not only the peoples of the Black ex-slave Diaspora, but all the peoples of Black Africa” who were constructed as Man’s Other (319). Furthermore, the emergence of economic liberalism and capitalism gave rise to what Wynter called the “second intellectual revolution of humanism”, liberal humanism (Wynter 2000, 182). This humanism also created another category of inferiority: against the ideal of Man as capitalist and breadwinner stood the jobless, the homeless and the poor.

To sum it up, against essentialism, Wynter understands being human as a genre and praxis that produces social orders and hierarchies. Her analysis of Western history demonstrates that the construction of Man and the inferior human ‘Other’ was constantly defined in different terms: that of Christian/enemy of Christ, rational/irrational and selected/deselected. This impacted the categories of gender, race, class and sexual orientation. Crucial in this history is the construction of race and the inferiorization of African diasporic peoples. As Wynter (2003) writes, “beginning

¹⁰ Wynter argues that the need to understand the ‘Other’ as subhuman is particular to Western Europe. For example, when Bantu-Congolese people saw white colonialists for the first time, they thought they were monstrous and understood them to belong to their dead ancestors. Wynter writes: “For the Europeans, however, the only available slot of Otherness to their Norm, into which they could classify these non-European populations, was one that defined the latter in terms of their ostensible subhuman status” (292).

¹¹ There is a difference between racist narratives about African and Indigenous peoples. See Wynter 2003, 300-301 and Grosfoguel 2013.

early on in the sixteenth century, a projected taxonomy of human population groups had begun to be put in place— one in which the ‘Negro’ had to be, imperatively, at the bottom” (309). There is a continuity in the racialization of African diasporic peoples from the 16th century to the present day. First understood as the cursed sons of Ham (Goldenberg 2012) and irrational animals and later as biologically inferior, the peoples of Black African descent were constructed as the ultimate referent of Man’s Other. Wynter’s analysis of Man thus shows that racialization and antiblackness are at the very center of the Western genre of the human.

In light of Wynter’s analysis, we can understand Jackson’s argument that liberal humanism is fundamentally antiblack. However, the liberal elements of rights, liberty and autonomy also play an important role in the formation of Man. These values emerged from Enlightenment philosophers like Hobbes and Locke, who argued that each man was entitled to individual rights as protection against the government. In the 18th and 19th century, Mary Wollstonecraft, John Stuart Mill and Jeremy Bentham argued that women (which women?) and animals (which animals?) were entitled to rights and protection too. Wollstonecraft and Mill argued that women were rational human beings and were therefore also entitled to rights (Mill 1869; Wollstonecraft 1792). Similarly, Bentham and later animal rights advocates based their arguments on the likeness of animals to humans (Bentham 1789). In the present day, proponents of liberalism argue that the extension of rights has led to the protection and emancipation of many minority groups (Ryan 2007). However, this extension of rights necessitates a recognition of one’s ‘humanity’ and value, and this is exactly what Jackson problematizes. Because liberalism is fundamentally antiblack, she argues that a recognition of humanity and inclusion into liberal humanism is not a solution to antiblack racism and violence.

Saidiya Hartman’s *Scenes of Subjection: Terror, Slavery, and Self- Making in Nineteenth-Century America* lies at the basis of this argument. In this book, Hartman shows that the recognition of the humanity of enslaved Black people did not lead to an improvement of their position. The recognition of humanity came with rights, protection and criminal culpability that served as an extension of the ways in which slavery and violence against enslaved people could be legitimized. Hartman (1997) asks: “suppose that the recognition of humanity held out the promise not of liberating the flesh or redeeming one’s suffering but rather of intensifying it?” (5). The extension of rights to freedmen led to more ways in which violence and oppression could be legitimated.

For Hartman, the concept of liberty is inherently entangled with bondage: there is no freedom and autonomy without property and proprietorial notions of the self. This means that humans are only free insofar as they are able to establish and protect what is theirs. “In short”, she writes, “the advent of freedom marked the transition from the pained and minimally sensate

existence of the slave to the burdened individuality of the responsible and encumbered freedperson” (Hartman 1997, 117). Before the humanity of enslaved people was recognized, slavery was legitimized on the basis of biblical narratives and comparisons with animals. With the recognition of humanity and human rights, freed slaves were assigned full responsibility for their oppression. Hartman characterizes this as “burdened individuality”, because the status of the free individual came with an immense amount of social control and regulation (117). It was the freedman’s duty to “prove their worthiness for freedom rather than the nation's duty to guarantee, at minimum, the exercise of liberty and equality” (118). Without denying the emancipation of the abolition of slavery, Hartman critically interrogates the values of liberal humanism – freedom, autonomy, sovereignty, rights and possession – and demonstrates that they rely on racism and particularly on the abjection of blackness.

To sum up, Jackson’s understanding of liberal humanism is influenced by Wynter and Hartman, who argue that liberal humanism and the recognition of humanity within this system are predicated on antiblackness. Still, Jackson’s understanding of liberal humanism is very broad. Her central argument that liberal humanism is fundamentally antiblack could have been strengthened by a more specific delineation of how she understands both liberalism and humanism. Right now, it is difficult to convince proponents of all the strands of liberalism and humanism of its antiblackness because she does not engage with them. A (tentative) definition of liberal humanism would also have strengthened her argument, especially because this concept is very underdefined. However, she does intervene in liberalism by showing demonstrating its raciality, something which is rarely discussed in debates about liberalism (Mills 2008).

Nonetheless, Jackson’s *Becoming Human* is an indispensable contribution to Wynter and Hartman’s analyses of liberal humanism because she addresses the dimension of animalization.¹² She further complicates the argument that Black studies should not seek inclusion into liberal humanism and recognition of humanity by arguing that antiblackness is not only based on dehumanization, but also on animalization and bestialization. This means that recognition of humanity is no safeguard for antiblackness because antiblackness is not limited to the process of dehumanization. Humanity can be recognized through human rights, but this does not challenge the liberal humanist framework in which these rights can be exercised. This is not only because the judicial, political and economic values of individual human rights, autonomy, liberty and self-possession remain fundamentally antiblack, but also because the notion of the human that lies at the heart of this abjects animality. Because the abjection of animality and blackness are co-

¹² Wynter’s work is mainly focused on the human and she also holds traditional ideas about the difference between humans and animals. For an interesting discussion of Wynter’s humanism and how her thought could be extended to critical theories about animality as well, see Hantel 2018.

constituted, a recognition of humanity within a liberal humanist framework will not actually challenge antiblack racism and violence. Up until now, we have seen that the construction of race is part of the emergence of Man, but how are processes of animalization and racialization entangled with each other? In the next section, I will elaborate on Jackson's argument that racialization is (gendered and sexualized) animalization and discuss how this argument relates to the human-animal binary and critical animal studies.

Racialization is animalization

Jackson's argument that racialization is entangled with animalization builds on Wynter's analysis of the liberal humanist subject, Man. Jackson argues that Man has produced the dichotomy between the human and the animal, which is based on ideas about race, gender and sexuality. Her argument is rooted in the history of colonialism, slavery and Enlightenment thought. In her book, Jackson (2020) mainly discusses the racism of Enlightenment philosophers and scientists like Hegel, Hume, Kant, Carl Linneaus and others. She writes that "whether in the work of Carl Von Linne, Georges-Louis LeClerc, Comte de Buffon or Kant [...], animal and human 'race' are co-articulations" (24). She also discusses how evolutionary theory is informed by racism and how the concepts of species and race are entangled.

I first discuss some examples of racism in Enlightenment science and philosophy and then elaborate on the centrality of sexuality and gender. The examples discussed below are the product of Jackson's historical analysis of the entanglements of animalization and racialization. It is important to emphasize once again that the approach of this thesis is intersectional: the examples given are not meant to reify the racist foundation of the connection between blackness and animality or to instrumentalize the comparison. Rather, the examples are meant to illustrate in what ways racialization and animalization are two sides of the same coin, so that we (as philosophers and scholars) can better understand the importance of displacing the antiblack and liberal humanist subject in philosophy.

According to Hegel (1837), "the Negro is an example of animal man in all his savagery and lawlessness" and the African's "primitive state of nature is in fact a state of animality" (177, 178). Jackson (2020) considers Hegel to be "the most extreme articulation of 'the African's animality'", for he considered animality not just a feature but rather the essence of African peoples (25). Kant also considered African peoples to be the inferior race (Allais 2016; Kleingeld 2019).¹³ Jackson (2020) highlights Kant's remarks on the conflation of race and species, as he compares species deviation in animals to the mixing of human 'races', which create "mulattoes" (24). Tellingly, the

¹³ For more on the intersections between Kant's racism and sexism, see Allais 2016.

words ‘mule’ and ‘mulatto’ have a shared etymology, as there was a lot of anxiety over the question whether mixed children would be able to reproduce (Jackson 2020, 154). Furthermore, Hume and Kant both situated the alleged inferiority of African peoples in the climate (Jackson 2020, 24). Kant wrote that the hot, humid climate made African men “strong, fleshy and agile” and at the same time “lazy, indolent and dawdling” (Kant quoted in Bernasconi 2003, 17). There are debates on whether the racist passages written by Hegel and Kant make their entire philosophies racist (McCarney 2003; Mills 2014). However, I strongly endorse Jackson’s argument that their philosophies contribute to the formation of the antiblack liberal human subject at large, as their universal notions of reason and morality are not universal but predicated on the alleged superiority of Man. In chapter three, I argue how and why it is important that this racist context is appropriately addressed in academic philosophy.

Besides philosophers, Enlightenment scientists contributed to the animalization of African peoples through scientific racism. Carl Linnaeus, a zoologist and taxonomist, **hierarchically categorized plants, animals and human races in his *Systemae Naturae* (1735)**. In his taxonomical system, as well as in that of Georges-Louis LeClerc/Comte de Buffon, Ernst Haeckel and others, the ‘African race’ was considered to be closest to animals, and the European or ‘Caucasian race’ the most superior. Jackson analyzes the work of these scientists and shows how **the concepts of race and species have co-evolved with each other**.¹⁴ She argues that the “logics of race are determinate of logics of species” (Jackson 2020, 166). **This means that theories about species and their hierarchical categorization are informed by racism. According to some of these theories, humans were held to be one species divided in races, and according to others race was posited as species, but they all agreed on the superiority of the ‘Caucasian race’.** Thus, Jackson (2020) writes that antiblackness shapes “scientific thought and their taxonomies that purport to divide human from animal” (166).

In the words of Donna Haraway (2013), species not only reek of race, they also reek of sex: ideas about species are not only informed by race but also by gender and sexuality (18). I now turn to Jackson’s analysis of the centrality of gender, sexuality, reproduction and maternity in the process of racialization and animalization. The central argument is that

¹⁴ For instance, Ernst Haeckel’s recapitulation theory holds that the development of an embryo into an individual passes through former stages of evolution. According to Stephan Jay Gould, the “very first sustained argument for recapitulation in morphology was cast in a racist mold” (Gould quoted in Jackson 2020, 173). In 1797, physician Johann Heinrich Ferdinand von Autenrieth wrote that “completed forms of ‘lower’ animals are merely earlier stages in the ontogeny of ‘higher’ forms”, because there are “certain traits which seem, in the adult African, to be less changed from the embryonic condition than in the adult European” (Gould quoted in Jackson 2020, 173).

Liberal humanism's basic unit of analysis, "Man," produces an untenable dichotomy—"the human" versus "the animal", whereby the black(ened) female is posited as the abyss dividing organic life into "human" or "animal" based on wholly unsound metaphysical premises. (Jackson 2020, 12)

Jackson argues that that philosophers and scientists regarded the black(ened) female body as the limit case of 'the human'. A couple of things are important to point out at the start: Jackson writes 'black(ened)' to stress that blackness is not static (or essentialist) but rather fluid and constructed.

In a 2021 online lecture, Jackson mentioned that "blackness is a verb". This relates to my earlier discussion of blackness in chapter one, in which I highlighted the tension between blackness as a political, colonial and antiblack construct and blackness as a source of identity and critical analysis. Furthermore, Jackson writes about the 'black(ened) female body' and not about 'Black women' because they were not regarded to be women but 'females' in Western history. The use of the word 'body' also emphasizes that their bodies were objectified and used as a site of experimentation. In this section, I follow Jackson's phrasing of 'black(ened)' to emphasize and reinforce her conception of blackness.

Starting with the distinction between women and 'females', Jackson explains that womanhood was only reserved for white bourgeois women. This is because Christian beliefs about sexuality and beauty standards were formed in opposition to ideas about the black(ened) female body (Jackson 2020, 8). For instance, black(ened) women were considered to feel less pain and give birth and breastfeeding more easily than white women. There were countless forced experiments on the bodies of enslaved black(ened) women as well as forced research on their reproductive organs. Whereas white women were covered during gynecological exams, black(ened) women were naked and observed by multiple male doctors (Jackson 2020, 186). Scientists and doctors created animalized and bestialized narratives about the genitals, breasts and posterior of black(ened) women, as well as their sexuality and sexual behavior. But as Hortense Spillers (2003) points out, "in the universe of unreality and exaggeration, the black female is, if anything, a creature of sex, but sexuality touches her nowhere" (155). Black(ened) women were thus not considered to be 'women' but were reduced to the biological category of 'the female'.

Another way in which black(ened) women functioned as the limit case between the human and the animal in Western history is through the comparison with apes. Jackson discusses a debate in the 18th century over the question whether apes were superior to African women. Linnaeus and other naturalists described apes in terms of white, Western femininity: "female apes were chaste, modest, soft, sober, considerate, attentive, and tranquil— qualities Linnaeus attributed to civilized humans" (Schiebinger 1993, 99). These descriptions of female apes in terms of white femininity

were contrasted with African women. This even manifests itself in the way the breasts of female apes were drawn by male scientists:

Perhaps the most notable modification was the lifting and rounding of breasts, given the role of breast shape in the naturalization of racial hierarchy. Late nineteenth-century anthropologists classified breasts by their perceived beauty in the same way that they measured skulls for intelligence. The ideal breast was the compact “hemispherical” type, found, it was said, only among whites and Asians. In contrast, female African women were purported to have flabby, pendulous breasts similar to the udders of goats. (Jackson 2020, 183)

I have chosen to discuss this example to show the far-reaching extent to which animalization is entangled with sexuality and gender. In this 18th century debate, female apes were humanized according to Western ideas about sexuality and femininity whereas the position of African women remained unclear. This is because Enlightenment scientists were very anxious to maintain the distinction between Man, apes, and African women. Darwin’s proof of white man’s evolutionary proximity to apes requested new ways to retain this distinction. Thus, the African woman was animalized but did not receive the same ‘animal’ status as Orangutans and other apes. This debate illustrates that “black(ened) females variously occupied all positions: human, animal, animal human, human animal, unknown quantity, cipher” (Jackson 2020, 182).

The fact that black(ened) women occupied all kinds of ontological positions between humanity and animality – as seen in the citation above – is an instantiation of what Jackson calls the ‘plasticity’ of blackness. Plasticity is an ontological and political praxis “that seeks to define the essence of a black(ened) thing as infinitely mutable, in antiblack, often paradoxical, sexuating terms” (Jackson 2020, 11). Thus, the plasticization of blackness is a mode of domination that hierarchically categorizes “sex, gender, reproduction and states of being” (idem). Plasticized blackness can take any form – subhuman, human or suprahuman – as long as it ensures the superiority of Man. This concept explains how and why different forms of gendered and sexualized animalization have been persistent throughout colonialism, slavery and (modern-day) liberalism. The narratives and practices of gendered and sexualized animalization shift and change, but the violence of antiblackness remains unchanged. This is why Jackson (2020) writes that “black people are without shelter, whether invited into or locked out of ‘the human’” (20).

Jackson argues that the plasticity of blackness gives form to the dichotomy between the human and the animal.¹⁵ Blackness is not included in either category but forms the backdrop

¹⁵ Claire Jean Kim makes a similar argument in the article “Murder and Mattering in Harambe’s House” (2017). Through an analysis of the racist events following the killing of gorilla Harambe in 2016, she shows how the concepts of ‘black’ and ‘animal’ are connected. Like Jackson, Kim argues that “that the ‘human’ is paradigmatically *both not-animal and not-black*, birthed through the simultaneous application of these two caesurae, requiring the presence of both the ‘animal’ and the ‘black’ to locate itself” (9, *emphasis in original*). Because Kim’s argument is similar and also builds on an historical analysis of slavery and Western science

against which the categories of the human and the animal are erected. As discussed earlier, black(ened) people were variously and randomly placed in between these categories in Western philosophy and science through different processes of gendered and sexualized animalization. The plasticization of blackness throughout history thus shows that the binary relationship between the human and the animal is not stable. Rather, the human-animal binary is a “highly unstable and indeterminate relational hierarchy” that needs plasticized blackness to (re)establish itself (Jackson 2020, 77). This argument has important consequences for the field of critical animal studies and for critics of the human-animal binary. It is generally accepted that the human-animal binary is informed by a harmful anthropocentrism that produces both human and animal violence. However, Jackson shows that the human-animal binary is not only informed by anthropocentrism, but that the alleged superiority of humans over animals coincides with the abjection and plasticization of blackness. Importantly, Jackson’s argument has not been explored in critical animal studies before. In the next chapter, I start with discussing Jackson’s criticism of critical animal studies and the field’s understanding of the human-animal binary.

and taxonomy, I have chosen not to discuss her argument in this thesis. However, her discussion of the killing of Harambe shows how the connection between racism and animality functions in the present day. Harambe was killed to save a Black child. Discussions ensued over whether this killing was justified and whether it wasn’t actually the mother’s fault. Media also commented on the alleged criminal background of the family, suggesting that this background was somehow responsible for the death of Harambe. The discussion over the legitimacy of Harambe’s killing and the absurdity of the portrayal of the Black family illustrate that the media could not decide over who was the most abject: the ‘black’ or ‘the animal’. This shows, according to Kim, that the abjection of both blackness and animals is needed to erect the notion of the human.

III. Thinking with the race-animal connection

In this chapter I argue why the race-animal connection is important for Western philosophy. In doing so, I limit my argument specifically to philosophical reflections about what it means to be human. The fields of ontology and philosophical anthropology, in particular, engage with this question and how we relate to other beings.¹⁶ I first discuss Jackson's criticism of critical animal studies, the human-animal binary and show how this relates to Western philosophy. I then move on to theoretical and practical arguments for why the race-animal connection is important.

Problematizing the human-animal binary

Jackson's criticism of critical animal studies is twofold. First of all, she writes that recent scholarship in critical animal studies regards racialization as a by-product of the inferiorization of animals. In particular, animal studies is "slowly advancing the thesis that the human-animal binarism is the original and foundational paradigm on which discourse of human difference, including, or even especially, racialization was erected" (Jackson 2020, 12).¹⁷ The human-animal binary is thus seen as the source of racial dehumanization and animalization, in which the process of racialization is separated and understood as an effect of human difference and othering. However, as we have seen in the previous chapter, animalization *is* racialized. Therefore, the separation of animalization and racialization in critical animal studies is a fundamental mistake, because racialization is seen as a by-product or effect instead of being a fundamental part of the problem.

This mistaken separation of animalization and racialization relates to the debate on intersectionality that I discussed in the first chapter. As Boisseron (2018) argued, approaching the connection between race and animals comparatively rather than intersectionally causes debates over whose oppression was first or worse. This is undesirable, because it runs the risk of trivializing or marginalizing suffering, as we have seen in PETA's controversial exhibit "Are Animals the New Slaves?". The argument against a comparative approach also applies to the categories of gender, race and sexuality. As noted, Crenshaw argued in her foundational article on intersectionality that

¹⁶ I want to emphasize that I do not aim to argue that the race-animal connection is *necessary* for these fields. Such an argument would require a more rigorous demarcation of philosophers and/or philosophical theories. Because the race-animal connection has not received a lot of philosophical attention, my thesis aims to show the general relevance and importance of the race-animal connection for Western philosophical reflections on the human.

¹⁷ Jackson and Boisseron both direct their criticism at animal studies instead of critical animal studies. However, the difference between these two fields is not recognized by everyone. Jackson and Boisseron both speak of recent developments in animal studies and describe the field in a way that aligns with the more political and activist position of critical animal studies. I therefore take Jackson's criticism of animal studies as a criticism of critical animal studies as well.

Black women face different forms of gendered and sexualized oppression than white women because of the intersections of race, gender and sex (Crenshaw 1989). Therefore, these categories cannot be separated but should be studied in their interaction. The idea in critical animal studies that racialization is a by-product of the human-animal binary similarly suggests that the human-animal binary should be dismantled 'first'. It also marginalizes the centrality of racialized animalization in the human-animal binary.

The question that Jackson thus poses to scholars of critical animal studies is: can they adequately criticize and dismantle the human-animal binary when they do not acknowledge the centrality of racialization in this binary? To repeat, critical animal studies starts out from the argument that the human-animal binary lies at the root of animal suffering. This is because the human-animal binary is deeply anthropocentric: it marginalizes animals and considers humans to be superior. To tackle anthropocentrism, scholars of critical animal studies aim to be political and activist: their theories should contribute to the improvement of the lives of abused, exploited and endangered animals. At the heart of critical animal studies thus lies the belief that theory and praxis are inseparable. However, the attempt to dismantle the human-animal binary is incomplete because critical animal studies fundamentally misunderstands that animalization is racialized.

Jackson's second criticism is that animal studies does not sufficiently challenge liberal humanism. She argues that scholars of animal studies often do not critically question their understanding of 'the human'. She writes that "at present, animal studies scholarship tends to presume a humanity that is secure within the logic of liberal humanism rather than engage with a humanity that is often cast as debatable or contingent" (Jackson 2020, 16). This debated or contingent humanity is exactly the sort of ontological plasticization that I discussed in the previous chapter. Liberal humanism idealizes the human subject, whereas the 'other' is plasticized – it functions as its negative counterpart and can take any form as long as it keeps the liberal human subject in its allegedly superior place. An example that Jackson discusses is the criticism of anthropocentrism in critical animal studies. The alleged superiority of humans is questioned and challenged but it is still assumed that this superiority is *universal* instead of established by liberal humanism.

Crucially, the human-animal binary and anthropocentrism are problematized in philosophy as well. Calarco (2008) argues in *Zoographies* that "the kinds of questions and concerns central to animal studies should become more important for philosophy in general and for Continental philosophers in particular" (2). Calarco holds that philosophy has a unique role to play in answering to these questions and concerns, because animal studies needs a transformation of the underlying ontologies that lead to the human-animal binary. At the same time, he argues that "philosophers

have traditionally written about animals in reductive and essentialist terms” (Calarco 2008, 4). Philosophers have not considered animals in their own right but animality was used to demarcate the category of the human.

For Calarco (2008), Continental philosophy is particularly fit to dismantle the human-animal binary because it is committed to “existential, ethical and sociopolitical issues” (2). With “ethical issues”, he is not referring to ethics in the Anglo-American tradition but rather, as he writes, in the Levinasian sense of being ‘faced by the other’ (5). Without diving into Levinas’ ethics of Otherness, Levinasian ethics do not involve moral rules or prescribe how to behave ethically. It is rather focused on ethical questions such as how to respond to the other and how to take ethical responsibility for the other. Calarco engages with these sorts of ethical questions regarding the animal. Like scholars of critical animal studies, he argues that an ethical response to the animal cannot be anthropocentric. Therefore, he explores in what ways Continental philosophy can conceptualize non-anthropocentric thinking about the animal.

Calarco’s book is relevant because he argues that the insights of critical animal studies are important for Western philosophy. The main argument of his book is that “the human-animal distinction cannot and ought no longer to be maintained” (Calarco 2008, 3). He articulates this argument in strong terms, writing that philosophers “cannot proceed with business as usual” (63). If we accept Calarco’s premise that much of Western philosophy is anthropocentric, Jackson’s criticism of critical animal studies could also apply to Calarco’s arguments.¹⁸ In any case, Calarco does not address the raciality of the human-animal binary. He acknowledges that the ‘universal’ category of the human excludes both human and nonhuman beings, but he still views these exclusions as separate issues. For instance, he argues that philosophical critiques of the ‘universal human’ usually revolve around the human, but that there is “no parallel analysis of how the universal functions (falsely) to exclude not only those human beings who are not recognized as such but also those ‘nonhuman’ animals who are figured by and excluded from the universal” (Calarco 2008, 10). Calarco thus directs his attention to the animal, but he does not acknowledge the connection between racialization and animalization.

Calarco (2008) even concludes in his book that “we should simply let the human-animal distinction go” (149), overlooking the fact that the race-animal connection has hardly been

¹⁸ Calarco is not alone in arguing that Western philosophy is harmfully anthropocentric. For instance, Derrida (2002) and Agamben (2002) are notable philosophers who argue that Western thought is anthropocentric. Fields like critical animal studies, eco-phenomenology and environmental ethics also start out from the idea that the anthropocentric relationship between humans and animals is harmful and needs to change.

discussed in both critical animal studies and Western philosophy.¹⁹ I argue that this call to ‘simply’ let go of the distinction relates to Jackson’s criticism of posthumanism in her review article “Animal: New Directions in the Theorization of Race and Posthumanism” (2013). Jackson argues that posthumanists still presume a universal notion of the human that we need to go beyond, without questioning who this ‘we’ is. In the words of African philosopher Lewis Gordon (1998): “dominant groups can ‘give up’ humanism for the simple fact that *their humanity* is presumed”, whereas “other communities have struggled too long for the humanist prize” (39, *emphasis in original*). This means that predominantly Western and European thinkers can go ‘beyond’ humanism whereas African-Americans were not included in the humanist tradition. Thus, the argument to go ‘beyond’ the human or to ‘simply’ let go of the human-animal binary ignores their racial context.²⁰

The question now arises: why is this problematic? A skeptical response would be that it is not, because philosophers and scholars of posthumanism and critical animal studies cannot always include race, just like they cannot always include gender, sexuality, class, caste, age and ability. However, as discussed before, an intersectional approach does not mean that all categories of identity can and should be included at all times. Instead, the problem with critical animal studies and Calarco’s argument is that they misunderstand the relationship between the human-animal binary and racialization. They cannot be approached as separate issues, because racialization and animalization are two sides of the same coin. Thus, if critical animal studies truly aims to be intersectional, they should at the very least address the raciality of the human-animal binary and the centrality of racialized animalization. Likewise, if Calarco is right in arguing that Western philosophy can no longer ignore the question of the animal, this means that Western philosophers should turn their attention to race as well, and not in a way that reinforces racism and the abjection of blackness and animality.

¹⁹ Calarco is not clear on whether we can actually let the human-animal binary go. In *Zoographies*, he first suggests that we should analyze the human-animal binary from a historical and genealogical perspective in order to “desediment and denaturalize” it (140). This means that philosophers need to deconstruct the presuppositions behind the human-animal binary. However, he also shows throughout his book that the attempt to dismantle the human-animal binary runs the risk of reinforcing anthropocentrism. Calarco concludes, finally, that we should ‘simply’ let the human-animal binary go. However, he does not specify how, and his claim contrasts with the unanswered question on whether or how this is actually possible. In any case, Calarco does show that the wish to ‘overcome’ the binary completely is idle, because the argument that there is no difference between humans and animals *at all* reinforces an uncritical focus on human perspective. Therefore, the answer to this question should be sought in the margins and not in an ‘either/or’ framework that repeats binaristic thinking.

²⁰ This also applies to other ‘post’-movements, such as post-race. See Lentin 2014.

The erasure of race

In the previous section I argued that Western philosophy should turn its attention to the race-animal connection. This is an extension of Calarco's argument that philosophy can no longer ignore the question of the animal. However, the question still remains: why is it important that philosophy does so? It is not only a matter of understanding the connection between animalization and racialization correctly for the sake of being correct, but there are actual lives at stake. In this section I discuss what happens when the centrality of race is 'erased' and I reflect on the relationship between theory and praxis.

In "Blackness and the Pitfalls of Anthropocene Ethics", Axelle Karera (2019) argues that debates about the Anthropocene 'erase' the centrality of race and racism. The Anthropocene is the name for our current era in which human activity has a catastrophic impact on the Earth's climate, biodiversity and ecosystems (Karera 2019). She discusses several theories on ethics in the Anthropocene. These ethics commonly agree that the massive scale of climate destruction shows the extent to which humans, animal and nature are interdependent (Karera 2019, 35). The Anthropocene has exposed this interdependency, but also shows the catastrophic effects of anthropocentrism. The general consensus in Anthropocene ethics is that human's alleged superiority over animals and nature is the conceptual root of climate destruction. To tackle this anthropocentrism, Anthropocene ethics emphasize the values of interdependency, kinship and relationality (Karera 2019, 34). But again, the question is: which humans? As Jackson argued, anthropocentrism is not a problem of *all* humans, but it is a problem of liberal humanism. The superiority of the liberal humanist subject is predicated on the abjection of blackness and animality and establishes itself as though this superiority is universal. It is therefore unsurprising that Anthropocene ethics largely ignores the specific racial geography of climate injustice, such as neocolonial tourism, toxic waste and littering, the military practices of resource extraction and the treatment of climate refugees (Center for Sustainable Systems 2020; Karera 2019).²¹

Karera calls this the 'erasure of race'. Critical animal studies and posthumanism also contribute to this erasure by going 'beyond' the human and the human-animal binary without considering *who* it is that can or should go beyond these notions. Importantly, Karera argues that this erasure of race leads to solutions to the climate crisis that are not solutions for racialized peoples, because their position is not considered or included. As Karera (2019) points out: "the Anthropocene erasure of race anticipates a post-apocalyptic 'recalibration' of anti-black racist

²¹ There is a lot of literature about race in the Anthropocene and environmental racism. See for instance the Special Issue "Race in the Anthropocene and Race, Immigration and Refugees" in *Critical Philosophy of Race* 7 (1): 2019. For a factsheet on global environmental injustice, see Center for Sustainable Systems 2020.

practices” (34). In general, this argument applies to any theory that erases race. If the centrality of race is not considered by those fields that aim to contribute to ethical and political issues, how can scholars produce knowledge that can account for antiblack violence? And if the centrality of race is erased in debates about climate injustice and animal suffering, how can scholars understand that these issues are not only predicated on the abjection of animals, but also of blackness? The erasure of race in multiple debates regarding the human and the animal thus leads to antiblack violence in both theory and practice, ensuring that theories unequipped to account for race and racialization will be repeated in different ways.

Scholars should therefore acknowledge the centrality of racialized animalization in the human-animal binary and the liberal humanist subject in Western philosophy. As noted, this white, Western and liberal humanist subject is formed through the history of colonialism, Black slavery and liberalism. The erasure of race leads to a re-instantiation of this liberal humanist subject because its antiblackness is not interrogated but rather left intact. This is exactly why the race-animal connection is important: it historicizes and situates the category of the human by evoking the question: which humans am I talking/writing/thinking about? It shows that antiblackness underlies the human-animal binary and challenges the alleged universality of ‘the human’. Thus, the race-animal connection is indispensable to (philosophical) reflections on what it means to be human.

This is all the more important because many scholars in Black studies and decolonial theory argue that Western philosophy is particularly prone to erase race. Maldonado-Torres et al. (2018) argue in “Decolonising Philosophy” that Western philosophy is particularly hesitant to address its colonial origins in comparison to other disciplines in the humanities. They write that “philosophy as a field or a discipline in modern Western universities remains a bastion of Eurocentrism, whiteness in general, and white heteronormative male structural privilege and superiority in particular” (46). Similarly, Linda Martín Alcoff (2017) argues that the alleged superiority of American-European philosophy perpetuates the production of white, Eurocentric philosophy. Kristie Dotson (2012) argues that philosophy is “a white man’s game” and that the prevalence of Eurocentric philosophy and white professors makes the field of philosophy unattractive for diverse philosophers (4). Western philosophy departments have a “culture of justification” in which diverse philosophers have to spend a disproportionate amount of time justifying why their work is properly philosophical according to Eurocentric norms (Dotson 2012). It is no wonder that Jackson (2020) writes that we “will not find an effort justifying or trying to convince anyone that black thought has something to say about European Continental thought and it is valuable to do so” (35). The arguments of Maldonado Torres et al., Alcoff and Dotson thus show that Western

philosophy is particularly prone to perpetuate theories that universalize the Western genre of the human. This calls for a decolonization of philosophy that dismantles false claims to universality.

Still, the persuasiveness of this argument relies on how one views the task of Western philosophy. As Gordon (2019) points out, some view philosophy as “a battle for truth”, in which philosophers scrutinize each other’s arguments for fallacies (21). Others argue that the “definitive mission of philosophy is to provide a basis for understanding the world”, based on rational inquiry (Rescher 2017, 32). In this understanding, philosophy is a purely theoretical enterprise that aims at devising rational systems for understanding the world in the most correct way. Yet others argue that philosophy is the art of living, motivated by self-trust and the love for one’s soul (Tanesini 2017). Furthermore, the vast array of subdisciplines in Western philosophy (ethical and political philosophy, philosophy of mind, phenomenology, logic, philosophical anthropology and many more) are based on different presuppositions and engage with different topics. Philosophers that view philosophy as purely theoretical and apolitical might therefore disagree with the (historical) analyses of decolonial theorists and Black studies scholars. Nonetheless, building on the race-animal connection, I argue in the following section that there is a fundamental relationship between theory and praxis, namely between philosophical theory and the material living conditions of human and nonhuman beings.

Theory, praxis and academic responsibility

A further claim to be developed here is that the race-animal connection is important because it exposes the relationship between theory and praxis. Both Jackson and Wynter start out from the premise that theory and praxis are intertwined, which means that concepts and theories have material effects. This premise is also accepted by scholars of critical animal studies, who hold that a transformation of thinking about animals should lead to an improvement of their material living conditions. I now want to pose this question to philosophers in ontology and philosophical anthropology as well. What is the aim of thinking about what it means to be human? If the category of the human is implicated in antiblack violence, what kind of role does philosophy have in ending this violence? How can we, as scholars, conceptualize ‘the human’ and the ‘animal’ in a way that accounts for this violence and even possibly prevents it? I agree with many feminist (and decolonial) scholars that knowledge is embodied and situated (Ahmed 2006; Alcoff 2017; Haraway 1988). This means that the geographical location of the philosopher, their possibility for labor, and their cultural, economic and political environment influence their philosophies. Philosophical reflections on the human are not abstract and universal: they are historical and implicated in actual, material living conditions of humans and animals alike.

The work of both Wynter and Jackson start out from this relationship between theory and praxis. Jackson (2020) argues for instance that “the pursuit of an observable and comparative basis of racial taxonomy and typology is central to the rise of empirical science, an organizing principle, not a matter merely incidental to it” (173). Moreover, she argues that these racial taxonomies still influence scientific classification and measurements today. At the same time, more and more emerging research proves that the enduring stress and traumatic effects of antiblack racism have an “incomparably debilitating impact on psychological, cognitive, and allostatic systems” and lead to problems with hormonal, cardiovascular, immune and metabolic functioning (Jackson 2020, 196; Holoién 2012; Krieger 1990; Salvatore and Shelton 2007; Utsey et al. 2008; Williams 1999). The influence of these racial taxonomies and their material effects are for instance shown in the racial health disparity regarding breast cancer among Black and white women. Not only are Black women more likely to get breast cancer, the cancer is less often diagnosed correctly and in time (Jackson 2020; Taylor et al. 2007). Thus, scientific racism not only still informs modern-day science, but antiblack racism also produces long-lasting negative effects on the body.

In “No Humans Involved: An Open Letter to my Colleagues”, Wynter (1994) argues that the relationship between theory and praxis comes with academic responsibility. The motive for her article is the beating of Rodney King in 1991. As mentioned in the introduction, public officials in Los Angeles routinely used the acronym N.H.I. – No Humans Involved – to refer to cases that involved unemployed Black men. These three letters signified an institutional dismissal of their humanity and a free pass to treat these men in any way they pleased. Wynter asks: Where did this acronym come from? And why is it used by public officials who supposedly received the highest form of education in society – the university?

Wynter (1994) argues that the “founding premise” of the acronym N.H.I. is the Western biocentric genre of the human, Man (47). As we have seen in chapter two, this biocentric genre of the human secures itself through evolutionary narratives in which the white, Western man is seen as the most natural and superior ‘race’. The acronym N.H.I. thus refers to the exclusion of poor, jobless Black men from the domain of Man. It is a blatant example of the way antiblack violence is connected to the Western category of the human. To answer the second question, Wynter turns to academia. Through a discussion of Paul Ricoeur and Asmarom Legesse, she asserts that scholars are the “grammarians of our present order” who produce systems of knowledge through which to understand ourselves and the world (Wynter 1994, 57). What then, is our responsibility as university scholars, as grammarians of the present order? In Wynter’s words, “how can we marry our thought so that we can now pose the questions whose answers can resolve the plight of the jobless archipelagos, the N.H.I. categories, and the environment?” (65). This question has become

ever more urgent. The number of (unarmed) Black people killed by the police in the United States has reached endemic proportions (Chaney and Robertson 2015). The climate crisis has worsened, as well as the unequal geographical and racial distribution of its effects (Center for Sustainable Systems 2020; “Climate change indicators” 2020).

For Wynter, the answer lies in the category of the *liminal*, which are categories like N.H.I. that form the ground on which ‘the human’ is predicated. She writes that “it is only when such a category moves out of its negated place that the grammarians of an order [...] can be freed from their system-maintaining ‘structural models’ and prescriptive categories” (Wynter 1994, 67). In other words, only the categories that are abjected by liberal humanism can challenge its hegemony because of their liminality: they are both inside and outside of liberal humanism. These categories are both abjected and necessary for the establishment of the liberal humanist subject. To truly dismantle the racial human-animal binary and challenge the violent abjection of both animality and blackness, scholars need to think from and with the position of these categories. Furthermore, without the intervention of the liminal, the structural models and prescriptive categories through which scholars understand the world are “system-maintaining”. This means that the structural models and prescriptive categories that produce the categories of N.H.I. – and that I have shown are violent and racist – reproduce themselves unless scholars take on the responsibility to think from and with the liminal and to critically reflect on the knowledge that they produce.

Wynter and Jackson both show that theory and praxis are intertwined. Racist taxonomies influence science and health care, and the raciality of the human-animal binary expressed in the category N.H.I. legitimizes antiblack violence and oppression. Thus, the race-animal connection shows that ontological theories on the human affect the material conditions in which racialized humans and animals live and are exposed to death. Therefore, not only should Western philosophy turn its attention towards the race-animal connection because of the aspiration to tackle anthropocentrism (Calarco 2008), but also because research into the race-animal connection exposes the relationship between theory and praxis. This means that philosophers have a responsibility to take the race-animal connection into account when they think about what it means to be human. It also means that whether they accept this responsibility or not: theories about the human are entangled with actual living human beings and animals.

Where does the race-animal connection take us (philosophers)? For Jackson (2020), the race-animal connection suggests a radical questioning of the human and “may even signal [...] an urgent demand for the dissolution of ‘human’” (21). Jackson does not specify what this dissolution entails, but she does emphasize that African diasporic art and literature produces non-binaristic models of human-animal relationships that “preserve alterity while undermining the nonhuman

and animality's abjection" (18). The latter is especially important, because Jackson is less interested in replacing liberal humanism with another form of humanism or prescriptive theory on how to be human or treat animals. Rather, she focuses on the exploration of new ontologies and epistemologies that are not based on the abjection of blackness and animality. These epistemologies and ontologies can be found in philosophy, but also in art, poetry and literature. Because Black people have generally been excluded from the domains of Western philosophy and politics, Jackson shows the importance of looking beyond philosophy as well. Therefore, the importance of the works of Octavia Butler's *Bloodchild*, Toni Morrison's *Beloved*, Audre Lorde's *The Cancer Journals* and Wangechi Mutu's *Histology of the Different Classes of Uterine Tumors* cannot go unmentioned. In *Becoming Human*, these books and art are a vital part of Jackson's analyses and arguments.

Turning our attention towards the race-animal connection means that Western philosophy should challenge Eurocentrism and liberal humanism. Western philosophy needs interventions of scholars like Jackson, Wynter, Karera and Weheliye, who turn the category of the human into an ontological battleground. At the same time, philosophy needs to learn from Black studies and philosophy how to dismantle the category of the human. This means that the philosopher and the humans they write about are not presumed, idealized or erased. As Jackson writes, theories on the human need a perspective that does not "arise from beyond the imperatives of viewpoint and judgement, but *as position* or the entanglement of viewpoint and judgement" (Jackson 2015, 217). The race-animal connection thus calls for two separate, yet related demands: it requires that Western philosophy acknowledges and investigates the violent and racist history of the human-animal binary, and it requires that philosophers will, from now on, situate themselves and 'the human' in their proper place and time.

Conclusion

Things are in, but they do not have, a world, a place, but it is precisely both the specificity of having neither world nor place and the generality of not having that we explore at the nexus of openness and confinement, internment and flight. (Moten 2013, 751)

If an essential feature of your existence is that the norm is not able to take hold, what mode of being becomes available, and what mode might you invent? (Jackson 2020, 66)

Jackson and Moten write that there is a power in blackness: the power to invent new ways of being and thinking about humanity. This is because blackness is both included in and excluded from the liberal humanist realm of 'humanity'. From the perspective of the race-animal connection, I argued why it is important to dismantle the Western category of the human. This category, which is formed through liberal humanism, is predicated on the abjection of blackness and animality while at the same time establishing itself as universal. Research into the race-animal connection not only dismantles this alleged universality, but also shows the task at hand: philosophical inquiries into what it means to be human can no longer presume an idealized and universalized version of being human. Instead, Western philosophy needs to challenge its Eurocentrism and learn from interventions like Jackson's to imagine new ways of being and knowing. These new ways of being and knowing cannot any longer be produced by a liberal humanist subject that is predicated on racialized animalization and the abjection of animals. In this thesis I have argued why.

In the first and introductory chapter, I elaborated on the fields of Black studies and critical animal studies. Because the race-animal connection builds on core concepts from these fields, I found it important to carefully explain my understanding of them. I also introduced the main stakes and problems of the race-animal connection. The most important problem is the comparative approach, which trivializes suffering and leads to comparisons of suffering. As my understanding of oppression is intersectional, I do not wish to engage in these debates. I therefore argued that I explore the race-animal connection to gain a better understanding of the entanglement of racism and animality, which expresses itself as processes of (de)humanization and animalization.

In the second chapter, I elaborated on the concept of liberal humanism and explained the central argument of this thesis: racialization is (gendered and sexualized) animalization. Through an historical analysis, I showed how the concepts of race and species co-evolved with each other and should be addressed in their interrelation. I also argued, through Wynter and Hartman, that the Western notion of the human is formed through the history of colonialism, slavery, Enlightenment thought, and liberalism. The values underlying this notion of the human is what

Jackson has called ‘liberal humanism’. Though a broad and underdefined concept, liberal humanism shows that antiblackness is involved in nearly all segments of Western modern history. To a skeptic or critic, this historical analysis possibly appears as cherry-picking. I would like to reply with Michel Rolph-Trouillot’s book *Silencing the Past* (1995), in which he argues that the making of history is a matter of power and a matter of choosing which facts and events are highlighted. “The past – or more accurately, pastness – is a position” (Trouillot 1995, 15). Jackson and Wynter both show the erased and silenced parts of Western history, whose silences still inform Western societies today.

In the third chapter, I have made a case for Western philosophy, specifically the subdisciplines in philosophy that inquire into what it means to be human. I first extensively discussed Jackson’s criticism of animal studies and argued on the basis of Calarco’s *Zoographies* that this criticism extends to Western philosophy as well. I then formulated a theoretical and practical argument for why the race-animal connection is important to philosophy. Firstly, I argued that the erasure of race in academic and philosophical debates perpetuates the production of knowledge that is unequipped to address issues of race and racialization. On the basis of the relationship between theory and praxis, I then argued that the erasure of race also perpetuates antiblack racism and violence. I ended the chapter with something I consider to be very important: academic responsibility. Drawing on Wynter’s article “No Humans Involved”, I argued that philosophers are responsible for the knowledge that they produce and should reflect on their “inner eyes” – on the descriptive and prescriptive ideas about being in the world – in order to take this responsibility (Wynter 1994, 44). The title of this thesis is an homage to Wynter’s article and her argument for academic responsibility.

Regarding these “inner eyes”, there is much work to be done. My thesis falls short in multiple ways. First of all, I exclusively focus on knowledge produced in the United States and Western-Europe. Although I urge that Western philosophy should be less Eurocentric, this thesis still argues for a transformation *within* Western thought. Still, I think that the effort to adequately address the race-animal connection in Western philosophy can (and should) complement the exploration of non-Eurocentric ways of imagining animality and humanity. Another possible criticism is that there is a dissonance between Afro-American and European concepts of race. Although this is true, it does not diminish the importance of the race-animal connection for Western philosophy. As Dienke Hondius points out in *Blackness in Europe* (2014), Western-Europe’s relationship to race is influenced by nazi ideologies about race. After the Holocaust, there was a general desire to never speak about race again (Hondius 2014, 39). In the United States, the word ‘race’ still carries a different connotation than in Western-Europe. However, Hondius also

shows that the color-blindness specific to Western Europe does not mean that it succeeded in abolishing racism. I thus want to acknowledge that, indeed, the history and concept of race differs in the United States and Western-Europe, but that the insights from the predominantly Northern-American field of Black studies are nonetheless of immense importance. Furthermore, this criticism only shows the importance of further research on antiblack racism in Western-Europe.

Another suggestion for further research is to explore the race-animal connection in relation to gender. As I briefly explained in the first chapter, much research has already been done within critical animal studies on the connection between animals and gender. However, it is important that this relationship between animals, gender and sexuality is investigated from the perspective of blackness as well. Jackson shows that animalization is gendered and sexualized and that the Black female body has functioned as the limit case of the Western category of the human. An intersectional attitude thus requires more research on the intersections of race, gender, sexuality and animality. And which other axes of identity have been used to form the oppressive and violent human-animal binary?

In any case, I argued that Western philosophy in its current Eurocentric form will not answer these questions. We (philosophers) need to turn to art, poetry, literature and philosophies that are excluded from the label 'philosophy' on the basis of being non-Western. In our desire to go beyond the human or to challenge the human-animal binary, philosophers need to address the centrality of the race-animal connection. There is no true 'moving on' or 'letting go' of the violent categories of the human and the animal without addressing this centrality first.

Bibliography

- Agamben, Giorgio. 2004. *The Open: Man and Animal*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Ahmed, Sara. 2006. *Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects, Others*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Alcoff, Linda Martín. 2017. "Philosophy and Philosophical Practice." In *The Routledge Handbook of Epistemic Injustice*, 397-408. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Allais, Lucy. 2016. "Kant's Racism." *Philosophical Papers* 45 (1-2): 1-36.
- Andrews, Kehinde. 2020. "Blackness, Empire and Migration: How Black Studies Transforms the Curriculum." *Area* 52 (4): 701-7.
- Bell, Duncan. 2016. "What Is Liberalism?." In *Reordering the World*, 62-90. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Bentham, Jeremy. (1789) 1996. *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation*. In *The Collected Works of Jeremy Bentham*, edited by J. H. Burns and H. L. A. Hart. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Bernasconi, Robert, and Sybol Cook. 2003. *Race and Racism in Continental Philosophy*. Bloomington, Indiana University Press.
- Bernasconi, Robert, and Tommy Lee Lott. 2000. *The Idea of Race*. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing.
- Bhambra, Gurminder K., Dalia Gebrial, and Kerem Nişancıoğlu, eds. 2018. *Decolonising the University*. Chicago: Pluto Press.
- Bobo, Jacqueline, Cynthia Hudley, and Claudine Michel, eds. 2004. "Introduction." In *The Black Studies Reader*, 1-12. New York: Routledge.
- Boisseron, Bénédicte. 2018. *Afro-Dog: Blackness and the Animal Question*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Calarco, Matthew. 2008. *Zoographies: The Question of the Animal from Heidegger to Derrida*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Center for Sustainable Systems, University of Michigan. 2020. "Environmental Justice Factsheet." Pub. No. CSS17-16. <https://public.wmo.int/en/media/press-release/climate-change-indicators-and-impacts-worsened-2020>. (Accessed May 22, 2021).
- Césaire, Aimé. 2001. *Discourse on Colonialism*. Translated by Joan Pinkham. New York: Monthly Review Press.
- Chaney, Cassandra and Ray V. Robertson. 2015. "Armed and Dangerous? An Examination of Fatal Shootings of Unarmed Black People by Police." *The Journal of Pan African Studies* 8, (4): 45-78.
- Chen, Mel Y. 2012. *Animacies: Biopolitics, Racial Mattering, and Queer Affect*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- "Climate Change Indicators and Impacts Worsened in 2020." 2021. World Meteorological Organization. April 19, 2021. <https://public.wmo.int/en/media/press-release/climate-change-indicators-and-impacts-worsened-2020>. (Accessed May 22, 2021).
- Copson, Andrew. 2015. "What Is Humanism?" In *The Wiley Blackwell Handbook of Humanism*, 1-33. Chichester: Wiley Blackwell.
- Crenshaw, Kimberlé. 1988. "Race, Reform, and Retrenchment: Transformation and Legitimation in Antidiscrimination Law." *Harvard Law Review* 101 (7): 1331-87.
- . 1989. "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of

- Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory, and Antiracist Politics.” In *Feminist Legal Theory*, edited by Katherine Bartlett and Rosanne Kennedy, 57-80. New York: Routledge.
- Derrida, Jacques. 2002. Translated by David Wills. “The Animal That Therefore I Am (More to Follow).” *Critical Inquiry* 28 (2): 369-418.
- Dotson, Kristie. 2012. “How Is This Paper Philosophy?” *Comparative Philosophy* 3 (1): 3-29.
- Fanon, Frantz. (1952) 2008. *Black Skin, White Masks*. London: Pluto Press.
- Goldenberg, David M. 2005. “What Did Ham Do to Noah?” In “*The Words of a Wise Man’s Mouth Are Gracious*” (*Qob 10,12*), edited by Mauro Perani. Berlin, 257-266. Boston: De Gruyter.
- Gordon, Lewis. 2019. “Decolonizing Philosophy.” *The Southern Journal of Philosophy* 57 (1): 16-36.
- Gordon, Lewis and Jane Anna Gordon, eds. 2006. *A Companion to African-American Studies*. Blackwell Companions in Cultural Studies 11. Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub.
- Grosfoguel, Ramón. 2013. “The Structure of Knowledge in Westernized Universities: Epistemic Racism/Sexism and the Four Genocides/Epistemicides of the Long 16th Century.” *Human Architecture: Journal of the Sociology of Self-Knowledge* 11 (1): 73-90.
- Hantel, Max. 2018. “What Is It Like to Be a Human?: Sylvia Wynter on Autopoiesis.” *PhiloSOPHLA* 8 (1): 61-79.
- Haraway, Donna. 1988. “Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective.” *Feminist Studies* 14 (3): 575-99.
- . 2013. *When Species Meet*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Harris Jr, Robert L. 2004. “The Intellectual and Institutional Development of Africana Studies.” In *The Black Studies Reader*, edited by Jacqueline Bobo, Cynthia Hudley, and Claudine Michel, 15-21. New York: Routledge.
- Hartman, Saidiya. 1997. *Scenes of Subjection: Terror, Slavery, and Self-making in Nineteenth-century America*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Hegel, Georg W.F. (1837) 1975. *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History*, edited by Johannes Hoffmeister. Translated by H. B. Nisbet. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Holoien, Deborah Son, and Nicole Shelton. 2012. “You Deplete Me: The Cognitive Costs of Colorblindness on Ethnic Minorities.” *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* 48 (2): 562-65.
- Hondius, Dienne. 2014. *Blackness in Western Europe. Racial Patterns of Paternalism and Exclusion*. London: Routledge.
- Jackson, Zakiyyah Iman. 2013. “Animal: New Directions in the Theorization of Race and Posthumanism.” *Feminist Studies* 39 (3): 669-85.
- . 2015. “Outer Worlds: The Persistence of Race in Movement Beyond the Human.” *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 21(2): 215-218.
- . 2020. *Becoming Human: Matter and Meaning in an Antiracist World*. Sexual Cultures. New York: New York University Press.
- . 2021. “On Race, Species and Becoming Human - An evening with Zakiyyah Iman Jackson.” Online event by Kaaitheater, 25 March 2021.
- Karera, Axelle. 2019. “Blackness and the Pitfalls of Anthropocene Ethics.” *Critical Philosophy of Race* 7 (1): 32-56.
- Keaton, Trica. 2018. “Race.” In *Keywords for African American Studies*, edited by Erica R. Edwards, Roderick A. Ferguson, and Jeffrey Ogbonna Green Ogbar, 163-168. New York: New York University Press.

- Kim, Claire Jean 2017. "Murder and Mattering in Harambe's House." *Politics and Animals* 3: 1-15.
- Kleingeld, Pauline. 2019. "On Dealing with Kant's Sexism and Racism" *SGIR Review* 2 (2): 3-22.
- Krieger, Nancy. 1990. "Racial and Gender Discrimination: Risk Factors for High Blood Pressure?" *Social Science & Medicine* 30 (12): 1273-81.
- Lentin, Alana. 2014. "Post-Race, Post Politics: The Paradoxical Rise of Culture after Multiculturalism." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 37 (8): 1268-85.
- Locke, John. (1689) 2002. *The Second Treatise of Government: And, A Letter Concerning Toleration*. New York: Dover Publications.
- Maldonado-Torres, Nelson and Rafael Vizcaíno, Jasmine Wallace and Jeong Eun Annabel We. 2018. "Decolonising Philosophy." In *Decolonising the University*, edited by Gurminder K. Bhambra, Dalia Gebrial and Kerem Nişancıoğlu, 64-92. London: Pluto Press.
- Mbembe, Achille. 2001. *On the Postcolony*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- McCarney, Joseph and Bernasconi, Robert. 2003. "Hegel's Racism?" *Radical Philosophy* 119: 32-37.
- Meijer, Eva. 2019. *De grenzen van mijn taal: een klein filosofisch onderzoek naar depressie*. Amsterdam: Uitgeverij Cossee.
- Mill, John Stuart. (1869) 2001. *The Subjection of Women*, edited by Edward Alexander. New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers.
- Mills, Charles W. 2008. "Racial Liberalism." *PMLA* 123 (5): 1380-97.
- . 2014. "Kant and Race, Redux." *Graduate Faculty Philosophy Journal* 35 (1/2): 125-57.
- . 2017. "Philosophy and the Racial Contract." In *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy and Race*, edited by Naomi Zack, 65-77. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Moten, Fred. 2013. "Blackness and Nothingness (Mysticism in the Flesh)." *South Atlantic Quarterly* 112 (4): 737-80.
- Mulder, Vera, and Riffy Bol. 2020. "Institutioneel racisme in Nederland: wat het is, waar het zit, en wat jij eraan kunt doen." *De Correspondent*. June 10, 2020. <https://decorrespondent.nl/11317/institutioneel-racisme-in-nederland-wat-het-is-waar-het-zit-en-wat-jij-eraan-kunt-doen/464087536-47232adb>. (Accessed May 22, 2021).
- Nash, Jennifer. 2008. "Re-thinking Intersectionality." *Feminist review*, 89 (1): 1-15.
- Nocella II, Anthony J, John Sorenson, Kim Socha, and Atsuko Matusoka, eds. 2014. "Introduction: The Emergence of Critical Animal Studies: The Rise of Intersectional Animal Liberation." In *Defining Critical Animal Studies: An Intersectional Social Justice Approach for Liberation*, xx-xxxvi. Counterpoints: Studies in the Postmodern Theory of Education, v. 448. New York: Peter Lang.
- Patterson, Orlando. 1982. *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Rawls, John. 1993. *Political Liberalism*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Rescher, Nicholas. 2017. "Philosophy as Rational Systemization." In *The Cambridge Companion to Philosophical Methodology*, edited by Giuseppina D'Oro and Søren Overgaard, 32-44. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Ryan, Alan. 2017. "Liberalism." In *A Companion to Contemporary Political Philosophy*, edited by Robert Goodin, Philip Pettit and Thomas Winfried Menko Pogge, 360-382. Oxford: Blackwell Pub.
- Salvatore, Jessica, and J. Nicole Shelton. 2007. "Cognitive Costs of Exposure to Racial Prejudice." *Psychological Science* 18 (9): 810-15.
- Schiebinger, Londa L. 1993. *Nature's Body: Gender in the Making of Modern Science*. New Brunswick:

- Rutgers University Press.
- Scott, Darieck. 2010. *Extravagant Abjection: Blackness, Power, and Sexuality in the African American Literary Imagination*. Sexual Cultures. New York: New York University Press.
- Smith, Linda Tuhiwai. 1999. *Decolonizing Methodologies. Research and Indigenous Peoples*. London: Zed Books.
- Spillers, Hortense J. 2003. *Black, White, and in Color: Essays on American Literature and Culture*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Tanesini, Allesandra. 2017. "Doing Philosophy." In *The Cambridge Companion to Philosophical Methodology*, edited by Giuseppina D'Oro and Søren Overgaard, 13-32. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Taylor, Nik, and Richard Twine, eds. 2014. *The Rise of Critical Animal Studies: From the Margins to the Centre*. London: Routledge.
- Taylor, Teletia R., Carla D. Williams, Kephher H. Makambi, Charles Mouton, Jules P. Harrell, Yvette Cozier, Julie R. Palmer, Lynn Rosenberg, and Lucile L. Adams-Campbell. 2007. "Racial Discrimination and Breast Cancer Incidence in US Black Women: The Black Women's Health Study." *American Journal of Epidemiology* 166 (1): 46-54.
- Trouillot, Michel-Rolph. 1995. *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- "Twintig mensen vervolgd voor bedreiging Sylvana Simons." Nu.nl. February 3, 2017. <https://www.nu.nl/algemeen/4440387/twintig-mensen-vervolgd-bedreiging-sylvana-simons.html>. (Accessed March 2021).
- Utsey, Shawn, Norman Giesbrecht, Joshua Hook, and Pia Stanard. 2008. "Cultural, Sociofamilial, and Psychological Resources That Inhibit Psychological Distress in African Americans Exposed to Stressful Life Events and Race-Related Stress." *Journal of Counseling Psychology* 55: 49-62.
- Wanzo, Rebecca. 2018. "Popular." In *Keywords for African American Studies*, edited by Erica R. Edwards, Roderick A. Ferguson, and Jeffrey Ogbonna Green Ogbar, 155-160. New York: New York University Press.
- Warren, Calvin L. 2017. "Black Mysticism: Fred Moten's Phenomenology of (Black) Spirit." *Zeitschrift Für Anglistik Und Amerikanistik* 65 (2): 219-29.
- Weheliye, Alexander G. 2014. *Habeas Viscus: Racializing Assemblages, Biopolitics, and Black Feminist Theories of the Human*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Weil, Kari. 2012. *Thinking Animals: Why Animal Studies Now?* New York: Columbia University Press.
- Weitzenfeld, Adam and Melanie Joy. 2014. "An Overview of Anthropocentrism, Humanism, and Speciesism in Critical Animal Theory." In *Defining Critical Animal Studies: An Intersectional Social Justice Approach for Liberation*, edited by Anthony J. Nocella II, John Sorenson, Kim Socha, and Atsuko Matusoka, 3-28. York: Peter Lang.
- Wekker, Gloria. 2021. "Afropessimism." *European Journal of Women's Studies* 28 (1): 86-97.
- Wilderson III, Frank B. 2020. *Afropessimism*. New York: Liveright Publishing.
- Williams, David R. 1999. "Race, Socioeconomic Status, and Health The Added Effects of Racism and Discrimination." *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences* 896 (1): 173-88.
- Wolfe, Cary. 2009. "Human, All Too Human: 'Animal Studies' and the Humanities." *PMLA* 124 (2): 564-75.
- Wollstonecraft, Mary. (1792) 2014. *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman. Rethinking the Western*

- Tradition*, edited by Eileen Hunt Botting. New Heaven: Yale University Press.
- Wynter, Sylvia. 1994. "No Humans Involved: An Open Letter to my Colleagues." *Forum NHI: Knowledge for the 21st Century* 1 (1): 42-103. Stanford: Institute NHI.
- . 2000. "The Re-enchantment of Humanism: An Interview with Sylvia Wynter." *Small Axe* 8: 119-207.
- . 2003. "Unsettling the Coloniality of Being/Power/Truth/Freedom: Towards the Human, After Man, Its Overrepresentation--An Argument." *CR: The New Centennial Review* 3 (3): 257-337.
- Zack, Naomi, ed. 2017. *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy and Race*. New York: Oxford University Press.