**I**nternational
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**Book Review**

**Gavin Lamb, *Multispecies Discourse Analysis: The Nexus of Discourse and Practice in Sea Turtle Tourism and Conservation.*** London: Bloomsbury, 2024, xii + 236 pp., ISBN: 978-1-3502-2962-4

Reviewed by
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In a world increasingly attuned to post-humanist scholarship, Gavin Lamb's *Multispecies Discourse Analysis* (MDA) offers a timely and crucial theoretical lens through which we can reimagine human–nonhuman interactions, particularly within the context of "charismatic creatures" and "spectacular tourism" (Lorimer, 2015). Drawing on empirical data from the islands of Hawai'i, Lamb provides an insightful exploration into the complex relationships between humans and Hawaiian green sea turtles. His work challenges entrenched human-centric paradigms of meaning-making, opening a pathway for new forms of multispecies scholarship that transcend the traditional dichotomy between empathic humanitarianism and the profit-driven imperatives of capitalist imaginaries. Rather than reducing the sea turtle ecotourism industry to a site of conflict, Lamb expertly situates this spectacle within a framework that fosters dialogue and protection, emphasizing the necessity of redefining the relationship between humans and nonhumans.

The book is divided into three thoughtfully constructed sections. The first section establishes the theoretical foundations of MDA, examining how discourse, materiality, and multispecies agency, specifically between humans and turtles, interact within "regimes of expressivity" (Lamb, 2024, p. 192). Lamb begins by mapping the linguistic and discursive structures that inform the spectacle of ecotourism, with particular attention to the colonial legacies and capitalist imperatives that shape these narratives. From this foundation, he advocates for a reimagining of our relationship with nonhuman species, grounded in reflexive and metadiscursive constructions (p. 115). In this intellectual space, Lamb acknowledges the tensions inherent in the human–nonhuman relationship, notably the absence of a clear political voice for the sea turtle. However, rather than sidestepping this issue, Lamb presents a compelling shift in perspective, one that reframes the "us" through the lens of nonhuman charisma (Lorimer, 2007). In this context, the sea turtle is not a passive object of human interpretation but an active participant in the production of

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meaning, its agency shaped by how it is framed within the spectacle.

Separate chapters move beyond theory to examine the material semiotic processes that underpin the representation of nonhuman species independent of ecotourism contexts. Lamb focuses on specific events such as turtle nesting and basking as well as processes like sensing, communicating, foraging, and migrating. Through this examination, he subtly reveals how power operates in the narratives surrounding these creatures, particularly how human authorship, control, and mediation shape the discourse surrounding turtle activities. While Lamb does not explicitly frame this as a political act, the book underscores how the human gaze shapes and constrains the narratives of nonhuman creatures. In exploring these processes, Lamb presents a sophisticated view of discourse not merely as a representational tool but as a material force that shapes the world.

One crucial section foregrounds the ecocultural identities that emerge from human and nonhuman interactions, culminating in reframing the relationship between humans and sea turtles. By moving from a stance of otherness that situated these creatures in spectacular tourism to a co-constituted identity, Lamb invites readers to reconsider the dynamics of power and representation in the ecotourism industry. This shift from human-centered discourse to a more inclusive multispecies perspective offers a compelling argument for recognizing the agency of nonhumans in the production of meaning.

One of the book's significant contributions to the field of MDA is its treatment of discourse as a material semiotic reality, informed not only by human stakeholders but also by the nonhuman protagonists themselves. Lamb's work pushes the boundaries of eco-critical discourse, where nonhuman creatures are often treated as mere objects of analysis. Instead, it offers a framework that treats them as active participants in the socio-ecological worlds they inhabit. By foregrounding the perspectives of multiple stakeholders, both human and nonhuman, Lamb offers a robust methodology for understanding the complex networks of roles, influences, and power relations that inform these interactions.

Like any pioneering work, the book encourages questions: How do we navigate the practical challenges of reading multispecies discourse without imposing anthropocentric logic? In addition, the methodological openness of MDA risks becoming too dispersed when the book discusses the circuits that inform the nexus of sea turtle ecotourism and conservation. While Lamb, a multispecies scholar, intentionally gestures an avoidance of romanticization of nonhuman agency, this book, in unpacking the very nexus of discourse and action, frames this implicitly. Lamb's work invites such critical inquiries, encouraging us to reflect on the ethical implications of representing nonhuman agency and to consider the limits of our interpretative frameworks.

In sum, *Multispecies Discourse Analysis* is a bold and pioneering work that offers a complex, multi-layered approach to understanding the intersections of language, ecology, and power. Lamb ensures that sea turtles are not rendered voiceless but are instead granted political agency and recognized as active participants in the discourse that shapes their lives. This book challenges us to reconsider what communication means in a multispecies context, inviting a rethinking of our role as humans in a world that extends far beyond our

own species.

The book deserves a wide readership across disciplines such as linguistics, anthropology, ecology, and the environmental humanities, as well as among those engaged in ecotourism. More than scholarly work, *Multispecies Discourse Analysis* is a call to reconsider how humans inhabit the world with greater care, humility, and awareness. By reorienting our attention to the multispecies networks we are part of, Lamb provides us with the tools to engage critically with our ecological futures.

## References

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## Author's bio note

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