

## Abstract

Animals have a peculiar place in the works of Adalbert Stifter, a 19th century Czech and Austrian writer. He deals with them in his prose, but also in an unpublished essay „Zur Psychologie der Tiere“. Stifter's concepts of the animal are linked by the recurring figure of animal gaze. First, the thesis delineates Stifter's way of viewing animals within conventions and beyond them. Then, interpreting animal gaze in Stifter's prose is the work's main focus. In these texts, gaze represents a non-mechanistic view of the animal like a subject with soul, such as it was later explored in the philosophy of Martin Buber and Jacques Derrida. Yet Stifter also articulates the possibility of an impenetrable boundary between man and animal, established precisely through this gaze. Symbolic repression of danger is another important aspect in Stifter's works, emphasizing the ideal of a harmonious coexistence of all living things in nature cultivated by man. That is why the last chapter takes a look at the environment that humans and animals inhabit.