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EXPLORING THE ANIMAL TURN

Human-Animal Relations in Science, Society and Culture



Erika Andersson Cederholm
Amelie Björck, Kristina Jennbert
Ann-Sofie Lönngren (eds.)

Lund University



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Pufendorfinstitutet, Lund 2014

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INTRODUCTION

In October 2013, a group of 12 researchers set out to investigate that which in the humanities and social sciences has been called the “animal turn,” denoting a new nexus of interdisciplinary scholarly interest in the human-animal relationship, manifesting itself in conferences, courses, book series and academic journal themes. In general, this turn entails recognition of the fact that human and animal lives have always been entangled and that animals are omnipresent in human society on both metaphorical and practical, material levels. Animals play a crucial role in cultural metaphors, myths, and identity-making, in which they function as objects of both fear and desire. But they are also physically present in human homes and workplaces, and in local as well as global economies (often via forced labor). They are even inside our bodies in the form of friendly and unfriendly micro-organisms or, for many, as processed and consumed meat.

In a complex web of relationships, both of these levels (the representational and the material) structure society, in the spheres of education, law, science, economy, media, art, entertainment, and more. However, the ways in which human society deals with its co-existence with animals, and the ways it interacts with, uses, and handles them are complex and embedded in paradoxes. Indeed, tensions and connections emerge in systemic patterns of extinction and production as well as in socio-cultural and intersubjective relations, highlighting the fact that animals and the human-animal relationship are deeply affected by the structures of power. Thus, the human-animal relationship is not an innocent one. On the contrary, it consistently evokes ethical and sustainability-oriented questions, and requests more and better integrated knowledge.

The forming of our research group was a response to this need, which apparently is more urgent than ever in an era of social, scientific, and environmental change. With the complexity of the field in mind, we aimed towards dealing with “the question of the animal” in a multidisciplinary space, in which different perspectives might intersect in productive ways. Such scholarly exchange is difficult to make happen within the traditional, disciplinary frames of the academic setting. Luckily, we were given the chance to develop such a space at the Pufendorf Institute for Advanced Studies in Lund, Sweden.

For a period of eight months in 2013–2014, the work and inquiry of the Animal Turn group revolved around fundamental themes such as 1) The role of the natural sciences vis-à-vis social, ethical and other discourses in human-animal re-

lated knowledge-making; 2) The idea of a human-animal divide and challenges to this divide in social, cultural, and scientific practices; 3) The representation of the interests of animals in institutional, commercial, and policy-related activities and processes. First and foremost, the work took place in the form of a rich and partially public seminar series, inviting many national and international scholars to contribute with their perspectives and to think with us.

Representing seven disciplines (literary studies, media studies, education studies, history of science and ideas, archaeology, sociology, and biology), there were naturally significant differences within the group, both in terms of research interests and approaches. But there was also common ground, such as a shared critique of the traditional investments in “the human,” especially in the humanities and social sciences, and a joint curiosity of how these investments can be disrupted by the “animal turn.” After all, there are many ways of relating to the world, and the human ways constitute only a small subset. Taking this into account has potentially unsettling implications for any academic discipline. The “animal turn,” thus, brings along an alternative outlook on knowledge production that does not only include animals, but places them centre stage as key actors in the innumerable modes of *being in*, and *making sense of*, the world.

In this volume, the Animal Turn group has extended its family in order to offer the reader an even more diverse and inspiring idea of what the “animal turn” is about. Most of the contributions emanate from papers or events presented at the symposium “Exploring the Animal Turn: Changing perspectives on human-animal relations in science, society and culture,” which concluded our sojourn at the Pufendorf Institute for Advanced Studies in May, 2014. This event brought together some of the most influential human-animal scholars from different disciplines and parts of the world to share their knowledge of the complexity of human-animal relations and how they might be analysed in the collective formation of an ethically and environmentally sustainable nature-culture. The symposium also included artistic forms of knowledge and interventions, traces of which are present in this anthology, in the form of poetic texts and human-animal photography.

*

This volume opens with a position paper by Helena Pedersen, coordinator of the Animal Turn theme group with Tobias Linné, Amelie Björck, and Elsa Coimbra. Pedersen addresses two questions in particular. Firstly, she argues that the recognition of the fact that animals have their own cultures, biology, and lifeworlds must affect the knowledge production of our fields. Secondly, Pedersen discusses the ways in which the two branches within the field of human-animal relations, generally named ‘critical animal studies’ and ‘animal studies,’ although with partly

different backgrounds, perspectives, and aims might co-operate in enlightening “the question of the animal” in the scholarly production of knowledge.

In the work of developing this young field, academic institutionalization plays a vital role and the pioneering centres of human animal studies around the globe are important precursors. During our theme period at the Pufendorf Institute for Advanced Studies, the Animal Turn group had the great privilege to invite Cultural Studies scholar Annie Potts as our guest researcher at the Pufendorf Institute. In 2007, Potts co-founded the Centre for Human-Animal Studies in Christchurch, New Zealand (NZCHAS), which today, she co-directs with Philip Armstrong. Potts has contributed with great generosity and substance to our formal and informal discussions concerning both research questions and organization – and collaborations will surely continue.

In this volume, Potts participates with an article on *The Vegansexual Challenge to Macho Meat Culture*, written in collaboration with the artist and doctoral student in Science and Technology Studies, Jovian Parry. Potts and Parry explore the relation between ethical consumption and sexual relationships. In focus is the concept of “vegansexuality,” which has been phrased over the past five years and is sometimes compared to, for example, homosexuality or bisexuality. A vegansexual is a vegan who either might experience an increased likelihood of sexual attraction towards those who do not consume animals or animal products, or an actual physical aversion to the bodies of those who do. In this article, Potts and Parry argue for the possibility that vegansexuals are expressing an intimate bodily resistance to the oppression of dominant, meat-eating culture.

Human eating habits are a delicate matter involving cultural norms, passions, ritual, taste, and ethics. In order to unsettle our thoughts and emotions around the subject at the symposium (which was vegan), the Animal Turn group invited the interaction design studio Unsworn Industries to the scene. In collaboration with artist Terje Östling, the studio arranged an “E.T. barbecue” in the garden outside the Pufendorf Institute for Advanced Studies, inviting the symposium participants to partake. Documentation of the event is presented in this volume, including reactions and reflections of seeing the beloved extraterrestrial on a spit and tasting his gluten “flesh.” A range of questions resulted. What are the rights of an extraterrestrial? What is going on in the grey zone between real and artificial/fiction? Do we need mock meat? And if so, why?

A meat, egg, and dairy free diet is a given for most scholars in the critical animal studies branch of the “animal turn.” In his article, sociologist Tobias Linné discusses the ethical issues of animal industrialization and analyses one of the many diverse channels via which the Swedish dairy industry sustains the imagination that Swedish cows live great and healthy lives and are happy to ‘give’ their milk to humans. Through accounts on Instagram and Facebook, cows are personalized

and given (fictional) voice and agency. Linné shows that what seems to be an expression of closeness between humans and animals, and an increasing transparency regarding the lives of farmed cows, rather reinforces the human-animal boundary and legitimizes the industrialization of animals.

Animal welfare can indeed be a treacherous thing. Law and philosophy scholar Gary Francione's essay offers a philosophical critique of the 'animal welfare position,' and what he defines as its underlying premise: that it is acceptable for humans to use animals "because their lives have lesser moral value than human lives." Francione traces the welfarist theory from its emergence in nineteenth century philosophy to its expressions in the work of animal rights theorists Tom Regan and Peter Singer. He meticulously points out the arbitrariness and inconsistencies of any set of arguments which aims to defend the exploitation of sentient beings.

As a response to parts of Gary Francione's essay from a criminologist point of view, Ragnhild Sollund argues, with examples from a selection of wildlife crimes in Columbia and Norway, that the failure to attribute them with rights means the infliction of severe suffering to nonhuman animals. In relating some of Francione's arguments to these wildlife crimes, Sollund accentuates the relevance of his discussion and concludes with a suggestion of steps to be taken to improve the legislative situation of nonhuman animals.

If the ongoing mass death of honey bees, known as the "colony collapse disorder," should be labelled as a human crime against wildlife remains an open question since a multitude of factors seem to be involved. In her article, environmental sociologist Elsa Coimbra discusses how the natural sciences and nature conservation has dealt with, and failed to deal with, solutions to this issue. Coimbra argues for a paradigmatic leap that should recognize its complexity, and take into account the fact that all human understanding of nature is mediated by social and cultural practices, assumptions, and belief systems. By calling into question the division between subjective and objective knowledge often taken for granted in the natural sciences, Coimbra proposes a model of knowledge that may deal with matters of sustainability in new ways, based on the notions of objective, inter-subjective, and experiential knowledge.

Interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary thinking is crucial when reconsidering human-animal relations. Beginning her essay with an illustration of the historical figure Joseph Merrick, also known as "The Elephant Man" due to his bodily deformations, Manuela Rossini discusses how the division between humans and animals has been reinforced in the humanities. While analysing the similarities between animal studies and gender studies and their focus on the process of othering, Rossini argues for a posthumanist perspective that moves beyond both biological determinism and cultural constructionism, since, she argues, both perspectives reinforce the logic of speciesism. Rossini proposes the perspective of a

new materialism or the so-called developmental-systems framework enabling an analysis beyond the nature/culture divide, arguing that human and nonhuman bodies are in constant exchange; they constitute each other through relationality and dynamic interactions.

In literary scholar Elisabeth Friis's article, the relationality between a woman and a dog takes centre stage. Virginia Woolf's short novel *Flush. A Biography* (1933) is 'based on a true story' and relates the liberation of a golden-brown spaniel called Flush. Via an elaborated row of mirrorings, mutual becomings, and shared desires, it is, however, also a story of the dog's human, Elizabeth Barrett Browning (1806–1861). Giving a close reading, Friis exposes the entanglements between two minority reports: both the woman and the dog liberate themselves from "all the oppressors in their several ranks," as Woolf writes and their gained freedoms are interdependent.

Friis's take suggests a move beyond the typical form of critique of Woolf's narrative from an animal studies perspective: the critique of *anthropomorphism*. This phenomenon which entails assigning things and nonhuman creatures human mental states, feelings, and responses is common in most human cultures. In her contribution, Monica Libell revisits the concept and functions of anthropomorphism in pre- and post-Darwinist epochs and in different disciplines, relating it to the core questions of perception, subjectivity/objectivity and epistemology. The question whether anthropomorphism could be used as a scientific method for the interpretation of nonhuman life continues to evoke vivid scientific debate.

If anthropomorphism is a common human tool when trying to understanding other animals, 'wonderment' is yet another recurring – and maybe even more primal – reaction towards the other, worth inquiry. Philip Armstrong takes the reader on an odyssey revisiting the writings and wordings of explorer Pigafetta, evolutionist Charles Darwin, naturalist and broadcaster David Attenborough, among others, and reflects on the diverse roles that wonderment might play in the process of gaining knowledge of other creatures. Wonderment, he finds, is not a self-contained expression, but may function either as a driving force for further inquiry, or, in other cases, as an enticing cover over unrecognized knowledge gaps.

Wonderment can surely strike you in front of remnants and traces from long past events and relationalities that you will never fully grasp. Archeologist Kristina Jennbert stresses the importance of having a sense of the past and of different cultural norms and values when working in the human-animal research field. For one thing, the classification of species in a pre-Christian setting seems to have been different from that in modern, urban, Western societies, and this raises questions in regard to attitudes towards animals and humans in the long term.

Time and history are also important dimensions in Amelie Björck's study of the roles of the farm animals in proletarian author Ivar Lo-Johansson's short stories in

the collection *Statarna* from 1936–37. In Lo-Johansson's stories about modernization, Björck observes and critiques a recurrent cultural paradox: on the one hand, the author is sensitive to the farm animals as being, in historian Jason Hribal's words, "part of the working class" and notes their bodily counter talk against exploitation. On the other hand, his stories fall into the formal and thematic pattern of promoting an anthropocentrically defined, progression-oriented modernization, which entails increasing temporal pressure on the bodies of farm animals.

Erika Andersson Cederholm's perspective is contemporary and directed towards the interactions between humans and animals in horse-related small enterprises in the recreation and tourism industry. By analysing the emotional work performed by the horse farmers and, in particular, the role of the horse in the triadic relationship between the horse farmers, their clients, and the horses, she demonstrates how the horse is ascribed various and often contradictory roles. Andersson Cederholm argues that the role of the third part is often neglected in studies of service interactions and may be particularly relevant in studies of interactions involving humans and animals. Since the triadic relationship evokes tensions and ambiguous roles, it may shed light on how we categorize and ascribe meaning to various actors, relationships, and social spheres.

In order to broaden the academic mindframe, the anthology includes several interventions of a more artistic and creative configuration. Beside the mentioned E.T. grilling by Unsworn Industries, artist EvaMarie Lindahl conveys a letter from the carrier pigeon Cher Ami to his/her general in WWI, and artist Lisa Nyberg presents the manuscript of a becoming-bear group meditation, held in the Pufendorf Institute for Advanced Studies garden during the pre-conference day in May. The image on the cover of this volume was created by Julia Lindemalm, who also contributes with a series of photographs showing the lives and boredom of the elephant, the waterbuck, the giant panda, the crocodile, the harbour seal, the brown bear, the spidermonkey, the grey seals, the anatees, the tiger and the chimpanzee, and the human-animal relation or, more often, lack of relation in artificial zoo environments around Europe. The book ends with a poetic text by Professor Susan McHugh, investigating space, power, and the human-animal relationship, accompanied by three photographs by the artist Mik Morrisey.

Ultimately, as the multitude of perspectives and disciplines in this volume show the project of developing new knowledge of the significance and the effects of the human-animal relationship is a challenging one. Still, this is clearly something that needs to be done in order to create possibilities for an ethically and environmentally sustainable future. To our joy, the field of human-animal studies continues to grow rapidly, developing theory, posing new questions, and rewriting our joint, multi-species history, present, and future.

This volume could not have come about without the support of the Pufendorf Institute for Advanced Studies in Lund, Sweden. To director Sune Sunesson, senior scientific adviser Sture Forsén, and manager Bengt Pettersson we express our warm and heartfelt gratitude, and in particular to administrative director Eva Persson, who tirelessly worked with us on all the small and time-consuming details in the creation of this book.

The Pufendorf Institute for Advanced Studies, Lund, Sweden, in October 2014

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CERTAIN HUMANS, CERTAIN ANIMALS. ATTITUDES IN THE LONG TERM

Kristina Jennbert

Introduction

What are the attitudes to humans and animals in different cultures? Do certain humans and animals have greater value than other humans and animals? Can present-day attitudes and values find their counterpart in the past? Or are modern Western values unique? Of course, attitudes, values and meanings are culturally constructed and have changed through time. As an archaeologist, I can't resist making comparisons with the distant past. In this short article, I would like to follow a line of thought emerging from the interdisciplinary programme "Exploring the Animal Turn".

Sometimes I feel slightly uncomfortable in the critical animal debate as well as in human-animal studies, especially when time of depth seems too shallow. The viewpoint can also be found to be too narrow when we consider all the variation that exists in the present, and existed in the past. Convinced that the cultural complexity and the historical outcome is important, I have a recurrent desire to look behind today's Western human-animal interaction and move into other cultural settings. Furthermore, in my opinion the present Western, urban anthropocentric worldview also has its historical background.

The human-animal research field needs to incorporate a sense of the past and of other cultural norms and values. Further, I believe that the human-animal division is biased in its excessively limited approach. I assume that in the real world, as in other cultures — past or present — the classification of beings emerged in a much more multifaceted reality than in a modern urban environment. Using psychological and cognitive theories about social identity and self-categorization helps to understand the variety of attitudes towards humans and animals that have developed since humans became humans.

My question about the valuation of humans and animals has emerged from my studies of Old Norse religion. In pre-Christian Scandinavia it seems as if the value of a person or an animal depended on the specific individual or the specific species (i.e. dog, cattle, horse, bird). As archaeologists we need concepts and theoretical

perspectives to understand human agency, and attitudes towards humans and animals. For example, the concepts of personhood and individuality are useful for understanding burials (Fowler, 2004; Aaltola, 2010; Hill, 2013). As neither animals nor humans buried themselves, the handling of the corpse reflects the values and attitudes of living humans concerning the dead. The buried animal or human very likely had individuality and possibly signalled a distinct personhood.

In general, archaeology and zooarchaeology share a very anthropocentric ontology (Overton and Hamilakis, 2013). To move from perceiving animals as objects to acknowledging animals as subjects gives new perspectives on interactions between humans and animals. Therefore the focus on the animal itself, in order to understand the agency of different kinds of animals, is groundbreaking within the field of archaeology and zooarchaeology. The “animal turn” enables radical non-anthropocentric explorations within archaeology and zooarchaeology. The question about certain humans and certain animals can probably gain from applying non-anthropocentric approaches, as the way we classify them is essential. What is a human, and what is an animal?

Both humans and animals were certainly integrated in their particular cultural settings, with their functional abilities, their social positions, and their specific social identities. In this article I will refer to my earlier research on human-animal relations. Sometimes I reuse direct extracts from my book *Animals and Humans: Recurrent Symbiosis in Archaeology and Old Norse Religion*, where I have previously given condensed descriptions of the findings (see Jennbert, 2011).

The multifaceted reality of humans and animals in the past justifies a plea for historical arguments in current animal rights movements and in the critique of today’s anthropocentric worldview. The archaeological research field provides a perspective comprising many millennia of the human lifeworlds. Archaeology is different from many other sciences. The analysing and interpreting of phenomena over a very long period, includes the studying the material culture from different contexts as well as the studying of the written documents. It is also important to emphasize that archaeologists study fragments of the past. Although we cannot reconstruct a sequence of events with movements and sounds, or ask about the underlying intentions, we can study and draw conclusions about how cultural expressions were shaped and reshaped.

Burials and other deposits of humans and animals

One of the most frequent material categories in the archaeological evidence is the deposition of dead bodies. Ways of burying both humans and animals have varied in the course of history. During the pre-Christian period, it seems that certain hu-

mans and certain animals were buried in graves specifically made for the purpose of burial while other humans and animals were deposited elsewhere. Corpses of animals and humans are found in different contexts: in burials, at settlements in the construction of buildings, in kitchen middens, waste pits, wells and slag-heaps, and in wetlands far away from the settlements and farms.

There seems to be much evidence that it was not just any person who was laid to rest in a regular grave during the pre-Christian period. The bones found in the archaeological contexts indicate that, in certain circumstances, human bodies and animal bodies were disposed of by similar methods and in ways much more varied than those used in our modern Western burial concept. Modern human burials and animal graves are similar, but restricted in staging and layout.

Humans and animals were buried with intact bodies; they were also skeletonized, burned, sorted, polished and packaged as whole bodies or parts of them. The bones were dispersed unsystematically around the site as separate pieces or tiny fragments from butchering or other causes, or articulated (the bones still laid out as they were in life) within a deliberate burial (e.g. Pearson, 1999; Jennbert, 2011; Pluskowski, 2012; Thilderqvist, 2013).

A recurrent theme is the ritual use of animals in connection with human burials. Numerous burials contain several species, deliberately killed, and laid in the grave. I will give one example from the Vbyhögen mound in Uppland, Sweden. It contained a cremated middle-aged man who had probably been wrapped in skins of bear and lynx. The grave also had a rich array of artefacts made of gold, silver, and bronze, and it is dated to the Viking Age (*c.* AD 950). The grave contained burnt bones of 19 different animal species from a total of 25 individuals, amounting to some 65 dm³ of burnt bones and a few cubic decimetres of unburnt bone. The dogs and the horses had been cremated whole. Parts of cattle, sheep, pig, hen, and goose were also cremated. Of six dogs, five had reached adulthood, and lesions on the vertebrae of one of the dogs indicate an old age. One dog was less than 15 months old. Of the six horses, one was young. The ox proved to be an old animal with morbid lesions on both fore and rear ankles, of the kind that results from strain after hard work. The two parts of sheep came from one adult and one younger animal. One piece from a pig came from an individual roughly two years old. Altogether the following animals were cremated on the pyre along with the dead man: six dogs, six horses, one ox, two sheep, one pig, one cat, one hen, one goose, one goshawk, one eagle owl, one cod, one bear and one lynx. Some animal species had been deposited unburnt in the grave: one crow, one squirrel, one cock, one perch and one pike (Sten and Vretemark, 1988; Jennbert, 2011, p. 102).

Furthermore, there are also special graves only for animals. In certain periods, for example, dogs and horses were buried in special graves, which closely resembled those of humans. Animal burials are common in several cultures around the

world, such as the Scythian culture, the Han Dynasty of China and Iron Age Britain. Mummies of cats and birds have been found in ancient Egyptian contexts. In a global perspective, there is evidence of burial of both domestic and wild animals spanning over a very long time, from the early Stone Age to modern time (Behrens, 1964; Morris, 2011). For example, at the Late Mesolithic cemetery of Skateholm in southern Skåne (*c.* 6500 BC), eleven dogs were buried in individual graves. Seven other dogs were buried together with people. Grave goods were also found in the dog graves, deposited in a similar way to those in human graves. One dog (grave XXI) had been placed on its left side with its legs drawn up. A red-deer antler was placed by the dog's back; a hammer of antler, with incised decoration, lay beside the dog's chest; and three knives lay at its thigh. With regard to the dogs in human graves, at least two of these had been killed in connection with the burial. Young dogs had their necks broken, while other dogs had been cut into pieces before burial. This was not the case with the dogs in the separate graves, which contained both puppies and older dogs. There are marked similarities between the burial rituals for humans and for dogs. The placement of the bodies, the use of red ochre, and the deposition of grave goods apply to both humans and animals (Larsson, 1990; Jennbert, 2011, p. 106; Grünberg, 2013).

Another example of an animal burial is the horse grave at Skovgårde cemetery in Sjælland, dated to the Late Roman Age (*c.* AD 400). The stallion was about eight years old, large and powerful, much larger than other horses of the Roman Iron Age. The horse was placed in a north–south direction, with its head in the southern part of the grave and its muzzle turned towards the west. The forelegs were bent in a natural way, but the hind legs were in an unnatural position (Hattig, 2000, p. 408; Jennbert, 2011, p. 111).

Another archaeological context is depositions in wetlands, away from settlements and farms. The bog of Östra Vemmerlöv in south-eastern Skåne is a Bronze Age site (*c.* 1000 BC), with deposits of bones consisting of skeleton parts from four humans and bones from domesticated and wild animals. Twenty dogs and five foxes were deposited as whole animals, and skeleton parts of one horse, of cattle (two individuals), two sheep/goats, one wild boar, and one red deer (von Post, 1919; Jennbert, 2011: 114).

Many years ago I was confronted with a unique deposition of sheep bones at the archaeological site of Agerbygård on Bornholm, Denmark. The find can be dated to the time around AD 400. Two complete female sheep (Figure 1) were placed in a shallow pit at a time when a building was to be erected on the site. Among the skeletons were two identical brooches, a small bronze bead, and seven amber beads (Figure 2, 3). Until now, I have not understood the meaning of the heap of bones. To consider the classification of humans and animals and

Figure 1. Female sheep in situ, Agerbygaard 1996, Bornholm. Photo: Bornholms Museum.

concepts such as personhood brings new insights. Archaeologists are simply not able to discover values of humans and animals if they are not reflecting on other archaeological contexts with cadavers or skeletal remains of humans and animals. The classification of humans and animals is complex when considering the diversity in the ways bodies were buried, and the removal of others on farmyards and in wetlands.



Classification

The classification of animals and humans seems to have been different from contemporary classifications. But perhaps not? Even today, certain humans and certain animals are more important than others. Apparently, the view of “the other”, whether a human being or an animal, is not obvious and certainly loaded with values. In the past, the division between human and animals were as diverse as today, but perhaps in other ways.



Figure 2. Fibulae, Agerbygaard, Bornholm. Length approx. 50 mm. Photo: Bengt Almgren, Historical Museum, Lund.



Figure 3. Seven amber beads and one bronze bead, Agerbygaard, Bornholm. Photo: Bengt Almgren, Historical Museum, Lund.

There are boundary crossings in archaeological images and in the Old Norse texts. The boundaries between human and animals appear to have been ambivalent and possible to push in various ways. It seems there were no absolute or rigid lines along species-membership. Instead evidence points to a sense of symbiosis, even humanimal hybridity (Jennbert, 2011, p. 189). Furthermore, it seems that “thinking with animals” is a cultural habit. Anthropomorphic and zoomorphic representations are frequent in cross-cultural discussions on understandings of human and animal beings (Daston and Mitman, 2005). In pre-Christian Scandinavian archaeological material culture and in the Old Norse texts, anthropomorphic and zoomorphic paraphrases can be found. The Old Norse animal ornamentation on jewellery and weapons give an impression of visual representations of humanimals. Visible horses, eagles, wild boars, snakes, and birds of prey are intermingled with representations of human body parts and face masks.

I believe that what we see in pre-Christian Scandinavia, is a group of people categorizing themselves as equal to animals. The same group of people classified other humans and other animals as “the other”. Presumably, this group is the upper class, the elite, or the aristocracy, whatever expression you prefer. The classification we apply today was most probably not a reality for everyone, whether human or animal. So, if humans and animals were valued equally and if we understand this as an expression of unclear boundaries between humans and animals, it was only relevant for a part of the population. The problem is that we don't find burial sites containing representatives from the entire population. Or, do we find them in wetlands and in other deposits?

A reflection on the pre-Christian classification of humans and animals enables some reflections on attitudes to humans and animals. To conclude, The pre-Christian Scandinavian lifeworld was structured with ambiguous and fluid boundaries between different natural elements of the landscape and between different structured worlds, which also consisted of gods, giants, and other beings. The world and mortals resembled each other, and were born from each other (Clunies Ross, 1994). As archaeologists, we find humans and animals in different archaeological contexts; we find wild and domesticated animals in all kinds of deposits in burials, farmsteads and wetlands, sometimes together with human bodies.

Attitudes towards humans and animals in a long-term perspective

We can be sure that the pre-Christian cultural viewpoints, including the Old Norse cosmology and social and political circumstances, formed attitudes to humans and animals. The archaeological remains are the consequences of lifestyles, of cultural mentality.

Of course, you may wonder how humans treated animals (and other humans). Animals were treated according to human needs but also according to how people related the animals to themselves. We know of examples of maltreatment of livestock. But hunting and animal husbandry require knowledge and continuous work in order to have healthy animals. Since the Ice Age (*c.* 12,000 BC in Scandinavia) animals have been consumed as food. They became raw material and took on practical and symbolic functions. During the Neolithic (*c.* 4000 BC), when animals were domesticated, a stronger mutual dependence between humans and animals emerged. I am convinced that, as a result, animals domesticated humans and not the reverse. The animals had power of unspoken dimensions. They tamed humans, who were forced to feed them and to take care of them so that they would be healthy, give a good yield, and reproduce. Animals were a part of the Midgard mentality and the pre-Christian life-world, in which hunting, animal husbandry and breeding were important tasks, calling for knowledge and experience, consideration and concern.

To continue exploring the animal turn, I would briefly like to discuss just a few individual animals from archaeological examples (the bird of prey, the dog, the horse and the sheep) and discuss some implications of the important power of animals. Furthermore, to understand the pre-Christian treatment of humans and attitudes to dead bodies, it is necessary to consider the humans who were not buried in proper graves.

In the Viking Age burial of Vibyhögen, a large number of species were found, among them one goshawk and one eagle owl. These birds of prey are the key animals for interpreting the burial in terms of falconry. The falconer knows the bird, and has no success in hunting if she/he doesn't consider the needs of the bird. Doing archaeology is a never-ending adventure, and as an amateur I entered the world of birds, to explore descriptions and habitats of different species. I therefore learned falconry myself in Denmark to try to understand hunting with falcons. The close connection between the falconer and the bird became clear to me. They understand each other, and the care of birds is full of understanding and intimacy. Emotions and knowledge are essential, otherwise the falcon could fly away.

Richly equipped burials have a large package of attributes for several lifestyles. The dogs and the horses require the same attention as the birds. Their presence in the Viby grave supports the idea of falconry, but also of great wealth. The body parts of cattle, sheep, pig, hen, and goose suggest a big farm. Every kind of the domesticated animals required special consideration and knowledge of their basic needs. But the man buried in Vibyhögen must also have had a personal knowledge of the dogs and the horses. They were certainly individuals. Did they have personhood? The burial gives the impression of a very wealthy male warrior with several skills, among them riding and falconry, the fashions of the time.

The Vibyhögen burial has many animals, but that is the standard of many burials in pre-Christian Scandinavia, as in other parts of the world. Presumably, the articulated whole bodies of dogs, horses, and birds of prey represent individual animals, with a personhood, important to the dead person. Why kill them? I believe that the burial is a representation of the dead person, perhaps an ideal image. Nevertheless, the burial should not be interpreted in terms of an afterlife, rather as a staging of the social identity of the deceased.

The specific animal burials can be interpreted in the same way. In pre-Scandinavia we find animal burials with dogs, horses, and cattle in the Old Norse burial tradition. The animals were buried in ways similar to those in which humans were buried. In Saami tradition, reindeer and bears are buried in graves which show similarities to Saami human graves, in regards to the terrain and types of graves .

However, the female sheep are unique remains. Sheep are extremely hard to find in the Old Norse mythology. From other archaeological remains, we know that Sheep belong to the species that are most frequently left in rubbish heaps. Sheep were extremely important in everyday life. In Old Norse, the word for sheep is *sauðr*. The verb *seuðan* is a general term for 'to seethe, boil', suggesting the preparation of the animal for a ritual meal (Green, 1998, p. 23). The meaning of the word for sheep strengthens the idea that the sheep was also a sacrificial animal. Sheep probably represent a female everyday occupation forgotten in the highly male warrior world as expressed in Old Norse mythology. This is interesting, as women in everyday situations are often excluded in the Old Norse texts. The female sheep on Bornholm must have been very particular animals deposited on the farm with prestigious bronze and amber objects. Did they have personhood for someone?

The deposited humans and animals in burials are cultural representations of gender, class, or other social identities. Another possibility of cultural representation is bodies with a special personhood. Other humans and animals were not buried but are deposited in cultural contexts such as rubbish on settlements or deposited in wetlands. These bodies might be interpreted as cultural representations of "not belonging", of being outside the fellowship. From several archaeologically excavated settlements dated from the early Stone Age up to the coming of Christianity, we know that human bones were deposited/thrown in rubbish pits or heaps. In addition, the most wellknown bog bodies, from the Neolithic up to the first centuries of the Common Era, are examples of how people were deposited as complete bodies. Children, women and men were killed and their bodies kept in place with stakes and withies in bogs; they often had physical defects (van der Sanden, 1996; Jennbert, 2011, p. 125). There were also variety of ways of getting rid of humans, similar to the ways of disposing of animals.

In conclusion, there were no stable divisions between humans and animals in pre-Christian Scandinavia. In fact, I don't think that there are in the present either. The boundaries between humans and animals were diverse, a kind of hybridity between species. It seems as if attitudes to humans and animals varied greatly. Attitudes depended on gender, class, and on practical and symbolic functions within society. Present-day attitudes and values have their counterparts in the past, and I don't believe modern Western values are unique.

Summing up

The archaeological examples of animal- and human graves from pre-Christian Scandinavia shed light on values and attitudes concerning animals and humans. It seems if the pre-Christian classifications of humans and animals are diverse, more complicated than a simple division between humans and animals. The archaeological evidence during the pre-Christian period show practices of burying certain humans and certain animals in appropriate graves, while other humans and animals were deposited in other contexts. Different attitudes emerge depending on the social stratification, and the roles of humans and animals. A multilayered causality of social and cultural practices seems to underlie the agency of humans in mortuary practices and the way in which dead bodies of animals and humans were handled. Certain humans and animals held greater value than other humans and animals.

So far, my conclusion is that the archaeological findings challenge the idea of the anthropocentric worldview of a stable human/animal division that has been one of the fundamentals of the development of modern Western societies. But perhaps conditions similar to those in the past can be seen today? Animal ethics and the anthropocentric paradigm obviously call for reflection (Aaltola, 2008). It is also necessary to consider the social and cultural meanings of humans and animals in the long-term perspective. Finally, following the animal turn, it is necessary that the field of archaeology and zooarchaeology develop a non-anthropocentric approach to agency in order to consider different attitudes and values concerning humans and animals.

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Animals' omnipresence in human society makes them both close to and yet remarkably distant from humans. Human and animal lives have always been entangled, but the way we see and practice the relationships between humans and animals – as close, intertwined, or clearly separate – varies from time to time and between cultures, societies, and even situations.

By putting these complex relationships in focus, this anthology investigates the ways in which human society deals with its co-existence with animals. The volume was produced within the frame of the interdisciplinary “Animal Turn”-research group which during eight months in 2013–2014 was hosted by the Pufendorf Institute for Advanced Studies, Lund university, Sweden. Along with invited scholars and artists, members of this group contribute with different perspectives on the complexities and critical issues evoked when the human-animal relationship is in focus.

The anthology covers a wide range of topics: From discussions on new disciplinary paths and theoretical perspectives, empirical case-studies, and artistic work, towards more explicitly critical approaches to issues of animal welfare. Phenomena such as vegansexuality, anthropomorphism, wildlife crimes, and the death of honey-bees are being discussed. How we gain knowledge of other species and creatures is one important issue in focus. What does, for example, the notion of wonderment play in this production of knowledge? How were species classified in pre-Christian Europe? How is the relationship between domesticated and farmed animals and humans practiced and understood? How is it portrayed in literature, or in contemporary social media?

Many animals are key actors in these discussions, such as dogs, cows, bees, horses, pigeons, the brown bear, just to mention a few, as well as some creatures more difficult to classify as either humans or animals. All of these play a part in the questions that is at the core of the investigations carried out in this volume: How to produce knowledge that creates possibilities for an ethically and environmentally sustainable future.



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