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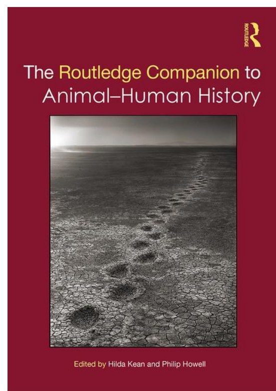

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8

ANIMAL MATTER IN MUSEUMS

Exemplifying materiality[1]

Liv Emma Thorsen

Live and dead animals are with us and around us. Innocently and unconsciously, animals have left material sources such as horns, bones, hides, and shells. If animals themselves do not leave documents, the historian's most prominent sources, there are nevertheless several other ways to encounter their historical existence. The animals of past times subsist as natural matter, for instance, in old photographs, dusty registers, and fragile letters; remnants from encounters between humans and animals which can tell us something about animals' unnatural history, as historian Nigel Rothfels claims.[2] This chapter will give emphasis to the potential of museum objects as sources for an animal–human history, exploring objects in cultural history museums and natural history museums, institutions that store a variety of objects made of animal remains, ranging from stuffed animals to utility shafts of bone, from viscera in spirit to breeches of canine leather. The examples discussed in this chapter are things made of organic material derived from animals, either objects made to reshape the once-living animal, or objects composed exclusively or partly of animal matter. The question is what kind of knowledge may such objects provide, beyond their form, shape, materials, and technique.

The lives of wild as well as domestic animals, their corpses and their place in tradition, imagination and beliefs have been given a wide range of material expressions throughout history. However, the word 'animal' is not even indexed in the *Handbook of Material Culture*, first published in 2006.[3] In his introduction to the handbook, Christopher Tilley nevertheless challenges the opposition between things and persons by pointing to animals as a kind of border case, being neither one nor the other:

> The object and the objectivity of things supposedly stand opposed to the subject and the subjectivity of persons. From this perspective, persons are animated and alive, while the things, whatever they may be, are simply static and dead: kick a stone or a pot and you won't hurt or offend it. Yet even in simple and empirical terms, a host of borderline cases, such as animals or technological extensions of persons, challenge the opposition.[4]

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Animals are here considered as something distinctively *in between*. Animals work undauntedly to maximize their well-being, for instance, something considered in the language of 'agency'. But if agency also may be assigned to *things*, following the lead of 'the material turn' in the humanities and social sciences, how might we characterise the agency of this genre of museum objects?

To ascribe agency to things means to contemplate their materiality, which is the central aim of this chapter. An understanding of material agency can hardly be separated from the difficult business of *matter*.[5] Materiality implies a relation between the material object and people, and establishes the material object in a historical, social and cultural context.[6] When studying material objects as materiality, the task is then to identify materials as significant and meaningful in these contexts: 'All materials have their properties which may be described but only some of these materials are significant to people'.[7] Following this injunction, the objects that are presented and exemplified in this chapter are carefully chosen because of the significance of their material properties. To allude to the material objects desired by collectors and destined for the early modern cabinets of curiosity, for instance, these material qualities were supposed to arouse wonder and invite attention, to provoke investigation and prompt reflection about the world.[8]

Studying material things as meaningful elements in a wider historical and cultural context furthermore implies a kind of vicarious agency – their provocation to interpretation *by* somebody, *for* some purpose. Writing and reflecting about the meaningfulness and materiality of museum objects contributes to keeping them visible and prevents them from falling into oblivion. As stated by the critic Miguel Tamen, interpretable objects attract 'friends'.[9] This making of friends by material things testifies to a society engaged in interpretation and in attributing a kind of intentionality to the objects they are in this way befriending.[10] The mission of such societies of friends is precisely to keep the objects 'alive'. Inspired by Tamen, science historian Lorraine Daston turns to the things themselves to scrutinise why certain objects attract friends, and she is arrested by their sheer *materiality*: 'The capacity to call such a society of friends into existence is as much a part of a thing's thingness, of its reverberations in the world, as its material properties like weight and chemical composition'.[11] Daston's personal selected things are the unique glass flowers at the Harvard Museum of Natural History in Cambridge, Massachusetts. In contrast to these famous glass flowers, the chosen objects that will be presented in this chapter are, except perhaps for the preserved dogs in the Natural History Museum at Tring, little known to the public, some of them being permanently exiled to a museum storeroom. However, even if they may look like humble things at first encounter they are nevertheless worthy of befriending, because, to paraphrase Daston, they are as I shall show 'irresistibly interpretable'.[12]

This chapter stresses animal matter and its repercussions on the scholar as a starting point for a discussion of materiality. First, the cultural history museum and the natural history museum will be presented as places that contain animal matter and treasuries for scholars engaged in the cultural histories of animals. Next, a biography of Bella, a stuffed dog in a museum storeroom, will serve as a primer to different perspectives on museum animals and materiality, leading to a discussion of taxidermy as both handicraft and a category of things still closely associated with animals and animality.

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With the trajectory of Bella in mind I will then discuss how animal matter is embedded in culture and society, exemplified by evocative, talkative and 'knotted' animal things. Finally, the chapter touches on the ethical questions animal museum objects may provoke.

Animal matters in museums: across categories

With a wording taken from Chris Philo and Chris Wilbert, museums of cultural history and natural history may be described as 'beastly places'.[13] However, contrary to their idea of beastly places as territories in which animals can live according to their natural needs with a minimum of human interference, museums are places that demonstrate the numerous ways animals have been merged and incorporated in culture, and likewise, though less investigated, their importance and influence on society. In the museum the objects have been ordered, classified, defined and categorised. Museum objects are, however, also confined by their classificatory categories. Looking for the materiality of animal matters typically implies the crossing of these categories.

During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, collecting precious and rare objects was intrinsically connected with a princely way of living. To collect was, according to Paula Findlen, 'a precise mechanism to transform knowledge into power'.[14] In order to raise the visitor's curiosity, the favoured principle of exposing and exhibiting objects was 'the close juxtaposition of contrasting'.[15] At the end of the eighteenth century in Europe many princely collections were split up and systemised according to the Enlightenment visions of taxonomic order.[16] Things stemming from nature were increasingly separated from art objects. The historical and symbolic connections between object, collection and owner were thus ruptured when the objects were inserted in the new knowledge regimes. The *ippopotamo* in the *Museo Zoologica* 'La Specola' in Florence, one of the oldest European public natural history museums and today part of Universitá di Firenze, will serve as an example.

When Florence's new natural history museum opened its doors on 21 February 1775, with the impressive official name *L'Imperiale Regio Museo di Fisica e Storia Naturale*, the public was introduced to an institution that precisely realised the Age of Enlightenment's new museum ideal.[17] The museum was open to one and all, and its activities were organised according to new scientific principles. Commissioned by the Grand Duke of Tuscany, the medical doctor and natural scholar Giovanni Targioni Tozzetti put together a catalogue over a period of two years, from 1763 to 1764, of what he designated the 'natural products' in the princely collections. Most came from the now-extinct Medici family's cabinets of curiosity in the Uffizi galleries and the Palazzo Pitti.

In the preface to the catalogue, Tozzetti recommends that the general public should have access to these unique natural objects. Seven years later, the young Grand Duke Peter Leopold of Habsburg-Lorraine decided to put all the natural science objects in a separate museum. The construction of an astronomical observatory also brought astrology and meteorology into the museum's sphere of concern. Completed in 1789, the observatory gave the museum the popular name 'La Specola'. In the same year, the adjoining Giardino del Boboli was made into a botanical garden

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and associated with the institution. Thus the museum covered all the branches of natural history, while the Medicis' huge collections of art and precious items were put on display in the Uffizi and the Pitti Palace. To the visitor, however, the unique historical complexity of the Specola collections may confound the idea that 'nature' is presented here. For instance, decorated and engraved shells of *nautilus pompilius* and a valve of a freshwater bivalve with Buddha figures covered with mother-of-pearls are clearly artistically elaborated objects, but these were considered predominantly things of *nature* and directed to the collections in 'La Specola' accordingly.

The object that is probably most resistant to this categorisation, however, is La Specola's hippopotamus, approximately 300 years old, its venerable age revealed through the execution of its preservation, which further suggests that its executors had never seen the animal alive. The museum states that the origin and death of the hippo is unknown. What is known, however, is that the mount did belong to the Medici collections and it is easy to connect the pachyderm to the early baroque royal court culture of Cosimo III (1670–1723), and to the cultural history of exotic, wild animals in Europe.[18] Thus cages for wild animals were placed in the Giardino di Boboli for the enjoyment of the Florentine court. According to anecdote, the hippo belonged to this menagerie, and it is claimed to have lived in one of the garden fountains.[19] Not much else is known, however. The specimen proves that the hippo was not fully grown when it died, and it has a mark around its neck that has been interpreted as coming from some kind of harness, though this is now contested by the museum after a restoration of the hippo finished in 2012.

Little is known about the menagerie in the Boboli garden, but in a brief description from 1757 it is stated that the *serraglio* also contained a separate section with stuffed animals.[20] Cosimo III was a prince who spent time and money on collecting live animals – but also in presenting them after death for display, an act that shows how rare and expensive the noble collectors of this time considered these animals to be. Live hippopotamuses have been extremely rare in Europe, so exquisite that when a hippo calf arrived in London Zoo in 1850, it was claimed to be the first hippo seen in Europe after the age of the Romans. This makes the hippopotamus in La Specola an especially interesting and valuable object for both natural history *and* cultural history.[21]

Interestingly the recent restoration of the hippo has revealed that two styles of preparation are apparent in this specimen, from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries respectively.[22] When the specimen was moved from the Grand Duke's collection to be exposed in the new natural history museum, the highly skilled craftsmen of the famous anatomical ceroplastics in La Specola remodelled the hippo's head using wax on a wooden frame. More importantly, this was part of a crucial change of focus. The specimen in La Specola was initially preserved in order to allow a precious individual animal to be admired in a princely cabinet even in its afterlife, but in the systematic exhibition it was reduced to acting as a representative of its species. All the same, after its restoration in 2012, the hippo was displayed together with an ornamental arrangement of hippopotamus teeth, an object stemming from the late nineteenth-century collection of the Duke of Turin's hunting trophies; so the museum has re-established a link between this impressive species and the princely tradition of self-presentation by means of dead animals.

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Consider a second example, which in contrast to the mount of the rare and valuable hippo, is chosen from the multitude of vernacular things stored in cultural history museums, namely knives. Accession number NF 2007–0817AC (Norsk Folkemuseum) is an assemblage of twelve table knives, produced by Moss & Gambles, Sheffield, England, and by Henckels, Solingen, Germany around 1900.[23] The knives look pretty much alike, having a blade of steel (not stainless) with a rounded end and stamped with the manufacturer's trademark, and with handles made of bone. The Sheffield knives are a bit longer than the German ones, but both were common goods in Norway around 1900. They are still to be found in Norwegian kitchen drawers, and are frequently sold in antique shops and flea markets. Of particular interest when examining animals and materiality are these bone handles. What significance do these fragments of animal matter have for a discussion of the history of animals? As mass-produced things the knives are not especially interesting per se. If it is possible to maintain that this set of table knives reverberate in the world, to follow Daston, it is largely because the material of their handles connects them to the animal-industry by the turn of the twentieth century.

The crucial thing is what happens when we turn our attention from relation to substance, from seeing the knives only as imported common goods, to contemplating the material of the handles. This means using the knives as a *pars pro toto* – as a few of millions of ordinary table knives with handles of bone, most often either bone from horse or cow, a commonplace of what we can talk of as an animal-industrial economy. At the end of the nineteenth century the development of the great industrial cities in the US and Europe depended heavily, for instance, on horsepower, making bone from horse a cheap and easily available raw material.[24] In 1900, 130,000 horses worked in New York, 74,000 in Chicago, and in London 50,000 horses were used just for transporting people. Around 1900, the urban horse had been made a commodity – but not only as a living animal. Working horses lived short lives, partly because of hard work, but also because of the value of their carcasses:

> Rendering plants shaved the hair to be used for cushions. (. . .) Hair also became a stiffener for plaster and was made into blankets. Skinners cut the hide off, using the rump portion of the hide for highly valued cordovan leather. They boiled hooves to extract oil, especially for glue but also for gelatin. Renderers boiled the carcass in a pressure boiler to separate flesh from bones and carved the leg bones into knife handles and combs.[25]

Other products sourced from dead horses were bootblack, carbonate of ammonia, phosphorus for matches, pet food, soap, and candles.

Here are twelve different products extracted from the horse carcass, then. Some were perishable consumer goods, while others were used for the production of more durable objects such as the handles. The horse's materiality thus demonstrates how animal matter exists historically and continues today to be entangled in complex, extensive networks. But how far can horse matter such as, say, gelatine be followed?[26] What we can say is that from economies such as the food, pharmaceutical, cosmetic and weapon industries, to religious and ethical dietary restrictions, animal matter is everywhere.

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Special things: the poet's dog Bella

Animal museum matter may be both naturalised and unique. Take a third example, the dog belonging to the Norwegian romantic poet Henrik Wergeland (1808–1845). On 6 July 1845, six days before his death, Wergeland (1808–1845) wrote his last letter.[27] The addressee was Halvor H. Rasch at the Zoological Collections of the Royal Frederick University in Christiania (today Oslo) and the topic was Wergeland's dog Bella. In the letter Bella was bequeathed to the collections. The dog, Wergeland explained, 'deserved a place in them as a skeleton and stuffed as type for the antique canine form on bas-reliefs'. And, he continued, 'If you want it, take it at once, because it disturbs me in my scant sleep'.[28] Whether the 9-year-old Bella was allowed to die a natural death or she was put down immediately after being given to the Zoological Collections is not known. But the remains were to be inserted in the collections after Bella's hide was stuffed. The fragile body still exists, not as a scientific specimen but as object 'NF 1902–0211', currently stored in a refrigerated room in the Norsk Folkemuseum in Oslo.[29] The skeleton has disappeared. The accession number informs us that Bella was transferred from the Zoological Collections to the Folkemuseum in 1902. The body, though bulky and badly mounted, has a clear resemblance to sighthounds, being a bit larger than a whippet. The skin is greyish brown and dappled. Her glass eyes are missing.

The museum storeroom is a terminal station for many objects but also a point of departure. An approach to opening up the categories in which museum things are inscribed is to follow the trajectories or biographies of the objects, if possible all the way from live animals to museum items.[30] As stated by the anthropologist Arjun Appadurai, the meaning of things is 'inscribed in their forms, their uses, their trajectories'.[31] In this regard, Bella has a double biography, one that highlights her existence as an individual, and one that emphasises her as a museum object. The transfer here of the stuffed dog from a museum of nature to one of culture is particularly significant, as it eroded its legitimacy as a specimen and destabilised its meaning. In the zoological collections the remnants of the pet dog Bella had been neutralised and naturalised, to make her represent a type of *Canis lupus familiaris*. In the Folkemuseum, however, the stuffed dog became an item on a par with the poet's other belongings preserved therein.

The stuffed Bella sheds light on her potential as a museum object. For many years the dog was displayed in Wergeland's arbour. The octagonal small, wooden hut had been moved to the Folk Museum in 1902, the same year as Bella was transported from the university in the centre of Oslo to the peninsula of Bygdøy. Inside the arbour the stuffed animal was displayed together with others of Wergeland's belongings; here the dog was reduced to a prop in a tableau performing the poet's summer study. Exposed to shifting temperatures through many years the body deteriorated badly and was finally stored properly in a cold storeroom.[32]

To Wergeland, Bella had meant different things. He was himself a collector of nature, alive and dead; to make his dog a scientific specimen was a logical consequence of his engagement in natural history. Bella's destiny may be interpreted as a rational and unsentimental way to handle the body of a dead animal. When the dog was alive, Wergeland had written the beautiful stanza 'I lower my sorrows in my

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dog's eye like into a deep well'.[33] However, his strong affinity to dogs and to animals and nature in general did not prevent him from considering his pet dog Bella an interesting contribution to a natural history collection: namely, to add to our knowledge of the hunting hounds of antiquity. We on the other hand are inclined to see the individual *Bella*, Henrik Wergeland's dog, a beloved pet known to us from his writings, and the act of objectifying and transforming her to a thing, either as specimen or property, contrasts strongly with how the great majority of Norwegians deposit their dead dogs today.[34] Judged by the way we handle the bodies of our dead pet dogs, the dog as a sentient being seems to be closer to a human than in Wergeland's times. Whether our feelings towards dogs are more sincere today than then, is, however, harder to tell.

Why and for what purpose is this miserable-looking, poorly upholstered body, close to 200 years old, of a dog called Bella, a thought-provoking thing? Bella's story is really about animal matter in transition in space and time. It exemplifies brilliantly the degree to which our understanding of a material object is deduced from where it is situated or located, in the case of Bella the natural history museum versus the folk museum. It is also, and maybe even more suggestively, a lesson about shifting emotions and the historicity in humans' feelings towards dogs. The biography of Bella, alive and dead, demonstrates the antagonistic ways humans have handled dogs and treated dogs, an animal that has been moved along an axis with instrumentality and sentimentality as its extremes.

Today no casual visitor can see the real object, but Bella is virtually present at Digitalt Museum, the electronic database of the Norwegian cultural history museums. The virtual appearance of Wergeland's dog reinforces her prospects of gaining new friends and maybe of telling new tales.

Transformations: upholstering and taxidermy

In one sense, stuffed animal bodies stand out as the ultimate objectification of animals where animal matter in museums is concerned. Whether we are reminded of life or rather death is, however, a moot point. The objectified animal may have been seen as 'the remnant of life'; to Victorians 'the taxidermy specimen realized the vitality within the remaining fur and feathers', historian Ann C. Colley claims.[35] Taking the opposing view, the art historian Rachel Poliquin stresses death as the foremost property of taxidermy: 'its realism is deadly'.[36] Whether a taxidermy animal suggests life or death is perhaps, however, a question about *quality*. 'Mounts are intended to be "resurrections", as close to life as possible,' science historian Samuel Alberti unequivocally states.[37] But the remains of Bella attract attention because she was a national skald's pet, and we contemplate her eeriness accordingly. The trouble with Bella is that her badly mounted skin, and the general decay of the object, make her a travesty of a dog and expose her definitive deadness. The illusion of life that pulls thousands of children to the stuffed animals in dioramas and glass cases in natural history museums around the world is particularly absent in this specimen. What remains is death.

The object Bella is, then, a piece of upholstery. Old animal mounts have lumpy and lifeless forms because the technique was simply to fill a hide, for instance with

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straw, which makes the body shrink, or with plaster, which makes the hide crack. Taxidermy at its best has been considered an art.[38] The core of taxidermy is to eradicate allusions to the death of the animal. The term itself comes from the Greek, being composed of 'taxis' which means movement, and 'derma' which means skin. The combination of the two means moving or manipulating the skin or the hide on a manikin in order to recreate the shape of the once-living animal.[39]

Biographies of zoological specimens may be described as '*material* knowledge in transit, bringing experiences of nature with them to different sites and audiences'.[40] This can be elaborated further, for biographies of zoological specimens are typically fragmented knowledge. What is seldom reflected on when contemplating exhibitions of animals in glass cases is that what we see are body *fragments*: a giraffe's hide, an eagle's skin. Natural history museums are filled with nature, and the problem is really how to move nature into the museum. To succeed in this endeavour, nature must be processed and transformed to manageable pieces that can function as scientific data. A great deal of work is invested to save fragments of the original animal, and the information they contain. Mammal and bird skins are stored flat in cabinets, bones put carefully in boxes and on shelves, soft tissue soaked in liquor, the temperature in the storerooms controlled. Each fragmented animal is being held together by means of registers, field notes, photographs, measurements, scientific articles and the like.

The arrangement of animal matter, not merely its preservation, is an essential lesson. To take an example: the Gothenburg Natural History Museum displays a splendid mounted bull elephant, shot in Angola on 4 December 1948 by museum taxidermist David Sjölander.[41] The animal was flayed, the hide treated with 4 kilograms of phenol and 100 kilograms of salt. After two weeks the skeleton had been thoroughly cleansed and the transportation back to Sweden could begin. Some of the bones were so huge that they had to be sawn. 'The elephant is a particularly popular dismembered animal', Kalof and Fitzgerald state in their analysis of hunting trophy photographs.[42] As taxidermy, however, the Gothenburg mounted elephant is made of fragments from *three* separate elephants: skin from the Angola bull, tusks from a second animal, and the characteristic hairs on the tail from a third. The complete skeleton with tusks is stored in the museum's Bone Cellar. Another example is the walrus, another taxidermy eye-catcher in the museum, shot on 9 January 1927 in the archipelago north of Gothenburg, the body transported to the museum the following day. The walrus's hide was mounted, the intestines soaked in liquor and the bones placed in the Bone Cellar.

As previously argued, materiality may be studied as a relation between matter or materials and people. The materiality of a taxidermy animal body in a natural history museum works within a triangle composed of the mounted specimen, the absent and idiosyncratic and once-alive animal, and the observer. The mounted animals crowding together in the glass cases are didactic objects made to represent their species. However, the very idea of a species is an abstraction, as Jeremy Mynott claims in his book *Birdscapes*:

> But what is that we are identifying or failing to identify, anyway? For most purposes we seem to be more interested in the bird as a representative of a

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> *species* rather than as an individual. That's what we name, count, admire, conserve or eat. (. . .) The idea of a species is after all an abstraction, (. . .), a convenient way of relating a lot of birds that share certain common properties.[43]

The essence of the process to convert an animal into one or several specimens is 'the very act of removal' according to Alberti.[44] Scars, bodily defects caused by bone fractures, bullet injuries, and holes in hides have carefully been patched up on the taxidermy body. Through the act of removal and preservation, the animal is thus cleansed of meanings that might connect the beast to society and culture, its history partly erased: 'For, if objects are to act as data, they need to be impartial – their constructedness needs to be hidden by those whose credibility depends upon them', claims Alberti.[45]

To 'naturalise' is another verb used for mounting animals, expressing the taxidermist's purpose: to achieve a result that presents the animal in a natural state. But to what degree does an individual animal function fully as a neutral illustration of the idealised species? High quality taxidermy makes the animal look alive again but the use of real skins presupposes death and undermines the neutrality of the object. But even a single flat skin in a museum series can be a carrier of information for 'telling complex histories of human–animal encounter, cohabitation, and estrangement', as Patchett, Foster and Lorimer demonstrate in their biography of a harrier skin.[46] Information about earlier life clings to the animal fragments in the natural history collections.

In contrast to scientific models made of wood, wax, ceramics or plaster, being simulacra or imitations of an original, stuffed animals have skin and fur that once belonged to a live animal, pretending to be the real thing. They possess an 'uncanny animal-thingness', to quote Rachel Poliquin: 'This uncanny animal-thingness has the power to provoke, to edify, and even to undermine the validity of its own existence'.[47] A stuffed animal is a crafted thing, yet one of its properties is its volatility. Taxidermy's purpose is to arrange skins, but a skin can be arranged several times. A mount can be dismantled. The skin is of value to the natural history museum, not the animal object per se except for specimens of extinct or famous animals. And even the skin of a historical specimen from a famous animal can be rearranged, like the rescue dog Barry in the Natural History Museum of Bern.[48]

Poliquin, moreover, expresses the uncertainty that sticks to the materiality and meaning of stuffed animals: 'Animal or object? Animal and object? This is the irresolvable tension that defines all taxidermy'.[49] This tension leads Poliquin into seven different interpretations of taxidermy, each coloured by what she calls 'a particular longing':[50]

> All taxidermy is a disorientating, unknowable thing. All taxidermy is driven to capture animal beauty. It is always a spectacle, whose meaning depends in part on the particularity of the animal being displayed. It is motivated by the desire to tell ourselves stories about who we are and about our journey within the larger social and natural world. It is driven by what lies beneath the animal form, by the metaphors and allegories we use to make our world

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> make sense. And finally, taxidermy is always a gesture of remembrance: the beast is no more.[51]

To understand the materiality of taxidermied animals one must then ask for the reason why the animal was preserved, and then ask what the object means today.[52] Poliquin's seven interpretive categories are wonder, beauty, spectacle, order, narrative, allegory and remembrance. If we return to the animal-thing Bella, she definitely arouses both wonder and remembrance by virtue of being the relics of Henrik Wergeland's last companion animal. The dog was preserved to represent a canine type of antiquity and to be displayed in a natural history museum, but ultimately did not fit into the scientific taxonomies. As an animal-thing she is a travesty of a dog and the reverse of beauty. Bringing these elements together makes a narrative comprising the dog and the poet, attitudes to animals in the past and the present, an experience of distance in time and mentality.

Evocative and talkative things: dogs at Tring

In the flow of scholarship that has followed in the wake of the material turn in humanities and social sciences, many accounts explore carefully picked objects, objects that are attributed the power to talk, to evoke and to bring to mind. According to psychologist Sherry Turkle evocative objects are things that unite emotion and intellect:

> We find it familiar to consider objects as useful or aesthetic, as necessities or vain indulgences. We are on less familiar ground when we consider objects as companions to our emotional lives or as provocations to thought. The notion of evocative objects brings together these two less familiar ideas, underscoring the inseparability of thought and feeling in our relationship to things. We think with the objects we love; we love the objects we think with.[53]

Evocative things are mnemonic. They assist our memories helping and provoking us to think and remember. A hearing-impaired man explained to a journalist what his personal belongings meant to him. He expressed the link between things, memory and thought that we learn from Turkle's text but in this case experienced as a repetitive everyday task:

> I love to collect things, you know because I can't hear I need a lot to look at. I observe things, touch things, sniff on things and communicate with them. There's not a thing here without a personal value. When I dust, old memories pop up and make me happy. I love to dust.[54]

His statement adds a new potential to dull dusting: to dust is to keep the connection between things and memory present and awake.

When considering the expressive potential in things, Turkle gives prominence to the psychological quality of an object. Lorraine Daston, on the other hand, emphasises

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its materiality. I will claim that the objectified Bella, given her status of pet, is an evocative object. But Bella is also one of the kind of things that talk, or rather make us talk about them, a *chimera*. The essence of the chimera is composition, Daston states:

> Things that talk are often chimeras, composites of different species. The difference in species must be stressed: the composites in question don't just weld together different elements of some kind (for example, the wood, nails, glue and paint stuck together to make a chair); they straddle boundaries between kinds. Art and nature, persons and things, objective and subjective are somehow brought together in these things, and the fusions result in considerable blurring of outlines.[55]

A chimera is a being composed of parts from different animals. Originally a Greek term, the chimera was a monstrous animal, half lion and half goat, with a serpent's tail. The key aspect about chimera-like things, in Daston's words, is that they 'straddle boundaries between kinds', *and* they straddle boundaries drawn between classes or species.[56] They thus transcend boundaries and connect commonly separated elements. Because chimerical objects challenge boundaries and categories, they attract attention. Daston maintains that chimerical objects bind materiality and meaning together.[57] She also claims that the speech of objects is derived from the particular characteristics of the objects, properties that fit with the cultural purposes they are part of and participate in, or participated in. Hence, we must know the changing contexts to make things speak.

Stuffed animals are material chimeras. As physical natural history objects they can be touched, moved, rebuilt and viewed, all according to the purpose. To the visitor they tell about fauna and also mobilise perceptions, narratives and emotions.[58] Stuffed animals resist standard classification according to the nature–culture dichotomy. They raise the question of what kind of artefact we are dealing with: are they cultural objects, natural objects or rather hybrids that interact between nature and non-nature, where non-nature points towards the social and cultural conditions of natural science, as well as toward art and notions about the relationship between people and animals?

Talkative things thus catch our attention because they connect nature and culture, blur boundaries and combine elements that often are separate. Bella as history and materiality pulls together nature and culture, pet and specimen, museum registers and poetry, upholstery and flesh and blood. Chimera alludes to composition and monster. In this discussion it should be observed that chimera also claims a signification that refers to imagination, creative thought and inventiveness. This establishes a connection between Turkle's notion of 'evocative things' and Daston's understanding of 'things that talk'. But sight precedes speech, especially in museum displays. Evocative and talkative things first speak to the eye: 'Speaking to the eye beyond speaking to the brain I would think would be of the very greatest benefit for my readers'. These were the words of Italian scientist and taxidermist Paolo Savi in his introductory chapter to *Ornithologia Toscana*.[59]

The stuffed dogs exhibited in the Natural History Museum's collection at Tring, in Hertfordshire, England, certainly speak to the eye. European museum collections – be

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they in natural history museums or cultural history museums – very seldom contain stuffed dogs or other domesticated animals, and it is even more rare to see them displayed. A famous exception, however, is the Dog Collection at Tring.[60] During the years 1900–1915, Richard Lydekker (1849–1915) of the Natural History Museum (part of the British Museum until 1963) was in charge of the Collection of Domesticated Animals.[61] The collection was planned with skins and skeletons 'to form a nucleus of a study series', added with a 'collection of photographs of modern breeds (. . .). When practicable, the various breeds should be represented with skins and skeletons of well-known animals – more especially prize-winners'.[62] Such a collection, he hoped, 'in the course of time will be of the highest value to the breeder, as well as to the student of variation'.[63] The dogs that today are shown at Tring were formerly part of an exhibition of domesticated animals displayed in the Central and North Halls of the Natural History Museum in London.[64] In the 1950s there was an ongoing discussion about the possibility of making Tring into a museum of domesticated animals. This failed: the exhibition was dismantled in 1959, only the dog collection transferred to its present home at Tring.[65]

Today the display of stuffed dogs at Tring most of all offers an instructive and unique demonstration of the exterior changes the exposed breeds have undergone during the last hundred years. The exhibition may be interpreted as an illustrative and thought-provoking installation of the aesthetic manipulation of the so-called purebred dog. Short snouts are getting shorter, curved legs more curved, small loins and hind limbs smaller, wide skulls wider, under-hung jaws even more under-hung, which has been the case of the English bulldog. As Lydekker ascertained in his description of the breed already in 1908: 'These features are exaggerated in the modern breed, which is useless for fighting'.[66]

The dogs were mounted by the famous taxidermy workshop Rowland Ward Ltd.[67] Ward provided stuffed specimens to The Natural History Museum in London and to natural history museums all over Europe. The second important client group was big game hunters. Similar to the preferred posture given to wild mammals, the dogs are mounted standing, and they don't carry any pointers to domestication and tameness such as a collar. Trophy taxidermy has also influenced the mounting of the dogs: a head of a King Charles Cavalier mounted on a wooden plaque opens the visitor's eyes wide.

When assembling the collection of domestic animals Lydekker aimed at prize-winning individuals. In fact a high number of the dogs displayed in the Tring museum had been exhibited successfully in dog shows in their lifetime. Several of them had been famous award-winning show and racing dogs, and several had been at their best when they died, very often due to canine distemper. In this period canine distemper became steadily more common in the British Isles, and a vaccine against the illness did not exist.

The most prominent of the exhibited dogs are: Mick the Miller, who in his lifetime was a shining star after the first greyhound racing stadium was opened in Manchester in 1926 (between the years 1928 and 1931 he won 46 out of 61 races), the greyhound Fullerton (1887–1899) who lost just two of his 33 races, and the English bulldog Nuthurst Doctor (1901–1909), 26 times a champion, a winner of 700 other prizes, and declared Best in Show at the Kennel Club's exhibition at the

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Crystal Palace in 1907. Other dogs are distinguished because they were the first example of a breed presented in England, for example the Pekingese male Ah Cum, imported from China in 1896.[68] The Australian feral dingo and 'pariah' dogs from India and Turkey were included in the collection to emphasise the variation of the species and for a pointed contrast between the purebred and the mongrel.

Taxidermied wild animals generally fit well in natural history museums, being the places these objects are expected to occupy. Domestic animals have been less sought-after. One important reason for this is the great variety of breeds in a single species, another is that the breeds have been continuously altered by their domestication. The dog as a species is specifically problematic to stuff and put on display because of its cultural significance in Western countries. To the Victorians, '(a) home was the dog's proper place'.[69] Today the dog is frequently referred to as a member of the family. An animal that is so closely associated with the intimacy of home and family is not expected to be objectified. The taxidermied dogs in the natural history museum at Tring thus emphatically, with Daston's words, 'straddle boundaries between kinds'. The Tring dogs, preserved in the museum vitrine, address us simultaneously as specimens of breeds but also as individuals mentioned by name, each with a curriculum vitae that tells the dates of the dog's birth and death, data about their triumphs in the show ring or at the racing track plus the breeder's and the owner's names. The pedigree that placed the dog socially and culturally and made them 'pure' in contrast to the undocumented cur has followed the dead animal. The dogs' importance as cultural things is also accentuated by the fact that after the taxidermist had completed his work the preserved body was inspected by a dog show judge for quality.

In the museum the dogs have once more been put on display: they are still showpieces as they were in their lifetime. 'A preserved dog will always stand out as something different', Rachel Poliquin states in her discussion of the Tring dogs, hinting at the dog's importance as a pet and a friend:

> While the emotionality surrounding perpetual pets makes them particularly disturbing, even the dogs in The Dog Collection at Tring are disquieting. Dogs are our companion species, our ancient partners in work and life, and probably humans' first nonhuman friends. Perhaps the human–dog bond is too intimate for such post-mortem bodily invasion.[70]

To their owners the prize-winning dogs were, maybe pets, but surely tools for gaining social prestige and economic reward. For the majority of dog lovers who see the stuffed dogs today they are more likely to be considered 'matter out of place'.[71]

The dogs at Tring are evocative objects in flux between nature and culture. Championship was the standard for a good and correct animal. When Lydekker collected the dogs, prize-winning and purebred dogs were integrated in the upper classes' conspicuous consumption producing social status. Lydekker's intention was that the dog collection 'in the course of time' should function as a materialised guide for good breeding.[72] But time has taken the breeds on show at Tring far from the standards of a hundred years ago. The importance of the collection today is mainly to demonstrate human manipulation of canine matter by selective breeding, an

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instructive installation of what, according to Yi-Fu Tuan, may be labelled 'dominant affection' or 'affective dominance'.[73]

Knotted: dog fur

Humans, animals and objects are all 'products of their relating', and one type of relation is a knot.[74] 'The world is a knot in motion', Donna Haraway states in *The Companion Species Manifesto*.[75] This highly compressed formulation refers to two essential postulates in her text: first, beings do not exist alone and isolated but are entangled in other beings and objects by what Haraway calls prehensions or graspings. The second point is that neither live creatures nor dead objects have an isolated beginning or ending. As she declares: 'There are no pre-constituted subjects and objects, and no single sources, unitary actors, or final ends'.[76] In her book *Wild Animal Skins in Victorian Britain* Ann C. Coley demonstrates how big game hunters mapped their routes by marking the sites where the animals had been killed. Killing also comprised flaying and curing of the skins in camp: 'their course (was charted) through their encounters with wild skins'.[77] Such 'hunting maps' both materialise and visualize, by virtue of the object map, the interlocking of wild skins, colonialism and empire. Animal skins are highly movable and entangled objects. Here a Norwegian peasant's winter cap lined with dog fur and stored in the Trøndelag Folkemuseum, Norway, serves, like the stuffed hide of Bella, as a door opener to reach a better understanding of the contradictory attitudes to animals in the past, and especially to dogs.

The cap is made of red wool cloth lined with lamb fur, while the ear pads are lined with dog fur. The local term is 'hundskinnshuv', roughly translated as dog-skin cap. The cap is approximately 150 years old and was added to the collections in 1920. It was manufactured at a time when taking care of hides from dogs was as common as using skin and fur from other domestic animals.

Figuring in the General Register as number TF 810, the catalogue card contains interesting information about the use of dog fur among the peasants in the community of Røros before 1877. This was the year the community got a railway connection, and with the railway new commodities such as mass-produced clothes became available and consequently replaced the traditional clothing. Consulting the register we learn that a cap made of dog fur was part of the peasants' winter costume when driving to church and on festive occasions. Dog fur was, in other words, for high festivals and celebrations: it was exclusive.

The cap was worn together with an ankle-length overcoat made of dog fur. The hands were protected from the cold by mittens made of dog fur lined with lambskin, and on their feet they wore high boots trimmed with a brim of dog fur. Class also enters; only wealthy peasants could afford the dog fur costume. Those with less money had to content themselves with travelling furs of reindeer or sheep. This means that the skin of ruminants such as reindeer and sheep was of less value than that of the carnivore dog, not to mention travelling furs of wolf skin that were even more rare and expensive. A dog fur costume was a sign of social and economic power, a conspicuous indicator of class.[78]

By whom and where were dog furs made? The museum register gives the answer. The skins were from 'genuine sámi dogs' and the costumes were sold at the annual

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winter market in Røros. Here Norwegians and Swedes met, peasants as well as sámi people. The expression 'genuine sámi dogs' indicates that the costumes were sámi products, with fur from the small spitz dogs used by the sámi as herding dogs. Peasants in northern Sweden also raised dogs for their fur.[79] This was fur from larger dogs called 'grey-dogs'. Their grey coat was very similar to that of the 'grey legs', the feared wolf.[80] In 1876 the Swedish zoologist P.O. Olsson wrote that quite a lot of the population in Jämtland kept dogs '. . . mainly because their coat rends expensive and excellent fur'.[81] Greydogs were the ancestors of the Elk Hound, the most prominent of the five Norwegian national breeds.[82]

Unravelling object TF810 brings together people, animals and things that are related in human and beastly hierarchies and situated in time and place. The cap was part of an economic and rational culture in which animals primarily were of utility and the dog a domestic animal among other domestic animals. Skin, fur, wool and fat from dogs were all utilised.[83] While in a Norwegian valley peasants were still wearing dog-skin caps, dog owners from the upper and middle classes in other European countries had already started to 'domesticate animal death': to bury their pet dogs and raise tombstones on the graves.[84]

Animal matter: power and emotion

Dog-skin caps, taxidermied animals, cutlery, upholstered pets, fragments of exotic animals – all are glimpses of singular elements in a vast multitude of objects made from animal materials, most of them stored out of sight of the public. During recent years museums have worked to digitalise their collections to make them more accessible. On the other hand, objects are being taken out of displays because they are assumed to be offensive to visitors. 'The museum object is shaped by and shaping of visitors' attention. At the same time, these objects are animated by the museum, its practices and procedures, its classifications and its display techniques', Michelle Henning claims.[85] To display human matter is controversial today, and maybe it is only a question of time before taxidermied animals will be removed from the glass cabinets. As demonstrated previously, the objects selected have been labelled evocative, talkative, chimerical, knotted, and hybrid because their properties trigger emotions, tickle the curiosity, and invite conversations and discourse. Yet embedded in these examples of animal materiality are also questions that involve power and sentiment.

'Contact with power often ends in death. What once was alive becomes inanimate matter. Thus trees turn into table and chairs, animals into meat and leather', Yi-Fu Tuan states in his influential work *Dominance and Affection: The Making of Pets*.[86] Tuan's concern is to highlight how humans' affection and love for vulnerable creatures also contain elements of dominance and cruelty. In this way, animal matter in museums makes human power over animals visible, undeniable and ubiquitous.

Contrary to Tuan's dark vision of the totally controlled animal squeezed between love and dominance is the use of animals in sámi reindeer nomadic culture in Finnmark, Norway. Until the 1950s the reindeer was the principal element in a quotidian technology based on inter-relationship and inter-dependence between humans and animals.[87] From the reindeer the nomadic families received food and

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clothing. Everything digestible of the animal was utilised for food: the meat was salted, dried or smoked. The female reindeers were milked and with the fat milk they either made cheese or the milk was dried in reversed reindeer stomachs. The same with the blood, so the small working herding dogs would have blood in their daily diet the whole year through. Both summer and winter costumes were made of carefully chosen parts of the reindeer's coat. Babies and small children's clothes were made of skin from newborn reindeer calves, and winter shoes were made of skin from the reindeer's skull. A thick layer of reindeer skins covered the tent floor during the winter season. The reindeer has also been tamed to serve as a draught animal, the lasso was earlier made of sinews. Horn and bones have been used for making vernacular objects such as spoons, handles, and needle-cases. Animal matter holds together the reindeer nomadic family lives. In this perspective not only humans but also the humble animal things wield power.

Daniel Miller has claimed 'that the best way to understand, convey and appreciate our humanity is through attention to our fundamental materiality'.[88] Our relationship to material things has profound consequences for future life on earth, but before addressing materialism as a political issue, Miller calls for a consideration of 'the consequences of our materiality and of material culture for a more profound understanding of what we our selves are'.[89] In other words, to be a human is to live by and with what Miller calls 'stuff'.

Synonyms for 'stuff' are paraphernalia, junk, mess, gear, material, substance, matter, things, objects, articles, packages, bits and pieces. In the examples discussed in this chapter, stuff or whatever we choose to label the materiality we live with and in, animal and human are profoundly entangled. The logic of the museum is to detach things from their former relations in order to obtain ultimate storage suitable to the materials of the objects. To critically question the materiality of the objects means to restore their power as related matter. The Sheffield and Solingen knives are certainly pieces of commonplace paraphernalia, their handles are made from bones that once supported some beasts' warm and working bodies. This re-establishes a connection between the object and the once-animated animal and makes it ontologically stand out from objects made of stone, metal or plant material. When Miller asks us to consider 'the consequences of our materiality' we might feel that this is very close to the commonplace acknowledgment of humanity's dependence on animals. 'What we our selves are' cannot be imagined without including (other) animals. Animal matter, animal matters, are neither innocent nor neutral. This will become more evident and urgent as the history of animals is being written, step by step.

Notes

1 I wish to thank Kristin Asdal, Inger Johanne Lyngø and especially Karen Rader for constructive comments, and Philip Howell for making the text linguistically consistent.

2 N. Rothfels, *Savages and Beasts: The Birth of the Modern Zoo*, Baltimore MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002, 6. Rothfels mentions environments such as museums, books, circuses and zoos as places where animals' unnatural history unfold.

3 C. Tilley, W. Keane, S. Küchler, M. Rowlands, and P. Spyer (eds.), *Handbook of Material Culture*, London: Sage, 2006.

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4 Tilley *et al. Handbook of Material Culture*, 3.
5 Cultural historian B. Rogan says: 'It seems by the way to be clear that the concept (materiality) is used in different ways, both as a processual concept which aims to grasp the relation between things and persons, or the 'social life' of things related to the social life of humans, but also as a concept which says something about the physical substance of things'/'Det synes imidlertid klart at begrepet brukes på ulike måter, både som et prossesuelt begrep som prøver å fange opp relasjonen mellom ting og mennesker, eller tingenes 'sosiale liv' i relasjon til menneskers sosiale liv, men også som et begrep som sier noe om tingenes fysiske substans': B. Rogan, 'Et faghistorisk etterord om materiell kultur og kulturens materialitet', in S.-A. Naguib and B. Rogan (eds.), *Materiell Kultur & Kulturens Materialitet*, Oslo: Novus Forlag, 2011, 313–385. Dudley stresses the same duality when defining materiality: 'What, though, precisely is this "materiality"? In part at least it connotes the form and the materials of which an object consists, together with the techniques by which it may have been made or formed, any additions or presentational conventions (such as a frame) which may have been added to it, and all and any traces of the passage of time, and, especially, physical human interaction. Materiality implies, too, though, engagement – be it cognitive, emotional, or imaginative alone (. . .) or physically, bodily participative as well (. . .)': S.D. Dudley, *Museum Materialities: Objects, Engagements, Interpretations*, London: Routledge, 2010, 7. A strong argument for studying the properties of materials instead of materiality is given by T. Ingold, 'Materials against materiality', *Archaeological Dialogues*, 14, 1 (2007): 1–16.
6 C. Tilley, 'Materiality in materials', *Archeological Dialogues* 14, 1 (2007): 16–20.
7 Tilley, 'Materiality in materials', 17.
8 For the early modern collections in Italy, see P. Findlen, *Possessing Nature: Museums, Collecting, and Scientific Culture in Early Modern Italy*, Berkeley CA: University of California Press, 1996; S.M. Pearce, *Museums, Objects, and Collections: A Cultural Study*, Washington DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992, 91–98.
9 M. Tamen, *Friends of Interpretable Objects*, Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2001.
10 Tamen, *Friends of Interpretable Objects*, 4.
11 L. Daston (ed.), *Things that Talk. Object Lessons from Art and Science*, New York: Zone Books, 2004, 228.
12 Daston, *Things that Talk*, 229.
13 C. Philo and C. Wilbert (eds.), *Animal Spaces, Beastly Places: New Geographies of Human–Animal Relations*, London: Routledge, 2000.
14 Findlen, *Possessing Nature*, 23.
15 K. Whitaker, 'The culture of curiosity', in N. Jardine, J.A. Secord, and E.C. Spary (eds.), *Cultures of Natural History*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996, 75–90.
16 A. MacGregor, *Curiosity and Enlightenment: Collectors and Collections from the Sixteenth to the Nineteenth Century*, New Haven CT: Yale University Press, 2007; Pearce, *Museums, Objects, and Collections*, 98–115.
17 S. Battaglini, G. Bianucci, M. Cerri, M. Dellacasa, A. Iacopini, C. Nocchi, P. Orlandi, E. Palagi, F. Strumia, and M. Zuffi, 'Il Museo di Storia Naturale e del Territorio', in P. Meletti (ed.), *Arte e Scienza nei Musei dell'Università di Pisa*, Pisa: Edizioni Plus, 2002, 97–140.
18 M.M. Simari, 'Serragli a Firenze al tempo dei Medici' in *Natura Viva in Casa Medici*, Firenze: Centro Di della Edifimi, 1985, 99, 23–31.
19 G. Batini, *Firenze Curiosa*, Firenze: Bonechi Editori, 1972, 25–30.
20 Batini, *Firenze Curiosa*.
21 For a more extensive presentation of the biography of the hippopotamus in 'La Specola' see L.E. Thorsen, 'The hippopotamus in the Florentine zoological museum "La Specola": a

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discussion of stuffed animals as sources of cultural history', *Museologia Scientifica: Rivista dell'A.N.M.S.* 21, 2 (2006): 269–281.

22 'L'ippopotamo de "La Specola" torna in esposizione dopo mesi di assenza', 10 September 2012, available at www.nove.firenze.it/b212102051-l-ippopotamo-de-la-specola-torna-in-esposizione-dopo-mesi-di-assenza.htm, last accessed 17 March 2017.

23 See examples of common table knives produced in Sheffield and Solingen here: http://digitaltmuseum.no/011023244099?page=43&query=kniv&pos=1008, last accessed 17 March 2017.

24 The section about the commodifying of the urban horse draws on C. McShane and J.A. Tarr, *The Horse in the City: Living Machines in the Nineteenth Century*, Baltimore MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007, 16, 18–36.

25 McShane and Tarr, *The Horse in the City*, 29

26 Gelatine or gelatin is made from the skin of horses, cattle and pigs.

27 For Wergeland, see http://global.britannica.com/biography/Henrik-Arnold-Wergeland, last accessed 17 March 2017.

28 ' . . . fortjener Plads der som Skelett og udstoppet som Typus for den antikke hundeform på Basrelieferne': L. Amundsen and D.A. Seip (eds.), *Henrik Wergelands Skrifter*, Oslo: J.W. Cappelens forlag, 1962, Volume 8, 239.

29 Norsk Folkemuseum is Norway's largest open air and cultural history museum, founded in 1894.

30 S.J.M.M. Alberti (ed.), *The Afterlives of Animals*, Charlottesville VA: University of Virginia Press, 2011; L.E. Thorsen, *Elephants Are Not Picked From Trees: Animal Biographies in Gothenburg Natural History Museum*, Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 2014.

31 A. Appadurai, *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in a Cultural Perspective,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986, 5.

32 See pictures of Bella at the Norsk Folkesuseum here: http://digitaltmuseum.no/011023128033?name=%22hunder%22&pos=1, last accessed 17 March 2017.

33 'I min Hunds Øje sænker jeg mine Sorger som i en dyb Brønd'. From the poem 'Mig selv', 1841.

34 L.E. Thorsen, *Hund! Fornuft og Følelser,* Oslo: Pax Forlag, 2001, 247–273; L.E. Thorsen, 'Dead dogs: utility and emotions', *Ethnologia Scandinavica* 31 (2001): 109–117.

35 A.C. Colley, *Wild Animal Skins in Victorian Britain: Zoos, Collections, Portraits, Maps*, Burlington: Ashgate, 2014, 97.

36 R. Poliquin, *The Breathless Zoo: Taxidermy and the Cultures of Longing*, University Park PA: Pennsylvania University Press, 2012, 108.

37 S.J.M.M. Alberti, 'Constructing nature behind glass', *Museum and Society* 6, 2 (2008): 73–97, 81.

38 P.A. Morris, *A History of Taxidermy: Art, Science and Bad Taste*, Ascot: MPM Publishing, 2010.

39 Morris, *History of Taxidermy*, 8.

40 Alberti, *Afterlives of Animals*, 4.

41 This discussion of examples from the Gothenburg Natural History Museum is based on L.E. Thorsen, *Elephants Are Not Picked From Trees*.

42 Kalof and Fitzgerald classify trophy photograph motives according to three conventions: the newly killed animal prior to dismemberment; the killed animal and the white hunter, the latter sometimes posing on top of the fallen body with the cut-off tail in his hand, and the cutting up of the body with displays of tusk, head and feet; tail, tusks, head and feet members give an indication of size. See L. Kalof and A. Fitzgerald, 'Reading the trophy: exploring the display of dead animals in hunting magazines', *Visual Studies* 18, 2 (2003): 112–122.

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43 J. Mynott, *Birdscapes: Birds in Our Imagination and Experience*, Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009, 58–59.
44 Alberti, 'Constructing nature behind glass', 82.
45 Alberti, 'Constructing nature behind glass', 81.
46 M. Patchett, K. Foster, and H. Lorimer, 'The biographies of a hollow-eyed Harrier', in Alberti, *Afterlives of Animals*, 110–134. The authors underline the importance of well-curated collections and easy access to data as premises for animal biography studies in natural history collections.
47 R. Poliquin, 'The matter and meaning of museum taxidermy', *Museum and Society* 6, 2 (2008): 123–134, 127.
48 The most famous Swiss rescue dog, named Barry, was born in 1800 and died in 1814, and his stuffed skin has been on display in the Natural History Museum of Bern since 1815. The skin has been rearranged twice, the last time in 1923 when the mount was done to make the dog look like the modern Saint Bernard breed. Barry became a legend in his lifetime, and has been kept alive in stories, poems, pictures, and, notably, through the museum's own memory work. The dog's bicentennial anniversary was celebrated by reconstructing the body once again, this time on paper. See M. Nussbaumer, *Barry vom Grossen St. Bernhard*, Bern: Naturhistorisches Museum der Burgergemeinde Bern, 2000; L.E. Thorsen, 'A dog of myth and matter: Barry the Saint Bernard in Bern', in LE. Thorsen, K. Rader, and A. Dodd (eds.) *Animals on Display: The Creaturely in Museums, Zoos, and Natural History*, University Park PA: Pennsylvania University Press, 2013, 128–153.
49 Poliquin, *Breathless Zoo*, 12.
50 Poliquin, *Breathless Zoo*, 6.
51 Poliquin, *Breathless Zoo*, 7.
52 Poliquin, *Breathless Zoo*, 7.
53 S. Turkle, *Evocative Objects: Things We Think With*, Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 2007, 8.
54 'Jeg elsker å samle på ting, jeg må ha masse å se på når jeg ikke hører, vet du. Jeg observerer ting, tar på ting, lukter på ting og kommuniserer med dem, det finnes ikke en eneste ting her som ikke har personlig verdi. Når jeg tørker støv, dukker gamle minner opp og gjør meg glad. Jeg elsker å tørke støv': N.-C. Ihlen-Hansen in 'Fransk Las Vegas på Vestli', *Aftenposten*, 3 October 2008, available at www.aftenposten.no/norge/Fransk-Las-Vegas-pa-Vestli-277206b.html, last accessed 17 March 2017.
55 Daston, *Things That Talk*, 21.
56 Daston, *Things that Talk*.
57 Daston, *Things that Talk*, 10.
58 S.T. Asma offers an adequate expression of the emotional sensation visitors may feel in the natural history museum: 'Most nature museums – and this goes back to the curiosity cabinets of the Renaissance and early Enlightenment – do not really titillate the appetites, as in the case of consumer manipulation. The feeling of wonder, or the sensation of the marvelous, *is* emotional and can intoxicate, but unlike the appetites, it has no obvious object or specifiable goal. (. . .) Enthusiasm (the word means "to be filled with the gods") is an emotion that museums often engender, and it suggests that one momentarily loses oneself to something bigger – in a word, transcendence': S.T. Asma, *Stuffed Animals and Pickled Heads: The Culture and Evolution of Natural History Museums*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001, 34, emphasis in original.
59 'Il parlare all'occhio oltre il parlare alla mente, credei dovesse esser della più grande utilità per i mei lettori, (. . .)': P. Savi, *Ornitologia Toscana ossia Descrizione e storia degli uccelli che trovansi nella Toscana con l'aggiunta delle descrizione di tutti gli altri*, Pisa: Dalla Tipografia Nistri/Fratelli Nistri, 1827, XII.

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60 The collections and the museum were established by Lionel Walter Rothschild, biographed in M. Rothschild, *Dear Lord Rothschild: Birds, Butterflies and History*, London: Hutchinson, 1983. He bequeathed the collection to the British Museum.
61 Lydekker worked for the Director and Keeper of Zoology, Ray Lankester. For domesticated animals in the British Natural History Museum see W.T. Stearn, *The Natural History Museum at South Kensington*, London: The Natural History Museum, 1981, 183–185; for the Dog Collection, see K. Dennis-Bryan and J. Clutton-Brock, *Dogs of the Last Hundred Years at the British Museum (Natural History)*, London: British Museum, 1988.
62 R. Lydekker in A.C.L.G. Günther, *The History of the Collections Contained in the Natural History Departments of the British Museum*, Volume II, London, 1906, 67.
63 R. Lydekker in Günther, *The History of the Collections*, 68.
64 Apart from dogs, breeds of cattle, sheep, goats, cats, ferrets, guinea pigs, rabbits, pigeons, poultry, ducks, geese and canaries were displayed. See R. Lydekker, *A Guide to Domesticated Animals (other than Horses)*, London: British Museum, 1908.
65 British Museum (Natural History) Archives, DF 1004/cp/721 Tring Museum of Domestic Animals 1950–1960; See Stearn, *Natural History Museum*, 185.
66 Lydekker, *Guide to Domesticated Animals*, 40.
67 P.A. Morris, *Rowland Ward: Taxidermist to the World*, Lavenham: Lavenham Press, 2003.
68 Dennis-Bryan and Clutton-Brock, *Dogs of the Last Hundred* Years, 98. For the Pekingese, see S. Cheang, 'Women, pets and imperialism: the British Pekingese dog and nostalgia for old China', *Journal of British Studies* 45, 2 (2006): 359–387.
69 H. Kean, *Animal Rights: Political and Social Change in Britain Since 1800*, London: Reaktion, 1998, 88. See also P. Howell, *At Home and Astray: the Domestic Dog in Victorian Britain*, Charlottesville VA: University of Virginia Press, 2015, 73–75.
70 Poliquin, *Breathless Zoo,* 215.
71 M. Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, London: Routledge, 1966.
72 R. Lydekker in Günther, *The History of the Collections*, 68.
73 Y.-F. Tuan, *Dominance and Affection: the Making of Pets*, New Haven CT: Yale University Press, 1984.
74 D. Haraway, *The Companion Species Manifesto: Dogs, People, and Significant Otherness*, Chicago IL: Prickly Paradigm Press, 2003, 7.
75 Haraway, *Companion Species Manifesto*.
76 Haraway, *Companion Species Manifesto*, 6.
77 Colley, *Wild Animal Skins*, 154.
78 In the Swedish novel *Ormens väg på Hälleberget (The Way of the Serpent)* (1984/1990) by Torgny Lindgren, the cruel and despotic merchant Karl Orsa always wears an overcoat of dog fur when he visits his poor tenants' hut, forcing the women to have sex with him to pay their debts. Dog furs are also mentioned and attributed to well-off people in other Nordic novels set in the nineteenth century. The connnection between power and lack of empathy symbolised in the dog fur overcoat is also demonstrated in Lindgren's autobiography *Minnen* (2010). Lindgren notes how his grandfather bought a litter of sámi dogs, and when they were grown up, they were slaughtered and their skins used to make an overcoat.
79 C.R. Sundström, *Handbok för Hundvänner*, Stockholm: Gernandts Boktryckeri–Aktiebolag, 1889, 124; E. Johansson, *Skogarnas fria Söner*, Nordiska Museets Handlingar, 118, Kristianstad: Nordiska Museet, 1994; I. Svanberg, *Hästslaktare och Korgmakare: Resursutnyttjande och Livsstil Bland Sockenlappar,* Umeå: Johan Nordlander-sällskapet, 1999.
80 It is probable that several overcoats in Norwegian museums catalogued as wolf fur are in fact made of dog fur.
81 Olsson, quoted in Svanberg, *Hästslaktare och Korgmakare*, 87.

82 The correct name of the Elk Hound should be Elk Dog.
83 Even as late as the 1950s, Norwegian farm dogs could be skinned and the skin used to sit on or as bedside rugs. For the use of dog fur in England see: Kean, *Animal* Rights, 73–74; K. Thomas, *Man and the Natural World: Changing Attitudes in England 1500–1800*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, Penguin, 1996, 340, n. 340.
84 Howell, *At Home and Astray*, 147.
85 M. Henning, *Museums, Media and Cultural Theory*, London: Open University Press, 2006, 11.
86 Tuan, *Dominance and Affection*, 12.
87 Ø. Vorren and E. Manker, *Samekulturen: En kulturhistorisk oversikt*, second edition, Tromsø, Bergen, and Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1976, 30–81.
88 D. Miller, *Stuff*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 2010, 4.
89 Miller, *Stuff*, 5.

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PART II

Problems and paradigms

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