BURDEN OF THE BEAST:
ANIMALS IN TRADITIONAL EUROPE
AND THEIR ROLE IN GUIDING SOCIETY

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ABSTRACT

THESIS: Burden of the Beast: Animals in Traditional Europe and Their Role in Guiding Society

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ABSTRACT: This thesis examines the development of anthropocentric interpretations of nonhuman animals throughout Europe by tracing the ongoing transformation and usage of bestiaries. The Introduction outlines previous emblematic research, focusing on the relationships between cosmologies (e.g. Cosmic Hunt, Ursa Major, Orion’s Belt, and Pleiades) and ancient manuscripts (e.g. Pliny the Elder’s *Natural History*, Aesop’s *Fables*, the Greek *Physiologus*, and Isidore of Seville’s *Etymologiae*). This exploration serves as justification for this research by providing diachronic evidence for the prominent role of nonhuman animals in perpetuating societal mores and morality. Part One provides an overview of the geography and utilization of bestiaries throughout the Middle Ages, with a focus on Central Europe. Part Two conducts an in-depth examination, arguing that the early development of Germanic fairy tales represents the creation of a new medium within the existing compendium of bestiary texts. Like medieval bestiaries, the fairy tales gathered and edited by the Brothers Grimm used culturally constructed groupings of beasts to teach morals, continuing a tradition dating back to pre-Christian antiquity. The relevant features of each group and its members are discussed in detail, and the results of this examination are then used to propose new patterns of bestiary development and exchange between medieval texts and modern texts. Part Three summarizes the modifications made to each selected story and shows how the altered sense of morals and the text of each tale have been applied.
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Introduction

“Then God blessed them, and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.’”

(New King James Version, Bible, Genesis 1:28)

Animals, both real and imaginary, occupy an essential place in art, literature, thought, and everyday life. Artists and authors alike actively employ animal motifs as part of their lexicon and as muses. Animals also carry a copious range of symbolic connotations often drawn from the past. The following consists of an examination of animal portrayals utilized throughout the periods of prehistory and medieval history. However, when defining this captivating topic, it is important to recognize that the field of allegorical symbolism involving animals is not based solely within the confines of historical inquiry. Many sources including folkloric beliefs, agricultural motifs, and literary texts contribute heavily to animal representation and depiction. Documentation of agricultural and economic records concerning animals have been a constant since the advent of writing. Nevertheless, it is possible that animals may provide more than just an account of how we have exploited them throughout the ages, and they may in fact be the key to a richer understanding of humanity in general. This thesis examines the development of anthropocentric interpretations of nonhuman animals throughout Europe by tracing the ongoing transformation and usage of bestiaries – every living thing has its own special meaning. To explore this possibility the research investigates interpretations of nonhuman animals and how they were made to fit cultural needs and human objectives. Theoretical assumptions will rely heavily on postmodern and postcolonial fields of thought with an emphasis on animal rights and the animal-human relationship and its representation within the discipline.
Beginning with the earliest writings of civilization up until the eighteenth century, the focus of the historical narrative has been on the major political contenders, leaders of nations, and catastrophic wars. However, by the beginning of the twentieth century the focus shifted from concentrating on the “movers and shakers of the world” to an inclusion of average people and marginalized groups. According to Daniel Woolf’s *A Global History of History*, “…the modern ‘discipline’…of history has had for about 150 years a very clear set of professional codes and practices, generally understood by most, though of late challenged by alternative practices and differing senses of what is a proper subject for the historian.”

No longer is the history of the world solely focused on diplomatic relationships between nations. Instead, it is now exceedingly more holistic in how society is viewed, expressed, and developed, with an emphasis on what the general public has to offer to humanity’s story. Regardless, to say this approach, which has only affected the quiet voices in history or the underrepresented people in bygone times, is sorely missing the point. This revolutionary shift in historical ideology not only affected the agency of humans in our collective past, but also members of the animal kingdom as well. Animals are represented in artwork, legal proceedings, myths, legends, movies, novels, and even music, and as the historical narrative progresses, the chasm between human and animal is slowly being bridged via literature, metaphor, and changes in popular opinion. In addition, while the human-animal relationship is ever present the representation and treatment of animals is continually shifting—this relationship is an organic process filled with dynamic transactions.

Inclusion of nonhuman subjects in the historical narrative augments our limited—but expanding—knowledge of the past. In addition, the hazard with equating this idea of “otherness” of animals in relation to humans is that it perpetuates the existing divide and naturalization of the

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animal/human binary. This idea can be associated with Jacques Derrida’s emphasis on the notion in his essay *In The Animal That Therefore I Am*, as he attacks the expression “the animal” as a “catch-all concept” used to “designate every living thing that is held not to be human.” 

Perhaps the main issue with allowing an “animal point of view” to history would mean that humanity is realizing that perhaps they are not exceptional and are conceivably just another piece of the biosphere. Key to understanding animals’ current place in relation to our own in this shared environment begins with our concept of dominion and hegemony over other species that has been seriously questioned ever since the advent of Darwinian thought. 

If human history is reliant upon the natural order, that should require that the history of animals is necessary for our history also. When Darwin published his book *On the Origin of Species*, he not only opened the floodgates of a controversy regarding the religious paradigm of the time, he also ushered in the possibility that humans are not unique in their mental capacities. More likely than not, we are more similar to other nonhuman animals than we recognize.

The primary concern of this introductory segment is to present an analysis of the historiography of scholars, historians, and authors of the twentieth century and early twenty-first century discussions and investigations on nonhuman animals’ roles in shaping humankind’s unique perspective and interests in the natural world. It provides the general foundation and background for the research’s animal studies application, and familiarize the material, theories, and paradigms to non-specialists in the discipline. Research such as this is integral to the fields of anthropology and history because animal semiology has roots in prehistory and the ancient world.

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and it continues to affect modern opinion on contemporary issues and geopolitical doctrine, such as, climate change, deforestation, borders, etc. Furthermore, by utilizing a known piece of medieval proto-zoology literature – The Bestiary (The Book of Beasts) – as a framework for the rest of the paper, this section will look at how animals are portrayed in order to fit the narrative of early human antiquity vis-à-vis other eras of history.

Microcosm and macrocosm are two aspects of a theory developed by ancient Greek philosophers to describe human beings and their place in the universe. These early thinkers viewed humans as little worlds (mikros kosmos) whose composition and structure correspond to that of the universe, or great world (megas kosmos). Cosmos at this time meant "order" in a general sense and implied a harmonious arrangement of parts in any organic system. These Greek thinkers tended to view humanity as an intermediary who combined the material and spiritual worlds by virtue of being the only creature to possess both a body and a rational soul. Pope Gregory the Great (c. 540–604) would later offer a concise and reoccurring axiom that united the microcosm with the concept of the Chain of Being, whereby humanity was thought to contain all of creation because humanity shared some characteristic with every kind of creature and thus represented the entire universe.\footnote{Homiliae in Evangelium, 29, quoted in "Microcosm and Macrocosm," New Dictionary of the History of Ideas, Encyclopedia.com. (January 12, 2020). https://www.encyclopedia.com/history/dictionaries-thesauruses-pictures-and-press-releases/microcosm-and-macrocosm.} Under Gregory’s influence, Jesus’ injunction to preach to "all creation" was commonly interpreted as a reference to the human race and its status as an epitome of the created world.\footnote{Mark 16:15 (NKJV).} However, the understanding of a theological text depends upon the reader’s particular hermeneutical—the branch of knowledge that deals with interpretation, especially of the Bible or literary texts—viewpoint. The meaning of the narrative is constrained by imputing a particular intention to the Bible, such as teaching morality as symbolic lessons about church institutions and
current teachings. Thomas Aquinas explains this further, suggesting that man exists in a level between the spiritual and physical realm, or between the angelic and the animal realm. In other words, he conceived the human being as a microcosm that encapsulates the entire cosmos by containing both spirituality and materiality. The supposed analogy between the whole and its parts served not only to develop a cosmology in which the reality of the individual received due attention but was also fundamental to astrology and other fields in which belief in a metaphysical relationship between man and the rest of nature is postulated. This serves as justification for humankind’s “inherent status” by providing diachronic evidence for the prominent role of nonhuman animals in perpetuating societal mores and morality.

The French structural anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss coined the phrase “good to think with” in 1962. This phrase draws scholars and theorists alike, because it perhaps has certain exegetic power. The statement explains, or at the very least purports to enlighten, why we do what we do, and why it matters. Lévi-Strauss claims that “the animals in totemism” serve an intellectual and speculative function. They are not, or not only, objects of symbolism or identification, much less objects of culinary desire, but part of a structure of thinking.

The animals in totemism cease to be solely or principally creatures which are feared, admired, or envied; their perceptible reality permits the embodiment of ideas and relations conceived by speculative thought on the basis of empirical observations. We can understand, too, that natural species are chosen not because they are "good to eat" but because they are "good to think." Animals, Levi-Strauss said, are "good to think [with].” Essential to structuralism, this idea advanced discussion: “How to make opposition, instead of being an obstacle to integration, serve

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6 Marjorie Garber, “Good to Think With,” Professions (2008): 14. Totemism is a system of belief in which humans are said to have kinship or a mystical relationship with a spirit being, such as an animal or plant.
rather to produce it.” When comparing tribes, nations, or societies and the animals that represent them, "it is not the resemblances but the differences which resemble one another," an analogy to the relationship between multiple species. In initiating this example of structuralist thought—not piecemeal explanation, nor causal nor functionalist explanation, but the reconstruction of a system—Lévi-Strauss’s method of inquiry is integral to serious investigation in animal studies and breaking down the animal/human binary.

In 1973 Clifford Geertz explained, “[b]elieving, with Max Weber, that man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun, I take culture to be those webs, and the analysis of it to be therefore not an experimental science in search of law but an interpretive one in search of meaning.” Animals are universal to culturally defining and connecting groups or castes of people that humans have incorporated creatures into representing nation states, political parties, and even sports teams. The simplest way to achieve fuller understanding of the human-animal connection is to look at the major questions and methods currently being produced in the field. For example, should the historian include nonhuman animals as another social actor (alongside social classes, women, the state, the church, etc.) in the histories they write? Another argument is whether or not it is important or worthwhile to emphasize the contributions of animals in history. Other voices in the argument ask if it is even possible to separate animals from human history. According to Martha Few and Zeb Tortorici in their Introduction to Centering Animals in Latin American History, the study of animals in history has produced the question “does the centering of animals—the transforming of nonhuman animals into central actors in the historical narrative—provide us with significantly different versions of the past than those historical works

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8 Lévi-Strauss, Totemism, 89.
9 Lévi-Strauss, Totemism, 77.
11 Few and Tortorici, Centering Animals, 3.
that solely present animals as visible and important factors in history?” These questions present an interesting challenge that may create obstacles to including animals in the wider realm of historical narratives and ethnographical studies. Conceivably, it is possible to tackle these hurdles by taking a glimpse into our earliest human-animal interactions and shared prehistoric records.

In the fundamental textbook *Zooarchaeology*, Elizabeth J. Reitz and Elizabeth S. Wing define zooarchaeology as “the study of animal remains excavated from archaeological sites. The goal of zooarchaeology is to understand the relationship between humans and their environment(s), especially between humans and other animal populations.” Throughout the book, Reitz and Wing explain that humans are biologically, ethologically, and ecologically similar to other animals that they research. Zooarchaeology provides one of the many ways to show how inherently flexible human behavior is in relation to their natural and social environment, and how this adaptability is permeable in relationship to their nonhuman relatives. More so than that though, it helps provide a “better understanding of the diverse ways in which humans respond to the challenges and opportunities of their environment; the variety of roles that animals fill; the breath of the animal’s social meaning.” Through zooarchaeology, it is possible to examine ancient faunal remains and reinterpret the role animals and humans alike played in the past. Furthermore, with the advances in archaeogenetics (i.e. the study of ancient DNA) and the analysis of mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA), it is becoming possible to look even further into the animal past. According to Juliet Clutton-Brock, “this has become an increasingly important tool in revealing finer details in the identification of populations of species, the relationship between domestic species and wild

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progenitors, and the spread of varieties of domestic species from their location of origin.”\textsuperscript{15} While it may appear as though zooarchaeology serves as yet another scientific tool that scrutinizes ancient prehistoric human-animal bones and provenance and roles, certain researchers are exploring it further. Not only that, the field of zooarchaeology is multidisciplinary and by virtue of being a branch of anthropology is holistic in its approach—necessary when utilizing faunal remains to discuss cultural history, behavioral adaptations, and social meaning from an assemblage or site. While animal remains provide the scientific description of this natural interconnectedness of humans and nonhuman animals, a simple biological answer to explaining this relationship only touches briefly how people have depicted creatures in history though.

Nerissa Russell’s book from 2012, \textit{Social Zooarchaeology: Humans and Animals in Prehistory} goes one-step further than Reitz and Wing, because the author expounds on what it means to be an “animal”. According to Russell, “the opposition of humans and animals is artificial and anthropocentric. Humans are one animal species among many; like all other species we are by definition unique, but we do not logically form a category opposed to (and above) all other species.”\textsuperscript{16} Following this, Russell tackles the concepts of anthropocentrism and anthropomorphism and explains them as, “anthropocentrism inscribes a sharp human-animal boundary and privileges humans strongly, whereas anthropomorphism erases the boundary and risks denying animals their own unique identities.”\textsuperscript{17} These two notions attack the sensibility of the scientific community—“the attribution of any ‘human’ qualities to animals…was seen as unwarranted projection”—but are nonetheless crucial in grasping the breach in the human-animal

\textsuperscript{17} Russell, \textit{Social Zooarchaeology}, 2.
boundary by applying the ethical system we apply to humans to other species, as well as the agency and choice we commonly assume to be human attributes. The book argues that animals have contributed more to human history than just fodder for the human diet and roles in subsistence economies. Russell explores the relationship of human and animals with the latter’s continued duty as companions, spiritual helpers, sacrificial victims, totems, objects of taboo, and more. What makes this argument so intriguing is the fact that, although this book utilizes zooarchaeology and faunal analysis, it also incorporates evidence from ethnographies, history, and classical studies. Thus, by bridging the gap between science and history the author is able to construct a novel approach concerning zooarchaeology’s, anthropology’s, history’s, and folklore’s ability to evince humanity’s concomitant attitudes and actions towards animals.

As expressed previously, symbolic representation of wildlife emerges in prehistory, and by examining biological and emblematic interpretations of humans and nonhuman animals in early history, a relationship between humans and nonhuman animals can clearly be found. Semiotics, the study of signs and symbols and their use or interpretation, is utilized to prove that nonhuman animals exist in more than just the natural space that humanity shares with them. For example, French scholar Michel Pastoureau claims that “the oldest trace of the symbolic ties between man and bear seems to date approximately 80,000 years ago… where a Neanderthal grave is connected to the grave of a brown bear… thereby indicating the special status of the animal.” During the Upper Paleolithic period, beginning roughly 40,000 years ago, Neanderthal Man was replaced by a more "modern" version of Homo sapiens and prehistoric art took a massive leap forward. For instance, during this time one of the oldest-known zoomorphic (i.e. having or representing animal

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18 Russell, Social Zooarchaeology, 2.
forms or gods of animal form) sculptures in the world, Lion-man of the Hohlenstein-Stadel, was created. By carbon dating the layer in which the sculpture was discovered it appears to be between 35,000 and 40,000 years old. The figure was carved out of mammoth ivory using a flint stone knife and is associated with the archaeological Aurignacian culture of the Upper Paleolithic. Other forms of theriomorphic – (especially of a deity) having an animal form – art during this period is further exemplified by the cave paintings of Western Europe on the walls and ceilings of Lascaux Cave (France) dating to about 15,000 BCE. The Lascaux Cave complex contains depictions of bulls, stags, bears, horses, aurochs, and more, suggesting past hunting success stories, or representation of a mystical ritual in order to improve future hunting endeavors. Another case of Upper Paleolithic/Mesolithic figurative art involving animals is the Kapova Cave, a rock shelter in the southern Ural Mountains which is famous for its cave paintings, notably its red ochre pictures of mammoths and horses, that date back to the period of Magdalenian culture. The cave network consists of a mile-long series of cave paintings and drawings featuring more than fifty pictures of woolly mammoths, horses, bison and rhinoceroses, as well as anthropomorphic figures and various geometric markings. These brief examples provide a subtle view into humanity’s collective prehistory, and while these artworks are integral to the discussion on anthropocentric interpretations of nonhuman animals, animal depictions in sculptures, paintings, and bone assemblages are not the only places were beasts are found and utilized to fit cultural needs and human objectives in history.

One of the most thought-provoking and oldest known tales involving creatures is the Cosmic Hunt – an ancient and widely distributed family of cognate myths. The stories usually consist of a large animal being pursued by hunters, the animal is wounded, and is transformed into a constellation. The prey animal is either a bear or an ungulate (a hoofed mammal), and the

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constellation it is transformed into is typically the four stars of the bowl in the Big Dipper asterism—a prominent pattern or group of stars, typically having a popular name but smaller than a constellation—of Ursa Major. Variants of the Cosmic Hunt are common in cultures of Northern Eurasia and the Americas and include the story of Callisto in classical sources. The original myth is believed to have been invented at least 15,000 years ago for it to diffuse from Eurasia to North America across the Bering land bridge. According to Yuri Berezkin, “The mythological motif of the Cosmic Hunt (F59.2 according to S. Thompson’s index (Thompson 1955–1958)) is defined as follows: certain stars and constellations are interpreted as hunters, their dogs, and game animals, killed or pursued. This motif forms the core of the tales typical for northern and central Eurasia and for the Americas but is rarely, if at all, known on other continents.” The Cosmic Hunt evinces the power oral traditions and myths depicting animals possess in creating links between prehistoric people (e.g. Siberia and the Americas), and potentially why stories about animals are crucial in shaping identities and beliefs. According to Geoffrey Fenwick in The Oxford Companion to Fairy Tales, “Anne Pellowski’s 1977 survey revealed the existence of the activity (storytelling) in every part of the inhabited world.” The art of storytelling – represented by cave art, figurines, oral stories, or books – provides insight into a culture and gives a sense of what is important to that society. Through stories concerning nonhuman animals and depiction of beasts in figurative art,

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20 Callisto was a nymph, or the daughter of King Lycaon; the myth varies in such details. She was one of the followers of Artemis, or Diana for the Romans, who attracted Zeus (Jupiter). He transformed himself into the figure of Artemis and raped her in this disguise. She became pregnant and when this was discovered, she was exiled from Artemis's group, after which a furious Hera (Juno, wife of her seducer) transformed her into a bear. Later, just as she was about to be killed by her son when he was hunting, she was set among the stars as Ursa Major (“the Great Bear”).


humans can provide insight into the past, guidance for the future, and closure to the ever-decreasing boundary between humans and animals.

The discourse on the origins of animal domestication tends to focus on "the issue of intentionality"—the degree to which domestication was the product of deliberate human choice. Whether this choice was deliberate or not, the domestication of plants and animals marked a major evolutionary transition in human history. Emma R. Power states, "Domestication is a key process through which humans have claimed dominance over nature, including nonhuman natures and the nature of the human body. It has most often been examined as an historic biological and cultural process through which the 'wildness' of plants and animals was brought in and re-made in the image of human culture through selective breeding and incorporation into human social structure." Contrary to this idea, the introduction of canines into the history of humanity has raised arguments for the concept of "mutual domestication"—the notion that while we were domesticating dogs, they were in turn domesticating us. With the dog being regarded as humanity’s first domesticated animal—evidence for the domestication of the dog reaches as far back as the Neolithic—was this taming actually "self-domestication," the colonization of new ecological niches by animals such as wolves? Alternatively, did it result from intentional decisions of human beings? Regardless of the origins of this companionship, domestic animals have become intricately woven into human economy, society, and religion. Per Melinda Zeder, “animal domestication is an on-going process, as humans, with increasingly sophisticated technology for breeding and rearing animals in captivity continue to bring more and more species under their

Nevertheless, ideas such as “mutual-domestication” have led the discourse on a shared collaboration of humans and animals and strongly suggest an intertwined historical narrative.

Humans display their authority and dominion over animals by prescribing cultural significance and political and moral symbolism to each animal. Methodological documents about animals are created by humans, for humans. What with this being the case, how does the historian include nonhuman animals as another social actor (alongside social classes, women, the state, the church, etc.) in the histories they write? According to posthumanist Kari Weil, “for centuries nonhuman animals have been locked in representations authored by humans, representations that, moreover, have justified their use and abuse by humans.”

While it is now possible to decipher the history of these neglected group, our past shows that we treated animals unjustly and most times cruelly. Joyce E. Salisbury states, “some anatomists who followed Descartes: ‘administered beatings to dogs with perfect indifference and made fun of those who pitied the creatures as if they had felt no pain. They said the animals were clocks; that the cries they emitted when struck were only the noise of a little spring which had been touched, but that the whole was without feeling.’”

In addition, most underrepresented groups have their own voice and can propose their own interests and advocate for what best represents them. Although some scholars, like Tok Thompson, propose that nonhuman animals have their own version of a quiet voice, a sound that gives

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substance to the silence often prescribed them, humans have often ignored these voices and have been depicting animals according to how each beast best fit humankind’s worldview and agenda.\textsuperscript{30}

The problem with studying marginalized history and exploitation is that it shifts the discipline from purely academic into a quagmire of moral and philosophical questioning and more often than not a political debate. In his influential work, \textit{The Making of the English Working-Class}, E. P. Thompson had sought to “rescue” his subjects “from the enormous condescension of posterity.”\textsuperscript{31} This notion of “rescuing” disenfranchised communities and revealing their historical roles dominated much of social and women’s history. It resulted in knowledge of neglected and overlooked people and events albeit approached in a somewhat empirical vein.\textsuperscript{32} Regardless, while these marginalized populations slowly recover from a history of disparagement and indoctrinated interpretations, the people who study and advocated for the inclusion of the disregarded still must incessantly justify the addition of these histories. Furthermore, some academics and indigenous people question who should be allowed to study ostracized groups, stating that the average historian may not have the necessary tools to advocate for these subsets, thereby making an emic position an indispensable qualification for perpetuating the history of certain groups. In theory, this issue could be addressed and when it comes to discussing the history of humans and their place in the world, cultural and grassroots histories have certainly entertained and explored this phenomenal idea. However, resolving difficulties associated with this theoretical standpoint becomes much more problematic when the discourse revolves around nonhuman animals. As Hilda Kean states, “Whether past lives become “historical” lives depends not on the subjects


themselves—be these animals or humans—but on those writing about them who then choose to construct a history.”

According to David Shaw, these issues and questions could not have been addressed until recently by historians. When humanity considers its past, it looks at its ancestors to remember achievements and reflect on what we have learned from them. This shortsighted statement has its limitations though and does not aptly apply to the role that animals have played in humanity’s progression. In *A Way with Animals*, Shaw argues “that ‘we’ was always a way of saying ‘those enough like us to count.’ The ‘we’ sets limits. It’s our gang, a social group, whether a king and his crony vassals, the senate and people of Rome, the subjects of the Middle Kingdom, or all humanity.”

The expression of this idea allows for a theoretical approach that not only splits the history of humanity into multiple narratives—possibly a different history for each represented group—but also allows for the possibility of other and more distinct historical points of view to be addressed.

At this point in time, humanity is becoming uniquely equipped to handle and understand important contemporary topics, including precarious subjects such as racism and sexism, and the underrepresented and misrepresented groups associated with them. Although humankind is a long way away from fully grasping and deciphering the history of these neglected groups, the development of that process is being attempted, and scholars are becoming increasingly aware of disenfranchisement in the discipline. This development is a work in progress, and it follows that there have been mistakes made and probably many more to come. One of these mistakes includes the idea of essentialism—"assuming that things or structures have one set of characteristics which

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33 Kean, “Challenges for Historians,” 60.
is basic, or in a cognate sense ‘foundational’”—and it affects the discipline regarding these unheard groups.\textsuperscript{36} Groups that have their own voice can propose their own interests and can advocate for what best represents them—they do not need a researcher telling them what it is best. However, historians are also tasked with representing the groups that cannot speak for themselves. Much like David Shaw, Kari Weil is a proponent of animal rights and the need for their story to be heard. Her work, \textit{A Report on the Animal Turn}, centers around a concept made famous by Peter Singer—speciesism—and emphasizes this discrimination went largely unnoticed both inside and outside academia.\textsuperscript{37} Much like racism and sexism, Weil thinks it is time that animal rights be addressed in the scholarly world in order to dissolve the gap between human and animals in the discourse.

According to Weil, “for centuries nonhuman animals have been locked in representations authored by humans, representations that, moreover, have justified their use and abuse by humans.”\textsuperscript{38} She begins this position by stating that a similar argument has been used to justify “Women’s studies and ethnic studies programs in their demands that the academy acknowledge and address the underrepresentation and misrepresentation of groups of people under the forces of sexism and racism.”\textsuperscript{39} This is a noble and justified pursuit and should be addressed, however, while the women and minorities lacking representation can write and voice their issues and concerns, how do animals pursue the same course of action? The objective of this reasoning is not to suggest that animals can be or want to be heard, but rather that the discourse should attract attention to them as a marginalized group and their limited status as objects instead of representative agents.\textsuperscript{40} If other groups are finally being represented then so should animals. As Weil states, “if animal

\textsuperscript{36} Anna Green and Kathleen Troup, \textit{The Houses of History a Critical Reader in History and Theory} (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), 297.
\textsuperscript{40} Weil, “A Report on the Animal Turn,” 1.
studies have come of age, it is perhaps because nonhuman animals have become a limit case for theories of difference, otherness, and power.\textsuperscript{41} However, this perpetuates the notion that the status of otherness is cause for representation. The way in which we portray animal representation has a crucial bearing on how we portray the place of animals in history and the trajectory such a history is conceived to take.

In *Hunters, Herders, and Hamburgers: The Past and Future of Human-Animal Relationships*, Richard W. Bulliet describes the inconsistent relationship between humans and animals. Bulliet elaborates on four stages of history of this relationship—separation, predomesticity, domesticity, and postdomesticity. Bulliet mainly focuses on America, and explains that the contemporary state of postdomesticity allows humanity to distance itself, “both physically and psychologically, from the animals that produce the food, fiber, and hides they depend on…Yet they maintain very close relationships with companion animals—pets—often relating to them as if they were human.”\textsuperscript{42} The book explores our current era of postdomesticity and argues that although humans remain dependent on animal products, they do not have any desire, ethically or otherwise, to have any involvement with the processing and production of these items. The social and technological developments of industrialized nations have divided the animal side of the animal-human relationship into either companion animals or other, where the other is disregarded and not considered. According to Margo DeMello, “one of the most important criteria for being a pet is having a name because having a name symbolically and literally incorporates that animal in the human domestic sphere.”\textsuperscript{43} This allows communication with the animal—understood or not—


and develops a social contract that builds a relationship with the animal. However, the modern public opinion regarding companion animals must dictate a reconciliation between humans and nonhuman animals and suggest a different kind of connection is forming.

Tok Thompson argues that nonhuman animals have their own culture and utilizes folklore methods to verify his premise. He states, “since folklore is a discipline focusing on the very topic of collectively shaped, traditional, expressive culture, it would seem to be in an ideal position to take the lead in this newly emerging realm of the study of culture beyond the human.”

Thompson wants to breakdown the human-animal binary and open-up ways that scholarship can engage with animal thoughts, not just the thoughts that humans have of animals. The author provides multiple examples of “the study of nonhuman expressive culture in a philosophical framework,” including songbirds that change their song and style over time, demonstrations of nonhuman language and dialect, and even naming within species. What Thompson suggests is that humans need to change their understanding of culture and how it works. It “should be rethought, restudied, and reevaluated on a scale much grander and larger than anything we have considered before.”

He advances the idea that traditions and cultures are much larger than the human condition, and by acknowledging this awareness and investigating it is the “necessary step for the future of folklore studies, and for the future of scholarly understanding of culture.”

Interpretation of the theoretical framework of animal studies in historical study has appeared to be arguably split between animal rights advocates, historians, folklorists, and scientists. However, the shifting of the historiography that appeared in this research represents

45 Tok Thompson, “Folklore beyond the Human,” 70.
46 Tok Thompson, “Folklore beyond the Human,” 71.
47 Tok Thompson, “Folklore beyond the Human,” 85.
48 Tok Thompson, “Folklore beyond the Human,” 85.
only a fraction of information that could have been drawn upon. Animals have always been a fascinating object of study, to the naturalist or the historian, but now they are becoming objects of representation—a fact that scholars need to address. Speciesism is becoming a topic of political debate and philosophical questioning nearly equal to the topics of racism and sexism. Furthermore, animals’ position in legal systems have shifted from capital punishment in the late Middle Ages and Renaissance (discussed later) to animals having more rights than other marginalized groups during Nazi extremism. With this rise in contractual—legally or socially—relationships with animals, humankind is distancing itself from other creatures while simultaneously blurring the boundaries between our animal-human binary. In post-domesticity humans often ignore the animals used for food and clothing but treat pets as humans and equals. The problem this causes for historians is certainly unavoidable, but to associate with these varying polemical constructs allows them to turn instead to contemporary issues. Tok Thompson argues that nonhuman animals have their own version of a quiet voice, a sound that gives substance to the silence often prescribed them. His idea of nonhuman animal culture and folklore may finally give animals a voice in generating their own perspective in relation to the environment and the history of the planet. Nonhuman animal folklore may allow the historian to conceptualize neglected aspects of the discourse and add to the ever growing and ever-changing idea of what comprises the animal-human binary, if it exists at all.

By and large, problems that arise in relation to the representation of animals are exacerbated by the conceptual duality of human-animal and, by extension, culture-nature. Focusing on these issues of opposition gives way to terminology of symbolic difference and human identity, but it creates a sense of fascination of making these the governing expressions by which we write about animals. This also leads to a predisposition to make animals fit in with the
prevailing concerns and anxieties of a particular period, playing down the ways that they may be read against the grain of an epoch or culture.49 For instance, a study of the London Zoo in the nineteenth century suggests: “[A]nimals were to be viewed as metonyms of imperial triumph, civic pride, and the beneficence of God or scientific discovery.”50 Jonathan Burt states, “In addition, the metaphorical or metonymic status of the animal leads to the animal being treated as a type of tabula rasa that can signify anything we wish.”51 There is evidence for this in the bestiaries of the middle Ages, the stories of Brothers Grimm, and other figurative and literary sources. These issues will be addressed and the topic of discussion throughout the rest of this research. As Lippit simply put, animals “simply transmit . . . [they are] unable to withhold the outflow of the flow of signals and significations with which they are endowed.”52

Chapter I: Ancient & Medieval Symbolism

"But ask the animals, and they will teach you, or the birds of the air, and they will tell you; or speak to the earth, and it will teach you, or let the fish of the sea inform you. Which of all these does not know that the hand of the Lord has done this? In his hand is the life of every creature and the breath of all mankind."

(New International Version, Bible, Job 12:7-10)

“There is no evidence that there were special tales cultivated just for children. Some so-called warning tales dealing with dangerous animals were apparently directed at children, but they were not considered 'children's tales.'” 53


Humans have made use of beasts in a range of ways – companionship, transportation, diet, and even as literary tropes. Because of this, animals have been one of the few constants throughout human history. Animals were domesticated during the Neolithic Revolution, roughly 12,500 years ago, as it became necessary to bring animals permanently to human settlements. Since it became more efficient to keep animals close at hand, creatures have been in close proximity to humankind ever since. As prehistory marched into written history animals became more prominent in figurative representation and as vessels for education. In addition, throughout earlier history and the Middle Ages, animals were often considered more prized than they are now, both in a monetary and metaphorical sense. Humans were in closer contact to creatures and relied on them more for their daily lives. From the closer connection to the animals of this period, a sense of meaning and importance accompanied the creatures. While animals held more meaning and value to the people of the Middle Ages, there was still a divide between man and animal. Susan Crane writes, “In medieval writing the grip of a certain humanism was strong, as it is today: the humanism conceives all other animals in opposition to humankind, and hierarchizes the binary opposition so that animals are distributed along a single axis of lack. But medieval works abound in other ways of

thinking about animals that need recovering and reconsideration.\textsuperscript{54} The animal encounters of medieval literature reveal their full meaning only when we recover the animal's place within the written animal. Traces of nonhuman animals run across the entire corpus of medieval writing and reveal how pervasively animals mattered in medieval thought and practice.

Originating in the ancient world, bestiaries, a compendium of beasts, were made popular in the Middle Ages and were utilized to describe and enlighten the populace on various animals physical and individual characteristics. As early as the 11th century an otherwise unknown Thetbaldus made a metrical Latin version of 13 sections of the \textit{Physiologus} – the precursor to bestiaries. This was translated, with alterations, into the only surviving Middle English Bestiary, dating from the 13th century. It, and other lost Middle English and Anglo-Norman versions, influenced the development of the beast fable. Early translations into Flemish and German influenced the satiric beast epic. Bestiaries were popular in France and the Low Countries in the 13th century, and a 14th-century French \textit{Bestiaire d’amour} applied the allegory to love. An Italian translation of the \textit{Physiologus}, known as the \textit{Bestiario toscano}, was made in the 13th century.\textsuperscript{55}

These texts often were used as a way of sharing a common idea and awareness about the animals that they were written about. Bestiaries were essentially texts that assigned certain meanings to animals and distributed those meanings and ideologies among humans. T.H. White explains bestiaries as, “a serious work of natural history, and is one of the bases upon which our own knowledge of biology is founded… a compilation, a kind of naturalist’s scrapbook… [that] began with oral tradition in various parts of the world, and continued through Herodotus, Aristotle and Pliny… before it reached the \textit{Physiologus} which is the immediate ancestor of the work with

which we are dealing.” 56 While a few scholars such as T.H. White have maintained that the bestiaries were intended first and foremost as scientific natural histories, this idea is not really convincing. Bestiaries were heavily Christian in nature, and the medieval scholars were already using Pliny's *Historia naturalis* for scientific purposes. 57 Furthermore, within bestiaries, the natural history and illustration of each beast was usually accompanied by a moral lesson with religious overtones. It is important to note that these “book of beasts” are not rigid or a copy of a single text. The surviving manuscripts of bestiaries are conventionally placed into four textual “families”. 58 The First Family of manuscript follows the text of the *Physiologus* most closely, whereas, the Second Family is developed somewhat later and introduces materials from Isidore of Seville and others. The small Third Family rearranges the animal groups of the Second Family, uses different supplementary texts, especially the *Pantheologus* of Peter of Cornwall, and opens with a discussion derived from Isidore of the so-called monstrous races. The Fourth Family is represented by only one manuscript, housed in Cambridge University Library and dated about 1425. 59 Regardless of which family the manuscript belongs to, all bestiaries have similar origins and begin with the ancient manuscript of *Physiologus*.

The *Physiologus* is a didactic Christian text written or compiled in Greek by an unknown author traditionally dated to the second century AD. The *Physiologus* consists of descriptions of animals, birds, fantastic creatures, and sometimes stones and plants. These accounts were typically followed by anecdotes, from which the moral and symbolic qualities of the animal are derived. The manuscript retained its influence over ideas of the "meaning" of animals in Europe for over a

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59 *Medieval Folklore*, s.v. “Bestiary.”

Miller 26
thousand years. As a predecessor of bestiaries, it exerted great influence on the symbolism of medieval literature and art. For instance, symbols like those of the phoenix rising from its ashes and the pelican feeding her young are seen in many medieval “books of beasts”. Saint Isidore of Seville was a scholar and spent over three decades as the Archbishop of Seville. His book, *Etymologiae*, was an etymological (the study of the history of words) encyclopedia which assembled extracts of many books from classical antiquity. It was the most used textbook throughout the Middle Ages, and was so popular that it was read in place of many of the original classical texts that it summarized, resulting in many of these classical texts in ceasing to be copied and ultimately lost. Peter Cornwall was a medieval scholar and prior to the Holy Trinity Priory and his book the *Pantheologus* is a collection of biblical material assembled as a sourcebook for preachers. The bestiaries’ chief sources are evidently Christian, and the moral meanings are abundant throughout the text; however, the primary focus of the manuscripts were the animal illustrations and interpretations.

Nonhuman animals in the Medieval Ages exhibited “human” characteristics, commensurable attributes, and were given a hierarchal delineation. Michel Pastoureau’s 2011 book, *The Bear: History of a Fallen King*, explores Europe and the brown bear’s millennia long status as king of all animals and godly status before it was displaced by the lion. Beginning in prehistory and ending sometime in the High Middle Ages, the bear was considered the quintessential royal animal. This can be seen as with the case of King Arthur, Pastoureau states, “his name is directly related to the word for bear… he is not a divinity but a monarch, the most famous in medieval literature. His story is partly connected to an ancient ursine myth… The figure of the king is associated with the figure of the bear, because for the Celts – as for the Germans, the
Balts, and the Slavs – the bear is the king of all the animals."\textsuperscript{60} Regardless of this connection to royalty and nobility, by the end of the 1000s the bear was the Church’s number one enemy and was systematically killed in Europe and symbolically replaced by foreign fauna, the lion. While this may appear to be a trite statement, bestiaries from the Middle Ages represent this within their volumes.

*The Book of Beasts: Being a Translation from a Latin Bestiary of the Twelfth Century* translated by T.H. White in the 1950s is the first bestiary that was completely translated from its original Latin into English. As a retired Latinist and an amateur zoologist, White was well equipped for this unique endeavor. Providing a window into medieval monk’s, naturalist’s, and scholar’s worldviews, *The Book of Beasts* is source material for non-Latinists and makes bestiary studies available to the public. In his Appendix, White summarizes the intricacies of the sources of the Bestiary, its twelfth century background, some of the problems and attitudes toward the Bestiary, and its influence on later literature. His book provides a basic text of the Bestiary in English and condenses and amends the zoological information previously related to Bestiary manuscripts. He adds engaging footnotes that contribute to the information without detracting from the user-friendly approach.

T.H. White formative work of animal lore begins with “Leo the Lion, mightiest of beasts, will stand up to anybody.”\textsuperscript{61} The translation states that ‘*leon*’ is Greek for ‘king’ and the lion is justly labeled “Prince of All Animals”, which, according to twelfth century naturalists and clergy, parallels Christ.\textsuperscript{62} The Lion’s five-page entry is one of the longest throughout the manuscript, and aptly portrays characteristics and virtues of a righteous ‘king’. Moreover, as with most entries, the

\textsuperscript{60} Pastoureau, *The Bear*, 33.  
\textsuperscript{61} T.H. White, *The Book of Beasts*, 7.  
animal provides examples of virtuous behaviors that are applicable to the lives of humans. For instance, the text states, “So far as their relations with men are concerned, the nature of lions is that they do not get angry unless they are wounded. Any decent human ought to pay attention to this. For men do get angry when they are not wounded, and they oppress the innocent although the laws of Christ bids them to let even the guilty go free.” In this instance, the lion is a paragon of morality and is considered the most respectable beast of the animal kingdom. This contrasts greatly with the once (and future?) king of the beasts, the bear.

The bear does not occupy nearly as much text as the lion and its entry is only a couple of pages. Counter to the lion, ‘Ursus’ is described as greedy and lusty and has no redeeming qualities – portraying two of the seven deadly sins. Furthermore, while the lion gives birth to a dead cub and the male lion must breathe life into it on the third day (similar to Christ being resurrected on the third day), the bear gives birth to an “unformed creation” after thirteen days of gestation and has to lick and sculpture the formless mass into shape. The fall of the bear and the rise of the lion showcase two different areas of human expression that is poignantly expressed in medieval manuscripts on animal lore. By the twelfth century, the animal has become a tool for humans to teach lessons about proper behaviors and actions, and T.H. White’s translation exemplifies this in its utilization of the lion exhibiting conscientious attributes and its placement on a pedestal as a positive role model while the once mighty bear is neglected and described unjustly.

T.H. White’s translation is an important text concerning bestiary studies and represents a movement to include non-professionals and laypeople into the discipline of medieval manuscripts

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63 T.H. White, The Book of Beasts, 8.
and animal lore. As Richard H. Randall – a medieval art curator and director of the Baltimore's Walters Art Gallery from 1965 to 1981 – states in his praiseworthy review of White’s translation, That this book should have been studied assiduously since the middle of the nineteenth century and that facsimiles, commentaries, and special studies have been published in great number is not in the least astonishing. The amazing fact is that a complete Bestiary was never translated in English. The present volume fully satisfies this need... and it is greatly to his credit that he has confined his erudition to his own scope.65

As Randall expresses, this book has been studied rigorously for nearly a century, but it took nearly eight centuries for an English translation of this zoological text to be developed. Throughout this review, Randall goes on further to prove that T.H. White believed these manuals to be a serious work of natural history, suggesting that twelfth century bestiaries had “very high level of natural observation...and such facts as the migration of birds, obmutescence in the face of a man-eater, the love charm of a new-born horse, and the cloudy eyes of an eagle show the wisdom of the medieval naturalist if not in his own observation at least in the choice of his sources.”66 Randall’s praise and interest in the translation was well received; however, this review was not the only article to generate curiosity in the field.

Medievalist Florence McCulloch is best known for the book Medieval Latin and French Bestiaries, the first English-language study of bestiaries, with a major contribution in describing the nature of the Physiologus, which is frequently cited as among the earliest examples of serious works of natural history. The 1962 publication of said book “in a well-known, accessible scholarly series provided a systematic presentation and comparison of the complex bestiary versions. With a solid foundation for further research thus established, interest in bestiary studies increased steadily with the appearance of bestiary facsimiles and translations, studies in a wide variety of

66 Randall, review of Book of Beasts, 356.
related materials… including material on the bestiary, and conferences on bestiary lore.” McCulloch’s research helped bridge the gap between Montague Rhodes James’s work in bestiary studies in the 1920s and the later interest in topic in the 1960s. As the editors of the Beasts and Birds of the Middle Ages state, “modern research on the history of the bestiary scarcely predates the twentieth century and precise details of bestiary influence have seldom been analyzed.” As one of the foundations for current research in the area, M. R. James has edited several books on medieval manuscripts for the Roxburghe Club, including, in 1928, Bestiary: Being A Reproduction in Full of Ms. Ii 4.26 in the University Library, Cambridge, in which he set out for the first time the classification system of “families” of medieval bestiaries, a modified and extended version of which is still in use. In the periods before and between these two seminal works, few bestiary studies appeared.

Although the development of material compiled in bestiaries date back to late antiquity, it was not until M.R. James, White, and McCulloch did the interest in bestiary lore begin to grow steadily. As McCulloch in the review of T.H. White’s Book of Beasts expresses, “MUCH publicity has been given to the recent publication of the first modern English translation of a complete Latin prose Bestiary. This edition is important in that it makes more widely available one of the very popular and influential works of the Middle Ages to those interested in animal lore and indeed in literature because of the numerous allusions to its contents from antiquity through

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68 Intro., Beasts and Birds of the Middle Ages, 5.
69 His academic areas of interest were apocryphal Biblical literature and medieval illuminated manuscripts. His authorship of academic books was immense; however, he is best known for his work involving ghost stories. He redefined the ghost story for the new century by abandoning many of the formal Gothic clichés of his predecessors and using more realistic contemporary settings and is considered the originator of the “antiquarian ghost story”.
70 Intro., Beasts and Birds of the Middle Ages, 5.
the seventeenth century.”\(^{71}\) While McCulloch explains that White should be “congratulated for undertaking the task of translation,” she expresses that it could have been done better in regards to translations and utilizing existing aids.\(^{72}\) Regardless of these little mistakes, T.H. White should be congratulated for his work, as should James and McCulloch, for shaping and developing bestiary studies throughout the twentieth century.

The 1989 book, *Beasts and Birds of the Middle Ages: The Bestiary and Its Legacy* edited by Willene B. Clark and Meredith T. McMunn, is dedicated to the memory of Florence McCulloch and explores scholarship and theories concerning materials on the bestiary and related issues dating to the late 1980s. With eleven essays, the book attempts to “serve as a methodological paradigm for bestiary research.”\(^{73}\) While newer scholarship such as Debra Hassig’s 1995 book *Medieval Bestiaries: Text, Image, Ideology* have been added to the field, Willene B. Clark still utilized James and McCulloch as criteria and a basis for her argument against Hassig’s research. In her review of Hassig’s book, Clark asserts:

> The author makes a number of interesting proposals, but they are not always convincingly justified within her application of a semiological method or reinforced by sufficient reference to primary and secondary sources. The reader feels left to fill in the larger, supporting context based on his or her own knowledge of the bestiaries, their medieval world, and the divisions into versions made in the seminal bestiary studies by M. R. James (1928) and Florence McCulloch (1960; the versions are summarized and updated in Willene Clark and Meredith McMunn, *Beasts and Birds of the Middle Ages*, 1989, appendix).\(^{74}\)

Even newer research includes a temporary exhibition held at the J. Paul Getty Museum from May 14 to August 18, 2019 and an accompanying text to the display called *Book of Beasts: The Bestiary*

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\(^{72}\) McCulloch, review of *The Book of Beasts*, 694.

\(^{73}\) Intro., *Beasts and Birds of the Middle Ages*, 7.

in the Medieval World. The book includes over two hundred and seventy color illustrations with contributions by twenty-five leading scholars. The volume and exhibit explore the bestiary and its widespread influence on medieval art and culture as well as on modern and contemporary artists like Pablo Picasso and Damien Hirst. Designed for the museumgoer and layperson, The Bestiary in the Medieval World, much like T.H. White’s translation, makes bestiary studies and animal lore available and accessible to the public.

Because of this general attachment of animals to meanings that is presented throughout commonly read bestiaries during the medieval period “[animals], like nature more generally, become not beings or phenomena that exist for their own sake but vehicles through which human meanings are expressed.”75 For instance, for the duration of the Middle Ages and Renaissance, animals were placed in parallel—with regard to their moral and conscientious behavior—to their owners. Even though a creature was considered the property of its master, it was held to the same level of sentience as a human. The thirteenth century provides the first recorded legal trial of a nonhuman mammal committing murder.76 By definition, murder is the premeditated killing of another human being. Following this rationale, in order to be capable of committing murder, the animal had to have contemplated its actions and then made a deliberate choice to kill. In the aforementioned thirteenth century trial, a pig was accused of killing a child and then eating it—the sentence was burning in the public square.77 Interestingly, the pig was most likely someone’s property, but the verdict was carried out as though the animal were a human with free will that chose to kill and eat the child. Clearly, in this case, people in authority applied profoundly human

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77 Salisbury, The Beast Within, 108.
qualities to a nonhuman animal. This begs the question of whether or not other animals were likewise granted agency within the human world.

A second, even more interesting case presented itself a century later in 1386, when another pig was accused of murder by means of tearing the face and arms off a child.\(^78\) In this case, however, the sow’s punishment was to be maimed in the same manner as the child. The pig was then dressed like a man and paraded through the city before being executed. This incident is even more thought provoking than the first, not only due to the fact that the pig was clad like a human, but also because throughout the rest of the trial and execution the pig was treated like a human defendant. For instance, the executioner was paid the same fee that he would have received for executing a human. In addition, the state furnished the man with a new pair of gloves, “so his hands were ‘clean’ of the guilt of shedding blood.”\(^79\) It begs the question, why would an executioner feel guilty for killing a pig—an animal that would have been consumed without a second thought? In addition, why would anyone pay to have an executioner perform the killing of the pig instead of handing the delinquent animal over to a butcher? Much like the previous case, it appears as though the pig was considered the master of its own will, deserving of treatment equal to that of humans.

In 1457, one final pig was put on trial along with her six piglets for the same capital offense as the two previously mentioned cases.\(^80\) This final situation is unique in that there are records of a month-long imprisonment for all seven of these pigs, along with surviving records giving accounts of the trial and other legal proceedings. During the investigation and sentencing process,

\(^{78}\) Salisbury, *The Beast Within*, 108.
a judge, a lawyer, two prosecutors, eight named witnesses, and numerous other unnamed witnesses
took part in the trial.\(^8^1\) According to Esther Cohen:

> Though the owner was formally the defendant, it is clear from the proceedings that he stood
> accused only of negligence and was in no danger of any personal punishment. Moreover,
> he was allowed to argue in court "concerning the punishment and just execution that should
> be inflicted upon the said sow", if he could give any reason why the sow should be spared.
> The owner having waived this right, the prosecutor requested a death sentence.\(^8^2\)

Eventually the sow would be hanged, and according to the local authorities on the matter, upside
down. But what about the piglets? Since there was no proof of them participating in the murder,
they were free to go back to the custody of their owner on the condition that he vouch for their
future behavior. The master, however, acknowledged that he could not control the free will of the
pigs and he declined to take responsibility of the piglets, who “were declared forfeit to the local
lord’s justice, though they suffered no further punishment.”\(^8^3\) The owner accepted that he could
not govern the desires of his property and grudgingly acquiesced to the ruling of the magistrate.

All of the pigs above were accused of committing the most heinous deed that any human
being could commit and were treated as any human would have been treated. These trial
proceedings represent the human desire to understand the action of animals within the purview of
their own worldviews. What makes it possible for us to treat animals as akin to ourselves but yet
underrepresent them throughout history? Humans arbitrarily judge nonhuman animals according
to their convenience, but historians still struggle with placing them into the human narrative
outside of treatises acknowledging their agricultural and economic importance. Despite
widespread shortcomings, there are a few documented cases of human-animal transactions that

\(^{8^1}\) Cohen, “Law, Folklore and Animal Lore,” 10.
\(^{8^2}\) Cohen, “Law, Folklore and Animal Lore,” 11.
\(^{8^3}\) Cohen, “Law, Folklore and Animal Lore,” 11.
extend beyond the material and productive aspect of this relationship. In fact, some animals have been elevated to a higher status than their historical human compatriots have.

Roughly the same time and location—France—of the first recorded nonhuman murderer, a legend involving a dog, begins to develop in thirteenth century Europe. Although there are multiple legends involving wrongfully accused and murdered animals, in *The Holy Greyhound: Guinefort, Healer of Children Since the Thirteenth Century* Jean-Claude Schmidt specifically investigates the cult of “Saint Guinefort” and explains how this dog rose from being unjustly murdered to his evolution into a saint.84 Once a lowly canine—even though the Greyhound was considered the noblest of breeds—the dog became a symbol of healing and the peasants would bring their sick children to his grave to preserve them from disease and to keep the plague at bay.85 While the previous animal cases in this paper concerned the secular sphere, Schmidt brings the animal to the religious realm and broadens the human-animal relationship discourse by placing St. Guinefort in a place of spiritual importance. Although this animal and cult of peasants represented the divine status of animals, it also provides the historian an access point into their secular history and what was important to their everyday existence. By exploring this martyred animal’s background and life, historians and anthropologists can catch a glimpse of local traditions and practices of peasant life of thirteenth century Dombes. Schmidt’s analysis provides the necessary means to engage the past by using an animal as a focal point and allows for an expansion of the narrative beyond the animal to include information about the peasants who paid him homage. From these few examples, it appears that death has been key to answering the role animals play in

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84 Jean-Claude Schmidt, *The Holy Greyhound: Guinefort, Healer of Children Since the Thirteenth Century*, Cambridge Studies in Oral and Literate Cultures (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 63. The chapter, *The Legend*, splits the narrative and analyzes it piece by piece, so a definitive page number is hard to express. I established this page simply because it is discussing his burial and the concept of the gates of Hell.

defining our definitions of good and evil, either through the martyrdom of a holy greyhound or the execution of convicted animal murderers. Conversely, the preemptive killing of these creatures by humans does not automatically necessitate their role in our society or their place in history. For that, we must look deeper into the subject at hand and try to find what does dictate the nonhuman animals’ role in all of this.

Jack Zipes states, “It was through the tales that one gained a sense of values and one's place within the community. The oral tradition was in the hands of the peasantry, and each peasant community made its mark on tales that circulated beyond its borders.” Because of the importance of animals during the Middle Ages and the distinct prominence of bestiaries, most people would have automatically applied a lot more meaning to the creatures that were being discussed. During the Middle Ages, animals held more immediate prominence than their contemporary counterparts. Animals were often a large part of day-to-day life throughout this period partially because of the sheer amount of daily contact that people would have had with them. Various species of animals were kept as pets—including some species that would not be considered pets by modern viewpoints—and sources of transportation and food. Susan Crane explains, “The people of medieval Britain lived in daily contact with domestic and wild animals. Forest and wasteland loomed over settlements, and even city streets teemed with all kinds of creatures.” Since these animals were used more often and had more purposes within the everyday life of people during the Middle Ages, the medieval audience would derive more meaning from the literary versions of the animals and would have noticed dynamics that occurred around them more easily. With their daily contact and knowledge of these creatures from bestiaries, purposes, value, and functionality would have been easy to discern.

Examples and lessons learned from animals in bestiaries transpired throughout much of the medieval world and continue even today. Comparable to Aesop's fable of *The Fox and the Crow*, Chanticleer and the Fox is a tale that dates from the Middle Ages.\(^88\) Towards the middle of the 12th century it appears as an extended episode of the *Reynard cycle* – Reynard the Fox is a literary cycle of medieval allegorical Dutch, English, French and German fables – under the title "How Renart captured Chanticleer the cock". Chaucer’s popular adaptation of Reynard the Fox, *The Nun’s Priest Tale*, utilizes animals in its narrative and utilizes bestiary interpretations to describe some of its titular characters. Chaucer goes to great lengths to depict a rooster as a character—giving him human attributes, knowledge, and even an in-depth physical description that rivals those of humans. Other animals are created to be characters as well – one of Chauntecleer’s “wives” Pertelote and Russell the Fox more specifically – in order to add a layer of depth and affection for the creatures. Even though the animals would still be considered less than humans, because of this attachment and facade that the animals are ‘just like us’ and a feeling of sympathy towards their plights develops. Since a good portion of the readers would have also been Christians, when the two chickens reference God and Pertelote claims, “By my faith,” the readers would have felt a closer connection to these two animals.\(^89\) In addition to establishing a sense of community with the birds, the readers would have seen them as good citizens, ultimately forgetting that they are, in fact, chickens living on a farm and simply a part of a bigger story being told.

The other animal that is introduced is Russell the fox. Having watched Chauntecleer and his wives for three years, he is described as being “full of sly iniquity.”\(^90\) This matches the

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\(^88\) In the fable a crow has found a piece of cheese and retired to a branch to eat it. A fox, wanting it for himself, flatters the crow, calling it beautiful and wondering whether its voice is as sweet to match. When it lets out a caw, the cheese falls and is devoured by the fox. The story is used as a warning against listening to flattery.


\(^90\) Chaucer, *The Canterbury Tales*, line 3215.
description and allegorical associations with foxes that are found within bestiaries – “HE is a creature with circuitous pug marks who never runs straight but goes on his way with tortuous windings. He is a fraudulent and ingenious animal.”91 Dorothy Yamamoto expresses that, “Foxes were also linked with darkness, the underground, with evil, and with the Devil himself . . . The fox’s russet coat prompted comparisons with Judas, the arch-betrayer, who was traditionally red-haired.”92 This russet coat is part of the aspect of the fox that is first introduced to readers in one of the rooster’s dream vision. Chaucer even goes so far as to refer to Judas when describing Russell’s plan to steal Chauntecleer.93 Even beyond being compared to the man who betrayed Jesus, this completely ignores the very realistic fact that foxes are predators and need to eat! While Chauntecleer’s vision eventually becomes true and is carried away by the fox, the rooster ultimately saves himself. Regardless, much like bestiaries, this idea of animals being used as a means of teaching humanity lessons or morals is represented within the tale. The story ends happily and with the moral of: do not trust flattery or be careless and negligent.

While the Middle Ages utilized these tomes and the animals captured between the text as platforms for teaching proper values and behaviors, contemporary usage of these interesting encyclopedias of creatures is exceedingly less pedagogic. Harry Potter’s The Monster Book of Monsters or the Monster Manuals of the role-playing game Dungeons and Dragons, while entertaining, are neither religious nor educational. However, interest in bestiary studies appears to be rising, and although current scholarly research on “books of beasts” is not directed towards contemporary mediums, newer books, texts, and museum exhibitions such as Medieval Monsters: Terrors, Aliens, Wonders at The Morgan Library & Museum in New York from June 8, 2018 –

93 Chaucer, The Canterbury Tales, line 3227.
September 23, 2018, keep appearing. This section provides a quick overview of some of the research being conducted within the field of animal symbolism with a special focus on bestiaries. The field of bestiary studies, however, offers several challenging issues. For instance, questions regarding bestiary influences on non-bestiary genres, questions on audience and patrons, and more critical modern editions of bestiaries need developing.\textsuperscript{94} According to Clark and McMunn, “there is a need for application of broader interpretive methods, including theological and literary critical analysis. Most attention is still directed to iconography, texts, sources, and influences. It is time to turn some attention to problems of theoretical frameworks and critical strategies…”\textsuperscript{95} Regardless of these issues, through semiotics and by concentrating on medieval manuscripts of animal lore the relationship between humans and nonhuman animals is easily seen and justified – a relationship that continues to grow and blossom to this day.

\textsuperscript{94} Intro., \textit{Beasts and Birds of the Middle Ages}, 6.
\textsuperscript{95} Intro., \textit{Beasts and Birds of the Middle Ages}, 7.
Chapter II: Germanic Fairy Tales

Children point at the stars without a thought, whereas others fear offending the angels…

(Brothers Grimm, Preface, 1819)

Contrary to the ancient myth, wisdom does not burst forth fully developed like Athena out of Zeus’s head; it is built up, small step by small step, from most irrational beginnings.

(Bruno Bettelheim, The Use of Enchantment, 1976)

Visual representations of cultures and nation states such as animal symbols have always been of major interest due to their ability to evoke strong feelings of affiliation and provide stimulating imagery of recognition. Beasts have always been contributing factors in fables and fairy tales, usually as guides, anthropomorphic personalities, or simple dumb entertainment, but until recently their importance as a main character instead of as a pet or companion has sadly been overlooked. This is probably due to the human commitment to distancing ourselves from animals, making sure we are not involved with them outside of these two partnerships. The naturalization of the human/animal binary has made it easier to eliminate the human as an animal subject and split the two into separate entities. Fairy tales present some insight into this split, since through their portrayal of animals they have provided a sense of separation that has carried on for centuries.

To reiterate, the main challenge involving the documentation of animals is first and foremost, methodological – humans create documents and stories concerning animals. Their representation as political, moralistic, religious, or cultural symbols has been prescribed to them by humans for humans. Additionally, our history is laden with evidence of human trying to express

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100 Few and Tortorici, Centering Animals, 3.
our dominance over other animals and prove its superiority over the “dumb beasts.” However, fables and fairy tales are filled with counter examples to this hegemonic representation, since animals and wildlife represented in these stories usually end up prevailing against the hominids through the use of their wit and intelligence. While bestiaries provided a source for moralistic value regarding flora and fauna, fairy tales continue this pedagogical persuasion and provide additional didactic teachings by supplying contemporary exemplification of nonhuman animals. According to Jack Zipes, while “These tales were considered trite and pagan, more suited for children and peasants than for polite society. However, priests began to incorporate them into their sermons in the vernacular as parables to illustrate a moral message… priests "Christianized" certain folk tales…”

Although this text and the majority of nonacademic studies use these terms interchangeably, those who study folklore academically draw clear distinctions between the three. Fables are a genre of folklore that encompasses a broad range of topics and subjects with a plethora of animals used as the characters. Stories with the heavy involvement of creatures are usually called “animal stories” due to the fact that almost all characters are animals. One example of this is the Uncle Remus tales, which are a collection of tales that have their origins in African American culture. The main characters are anthropomorphized renditions of notable wildlife including the humanlike Brer Rabbit or Brer Fox. Another example is Aesop Fables, from the legendary Greek fabulist of the same name. This Western collection of stories is over two-thousand years old, yet the stories remain popular throughout the modern world.

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The primary distinction between a fairy tale and a folk tale is that one uses oral recitation and the other uses literary narration.\textsuperscript{104} According to the editor of \textit{The Oxford Companion to Fairy Tales}, Jack Zipes:

There is no such thing as the fairy tale; however, there are hundreds of thousands of fairy tales. And these fairy tales have been defined in so many different ways that it boggles the mind to think that they can be categorized as a genre. In fact, the confusion is so great that most literary critics continually confound the oral folk tale with the literary fairy tale and vice versa.\textsuperscript{105}

Beyond these technical definitions, fairy tales and folk tales are more than just spoken stories or written narratives, they are “autobiographical ethnographies – that is, it is a people’s own description of themselves.”\textsuperscript{106} Studying folklore makes it possible to view a culture \textit{from the inside out} instead of \textit{from the outside in} – the latter being the condition to which students of anthropology have become accustomed.\textsuperscript{107} In defining folklore as a mirror of culture, or a reflection of self-identity, it becomes possible to look past our own worldviews and ethnocentrism and embrace different cultures on their own terms. Looking at early myths, fairy tales, or the like has made it possible to discern what was important to our past-shared identities and give us a glimpse into our collective history and culture. As Lynne S. McNeill says, “The commonness of folklore is exactly what makes it so important as a subject of cultural study.”\textsuperscript{108}

The continued expression of human dominance over animals helps stimulate the controversy revolving around “fakelore” versus folklore. The discourse and discussion on fakelore – “that is, those elements of a culture that are incorrectly presented as or generally believed to be

\textsuperscript{105} Zipes, \textit{Fairy Tales}, xv.
\textsuperscript{107} Dundes, “Meaning of Folklore,” 55.
\textsuperscript{108} Lynne S. McNeill, \textit{Folklore Rules: A Fun, Quick, and Useful Introduction to the Field of Academic Folklore Studies} (Logan: Utah State University Press, 2013), 16.
genuine folklore”\textsuperscript{109} has been used primarily in the study of folklore regarding propaganda. A government’s interference and censorship of materials and information gives us a glimpse into what is deemed nationally and philosophically significant but does not necessarily tell us what is pertinent to the corresponding cultures and societies within the polity. Per William S. Fox, “fakelore is the antithesis of folklore; whereas folklore exercises a critical function in large nation-states, fakelore contributes to social coordination and ideological and cultural hegemony.”\textsuperscript{110} In addition, there has been some argument on the distinction between folklore and mass-lore, and according to Joseph Rysan, “there is a consensus that urbanization, industrialization, and the development of mass communication in modern society ushered in the age of emphasis on the mass.”\textsuperscript{111} For instance, the television has provided the means to disseminate folklore throughout the world, but it has also mass-produced its own brand of legends and myths. These mythologies are counter to folklore since they represent the collective of a society, whereas “traditional folklore mirrors individuals and occupational interests and attitudes of the members of a group.”\textsuperscript{112} Consequentially, mass-lore is a reflection of the masses – individuals who have given up their liberties and responsibilities to feel assimilated and incorporated – and they possess “no interest in their fellowman as an individual; they are concerned with humanity in the abstract.”\textsuperscript{113}

The definition of folklore presented in this study includes the ability for fairy tales and stories to grow and develop organically and dynamically just like the cultures and societies they represent. McNeill evinces this by stating, “The words or actions that make up a folk narrative or

\textsuperscript{110} Fox, “Folklore and Fakelore,” 252.
\textsuperscript{112} Rysan, “Folklore and Mass-Lore,” 6.
\textsuperscript{113} Rysan, “Folklore and Mass-Lore,” 6.
a traditional behavior don’t exist in a vacuum.” Whether you are studying the pop culture and fan fiction of an industrialized state or, a marginalized group on the fringes of society, folk tales are representatives of the culture and allow the investigation of customs and superstitions of the society. Studying early oral literature and fairy tales provides a window of opportunity to observe and analyze cultural consumption and traditional beliefs of the folk. Fairy tales, folk tales, and fables have been an intrinsic part of history ever since humans began telling tales. By telling the stories of our people and our past, it is possible to catch a glimpse of what “we” as a collective think is important to pass on and remember. With folklore, different cultures present a mirror image of themselves, and if students of history and researchers can understand what is being said, perchance it is possible to analyze what is valuable and pertinent to that society.

It is nearly impossible to discuss folk tales without bringing up The Aarne-Thompson-Uther Classification of Folk Tales (ATU), a catalog of international folktale types used in folklore studies. The ATU Index is the product of a series of revisions and expansions first developed by Aarne (1910) for European tales and later expanded by Thompson. Originally composed in German by Finnish folklorist Antti Aarne (1910); the index was translated into English, revised, and expanded by American folklorist Stith Thompson (1928, 1961) to include more tales from Europe as well as tales from India. It was later further revised and expanded by German folklorist Hans-Jörg Uther (2004). Along with Thompson's Motif-Index of Folk-Literature (1932), with which is usually used in tandem, the ATU Index is an essential tool for folklorists. Earlier efforts in historiography and folklore research was focused on synthesis. For example, Joseph Campbell’s magnum opus The Hero with a Thousand Faces, in which Campbell unveils his theory of the archetypal hero’s journey, a common theme in mythologies from all around the world. Campbell’s

114 McNeill, Folklore Rules, 24.
quest for universal archetypes directly undercuts claims of ethnic superiority in any one folk tradition. Recent historiography and folklore research have progressed from comparative analysis of dissimilar stories and are now increasingly focused on specific stories such as Maria Tatar’s work on animal brides and grooms (i.e. “Beauty and the Beast”) and Jack Zipes’s expansive global collection of “Little Red Riding Hood.” However, because folklore is such an expansive discipline, containing aspects of history, anthropology, literature, and language, it has made the identification and explanation of change very difficult. Currently, the interest of historians has been in expanding understanding of certain, singular, stories at the expense of a more inclusive, all-encompassing synthesis of large numbers of stories.

By looking at other group’s folklore, it allows important ideas and concepts that different cultures care about to seep through. Furthermore, it allows understanding of humanity as a collective whole and takes down the barriers of ethnocentrism and worldview biases – just like when Mickey Mouse was introduced to the USSR during the 1980s. As the famed folklorist Alan Dundes stated, “In this light, it is sad to think that folklore, instead of being used as a constructive force for internationalism, has all too frequently been the tool of excessive nationalism.” Folk tales are universals and can be appreciated by anyone. Peter Singer’s utilitarian theory—“based on the principle of equal consideration, which means that we must give equal consideration to the interests of all creatures, and we should maximize the satisfaction of the interests of everyone...who are affected by our actions”—asserts that humanity and nonhuman animals are both affected by tales. Whether or not these tales are literary classics or oral stories, when we look into fairy tales and folklore there is a possibility that we are looking at a

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116 Alan Dundes, “Meaning of Folklore”, 56.

representative of a people – an “autobiographical ethnography”\textsuperscript{118} – one that touches on relevant motifs and topics of its time or simply one that teaches lessons and morals that that culture should know.

Thus, storytelling is anything but frivolous or juvenile. As Maria Tatar states, “Storytelling is a culture-building activity… one that makes the human world, but, as the tales included here are forever reminding us, they also make the world human.”\textsuperscript{119} These “wonder tales” – the name some scholars prefer to give the folk tales – were once regarded as “old wives’ tales” or children’s stories but can no longer be considered insignificant. As J.R.R. Tolkien so eloquently said, “I propose to speak about fairy-stories, though I am aware that this is a rash adventure. F\ae{}erie is a perilous land, and in it are pitfalls for the unwary and dungeons for the overbold… I have been hardly more than a wandering explorer (or trespasser) in the land; full of wonder but not of information.”\textsuperscript{120} While the \textit{fairy} in fairy tales invokes a semblance of imagination and make believe, it is also what gives the stories their power. Even though we cannot see what is going on in the minds of our heroes, we are able to see magic within stories – where anything can happen. However, the word \textit{fairy} takes away from what is being portrayed in these stories – ordinary people doing extraordinary things. The Brothers Grimm saw these stories, legends, songs, and tales as “pure” representations of Germanic culture and heritage and strove to duplicate that magic for the entire community (\textit{das Ganze}).\textsuperscript{121}

Marie-Catherine Le Jumel de Barneville, Baroness d'Aulnoy also known as Countess d'Aulnoy, was a French writer of the late seventeenth-century who was known for her fairy tales.

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{118} Alan Dundes, \textit{Meaning of Folklore}, 55.
\bibitem{121} Gunhild Ginschel, \textit{Der junge Jacob Grimm (The young Jacob Grimm). 1805-1819} (Berlin: Akademie, 1967), 40.
\end{thebibliography}
When she termed her works *contes de fées* (fairy tales), she originated the term that is now generally used for the genre.\(^{122}\) While Charles Perrault derived almost all his tales from folk sources, he rewrote them for the upper-class audience, removing rural elements.\(^{123}\) In addition, French fairy tales are particularly known by their literary rather than their folk, oral variants. Whereas later authors such as the Brothers Grimm tried to encapsulate the natural and rustic elements (i.e., their idea of the “folk”), French fairy tales involved more aristocratic and courtly affairs. The French tales do not usurp their bestiary function of moralistic teaching, but their targeted audience detracts from a more encompassing system like the German, English, or Scandinavian folk tales. The English, German, and Scandinavian folk tales share many characteristics due to their origins in a common Germanic mythology. Due to these similarities and, because the first collectors to attempt to preserve not only the plot and characters of the tale, but also the style in which they were told to the Brothers Grimm, this section will evince anecdotes simply from the Germanic *Grimms’ Fairy Tales*.

The early development of Germanic fairy tales represents the creation of a new medium within the existing compendium of bestiary texts. The corpus of tales, *Kinder und Hausmärchen* utilized Christian morals, patriarchal motifs, and the role of authority to teach important lessons and attributes. Like medieval bestiaries, the fairy tales gathered and edited by the Brothers Grimm used culturally constructed groupings of beasts to teach morals, continuing a tradition dating back to pre-Christian antiquity. The Brothers Grimm’s *Kinder und Hausmärchen* (Children’s and Household Tales) is one of the most influential and widely read books in the world. Second only


\(^{123}\) Perrault helped lay the foundations for the literary genre of fairy tales, with his works derived from earlier folk tales, published in his *Histoires ou contes du temps passé*. The best known of his tales include *Le Petit Chaperon Rouge* (Little Red Riding Hood), *Cendrillon* (Cinderella), *Le Chat Botté* (Puss in Boots), *La Belle au bois Dormant* (The Sleeping Beauty) and *Barbe Bleue* (Bluebeard). Some of Perrault’s versions of old stories influenced the German versions published by the Brothers Grimm more than 100 years later.
to the Luther Bible, it has been translated into over 160 different languages and is a part of the UNESCO “Memory of the World Register.” 124 While the Brothers are usually credited with the first systematic collection of folk and fairy tales, they are neither the founders of Germanic folklore nor the first to collect and publish their tales. 125 In fact, they were asked by a well-known poet named Clemens Brentano to gather and assemble folklore and legends and send it to him to publish. However, Brentano never published these tales. Instead, the Brothers eventually took over the endeavor and developed the quintessential book of stories that we know and love today. While the Brothers published multiple editions of their books in their lifetime – seven in total – there are still new editions and versions being published to this day. The stories have been adapted by a number of entities – from German Nazis to American Disney animators – and continue to grow and evolve.

In order to understand what made the Brothers two of the most influential and foundational individuals of German autonomy and what their relationship to the Volkskunde (folklore) metanarrative is, it is necessary to become familiar with their personal history. Initially, the Brothers grew up in an idyllic countryside. However, their idyllic country lifestyle was destroyed when their father passed away while they were still young. This led to the Brothers, especially the eldest Jacob, to take up the mantle as head of the household and provide for the family. In spite of this, with the generous financial support from their aunt and grandfather, the Brothers were able to attend school in Marburg. Their hardworking attitude coupled with the support they provided one another helped the two Brothers to overcome the obstacles of their childhood and the oppressive

nature of their wealthier classmates. Although the Brothers were burdened with financing their living accommodations and supporting their family, they did not allow themselves to become discouraged. This optimistic attitude led them to develop important contacts and cordial rapport with their professors that shaped their lives ever after. According to Jacob Grimm,

In Marburg I had to live modestly. Despite all kinds of promises, we never succeeded in obtaining the slightest support, even though our mother was the widow of a magistrate and raised five sons for the state… However, all this never hurt me… Sparseness spurs a person to industriousness and work, keeps one from many a distraction and it infuses one with noble pride that keeps one conscious of self-achievement in contrast to what social class and wealth provide. I would like to generalize even more by asserting that a great deal of what Germans have achieved overall should be attributed to the fact that they are not a rich folk. They work themselves up from the bottom and break through by taking unusual and particular paths while other people walk on a wide paved main street.126

Grimm’s desire for a return to the rural lifestyle of his childhood and his association with the working class all contributed to his romanticization of the German Volk (folk).127 As such, the Brothers hoped to discover an idealized version of the German people that transcended time and communities in their research on linguistics, language, and heritage. This was a lofty goal, for in the early nineteenth century, the German-speaking populace was not a unified country but was in fact divided into over 200 bellicose principalities, who were constantly at war with one another. Meanwhile, Napoleon Bonaparte was building his French empire, setting out to conquer all of Europe. Individuals such as Napoleon, Goethe, and Beethoven were torn between earlier Enlightenment ideals and the new Romantic nationalism. However, the Brothers Grimm longed for an idealized, unified Germany, a Germany that could stand against France, conquering all its petty tyrants. Many, especially in the Brothers’ circle of friends and professors, voiced this desire.

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Thus, the search for folk tales began as a way to “reconstitute German culture in its oral and written forms so that it would not fade from the memory of the German people.”\textsuperscript{128} The Brothers viewed their works, including \textit{Kinder und Hausmärchen} and their German dictionary, “as part of a social effort to foster a sense of justice among the German people and to create pride in the folk tradition.”\textsuperscript{129} So strong were their beliefs, once the Brothers finally graduated they only took positions and posts that would allow them to continue their research on German folklore, language, and heritage.

The Brothers Grimm valued a unified Germany and were personally invested in the idea. However, their political opinions did not sit well with the German princes or their eventual French rulers, and they were both removed from a number of offices and professorships. Nevertheless, their philosophies would become the basis for a strong national foundation in later eras and would help cement their position in German Romanticism. In the second edition of \textit{Kinder und Hausmärchen}, published in 1819, the Brothers explained the reasoning behind their desire to save folk tales. They compared the folk tales that they were collecting to a harvest that had been destroyed; some of the less fortunate would later gather the few remaining crops that were hidden and sheltered from the storm. The unprosperous individuals would treat that small bundle of crops more favorably than the planter would have treated the whole field of food in general. Whereas modern-day scholars such as Alan Dundes argue that everyone is a part of the folk, romantics such as the Brothers Grimm believed that the peasantry were the people who held the key to folk belief and tales. Only those working the fields and staying close to the land and nature could be

\begin{footnotes}
\item[128] Zipes, \textit{The Brothers Grimm}, 12.
\item[129] Zipes, \textit{The Brothers Grimm}, 23. The Brothers worked on many projects besides their fairy tales. They were well versed in German law, language, and literature and believed that language was key to understanding Germanness. Regarding their dictionary, they both died before finishing this work. Their last entry was \textit{fruit}.
\end{footnotes}
considered traditional and hold authority on what was and was not folk. For many years, the preface to the Brothers’ new editions of their fairy tales would include a variation of this opening:

After a storm or another misfortune from the heavens has knocked an entire field of growing crops to the ground, it is possible that near some low hedges or bushes a small safe place can be found where a few growing spikes remain. If the sun shines again, they begin to grow, lonely and unnoticed. No hasty scythe harvests them for the great store houses. But in late summer, when they are ripe and full, poor hands come to search for them. Gleaned one by one, carefully bound together, and valued more than whole sheaves, they are carried home. They provide sustenance for the winter and are perhaps the only seeds for the future. That is how it appeared to us when we saw how nothing more remained from all that had blossomed in earlier times. Even the memory of it all was almost completely lost among the people, but for a few songs, books, legends, and these innocent fairy tales. Gatherings around the oven, around the kitchen stove, on stair landings, holidays still celebrated, grazing pastures and forests in their silence, and above all the unspoiled imagination – these were the hedges that protected these seeds and passed them down from one age to another.¹³⁰

The individuals who still gathered around the fireplace and told folk stories were the guardians of the hidden world of fairy tales, and these tellers of tales were starting to disappear. The Brothers believed that the people – not the legends – preserving these tales were dying off, making them more and more difficult to collect. Once collected and recorded, the Brothers left the contents of these tale open for interpretation, stating that it was not their job to defend any one position, instead choosing to let the tales speak for themselves.¹³¹ The Brothers were simply recorders, and their commitment to copying each story exactly as it was recounted to them was one of their core values. They realized that each revision took away from the simplicity of the stories, and that transcribing the oral tradition into written word would already irrevocably alter the folk tales’ original context and environment, even without any additional changes. In Jacob Grimm’s letter Circular wegen der Aufsammlung der Volkspeoesie (Circular-Letter Concerned with

Collecting of Folk Poetry) printed and distributed in 1815 he asked fellow Germans to help him with the task of collecting tales and wrote,

> It is our intention to track down as diligently as possible all the following items and to write them down as faithfully as possibly… it is extremely important that these items are to be recorded faithfully and truly, without embellishment and additions, whenever possible from the mouth of the tellers in and with their very own words in the most exact and detailed way. It would be of double value if everything be obtained in the local live dialect.\(^{132}\)

The Brothers distributed this letter in hopes that it would reach people they believed were just as concerned with the preservation of folk tales, proverbs, songs, and customs as they were. The Brothers believed it was their duty to protect these stories from dying out. Many of their prefaces concluded with a variation of, “Wir übergeben dies Buch wohlwollenden Händen, dabei denken wir an die segnende Kraft, die in ihnen liegt, und wünschen, daß denen, welche diese Brosamen der Poesie Armen und Genügsamen nicht gönnen, es gänzlich verborgen bleiben möge” (“We present this book to well-wishing readers, conscious of the purifying power which it contains. We wish that it should remain concealed from those who do not allow these crumbs of poetry to the poor and the frugal”).\(^{133}\)

Late nineteenth and twentieth-century German folklorists overlooked the French and broader European foundations of the Grimm stories, instead assuming that the stories were authentic documentations of German legends and people. The Brothers were aware of their stories’ trans-European connections and were only concerned with reliability and consistency when transcribing the tales told them, not necessarily the location from whence the stories originated. According to Jack Zipes, “More than Perrault, the Brothers Grimm were extremely conscious of

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\(^{133}\) Grimm and Grimm, *Kinder und Hausmärchen*, 37.
being within a broad, institutionalized fairy-tale discourse that had great implications for the future
development of German culture.\textsuperscript{134} While the stories were intended for an adult audience (despite
the title), the Brothers also realized that tales would be read to children and when they edited their
collection of stories, they kept that in mind. The Brothers would eventually fit the developing
morals of the German bourgeois middle class into their stories in order to make the tales more
relatable to Christian values, the Protestant ethic, and to provide children with morals and lessons.
These themes were important to the Brothers, and it is possible to trace the evolution of their
collection via examples of words and phrases from stories being changed to fit societal standards.

It is important to note that the fairy tales that the Brothers wrote down were originally
considered folktale stories and had to be adjusted to fit their literary narrative. The storytellers who
visited and performed their stories for the Brothers Grimm would generate powerful renditions of
their tales, accounts that would be received more strongly than their literary adaptations.\textsuperscript{135} One of
the most well-known and prolific fairy tales is “Little Red Riding Hood” or “Rotkäppchen” (“Little
Red Cap”) in the original German. According to the Aarne-Thompson-Uther Classification of Folk Tales, “Little Red Riding Hood” is a motif of supernatural adversaries and a tale of enchantment.\textsuperscript{136}
The protagonist was devoured by a wolf or supernatural monster and was later rescued alive from
the belly. According to Joseph Campbell, “Rotkäppchen” is a story that is shared by many cultures
and displays the magical redemptive qualities of being swallowed whole by a large beast, surviving
completely intact, and learning from this blunder – similar to “Jonah and the Whale” or

\textsuperscript{134} Zipes, \textit{Brothers Grimm}, 145.
\textsuperscript{135} Maria Tatar, \textit{A Norton Critical Edition: The Classic Fairy Tales} (New York: W. W. Norton &
\textsuperscript{136} Multilingual Folk Tale Database, “333: Little Red Riding Hood,” in Aarne-Thompson-Uther
Aarne (1910) for European tales and later expanded by Thompson (1928, 1961) to include more tales from Europe
as well as tales from India. The last expansion and addition were by Uther (2004) and included more tales from
eastern and southern Europe.
“Pinocchio”.

The multiple versions of this story that appear throughout the world share similar tropes and themes with the Brothers’ version. Therefore, the importance of the lesson is evinced in the plethora of adaptations and stories created in the twentieth century and into the present day. Crucial to all stories associated with “Little Red Riding Hood” is the redemptive event that follows the ordeal. For instance, in “Rotkäppchen,” by the end of the story the little girl learns to listen to her mother and to never stray from the path.

In the Brothers’ 1812 edition, the story begins by describing “Red Cap” as a child much loved by the family and community, but most importantly by her grandmother. The basis for the title revolves around a gift that the grandmother made, a red cap (or cloak). When her grandmother becomes sick, Red Cap is tasked with delivering wine and cakes to make her feel better. Before setting off to complete this task, the mother reminds Red Cap to “go directly there and don’t stray from the path, otherwise you’ll fall and break the glass, and your grandmother will get nothing.”

This line has been interpreted to represent two separate, but important motifs relating to the Brothers’ ideology and beliefs. According to Maria Tatar, the wine and cakes imply the Christian Communion and show the Brothers’ religious beliefs. Not only that, it is a warning to the child to listen to her mother (if not her elders in general). However, Red Cap does not listen to her mother’s warning and is lured away by the wolf, having been tempted to look at the beautiful surroundings and pick flowers for her grandmother, all while the wolf slips away to grandma’s to eat her and lie in wait for Red Cap. Eventually the child makes it to grandma’s house where the

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wolf is disguised as the old lady, awaiting his chance to “gobble up poor Little Red Cap.” Fortunately, for Red Cap and her grandmother, a nearby hunter guesses what has happened and uses a pair of scissors to cut open the wolf’s stomach, rescuing Red Cap and her grandmother. Once removed from the wolf’s stomach, the trio fetches some large rocks, puts them in the wolf, and sews his stomach back together. When the wolf awakens, he is unable to run away and dies under the weight of the stones. The hunter takes the wolf’s skin, the grandmother eats her cake and drinks her wine, and Red Cap learns a valuable lesson: “Never again will you stray from the path by yourself and go into the forest when your mother has forbidden it.”

Without a doubt, the pages of Kinder und Hausmärchen provide ample fodder for assembling a list of horrors. According to Linda Dégh, “Leafing through the pages, the reader will find no end to child abuse: torture, mutilation, abandonment, expulsion, and killing of children by parents. Children are sacrificed for the well-being of a friend; older brothers are condemned to death at the birth of a daughter; a child is fed to the father by the mother; a daughter’s hands are cut off by the father.” However, many fairy tales are modified and altered and like medieval bestiaries, the fairy tales gathered and edited by the Brothers Grimm used culturally constructed groupings of beasts to teach morals, continuing a tradition dating back to pre-Christian antiquity. As stated previously, the Brothers focused on Christian morals and patriarchal themes, but they also viewed the peasantry as key holders of these folk traditions. In the 1800s when the Brothers Grimm wrote their collection of stories, family and the peasantry, were the foundational basis of society and the economy. According to Matthew Stibbe, “German girls were to be the guardians of ‘German blood, German culture, German way of life and customs, physical and spiritual health

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and correctness.” Albrecht Möller goes further, stating that women were the “guardian for the purity of the blood and the people, in order to bring up heroes from among the sons of the Volk.”

Wilhelm Grimm added this tale, “Schneeweßchen und Rosenrot” (“Snow White and Rose Red”) to the collection in 1837. In it, the brothers chose to incorporate morals and Christian elements that clearly instructed children how to behave. What other tales alluded, “Snow White and Rose Red” expresses with clear intention. One of the most unmistakable themes is the value of familial love, and though the sisters have distinctive traits and preferences, they are united in love for one another. As Maria Tatar states, “Most same-sex siblings in fairy tales are hostile to each other, but Snow White and Rose Red are remarkable exceptions to this rule… both serving as models of compassion and kindness… run the household, carry out domestic chores assigned to them, they also help those in need, no matter how terrifying or repellant they may be. As the tale opens, the sisters and mother (father/husband is not in the picture) show a strong bond of affection for each other. According to the tale, “The two children liked each other so much that they would always clasp hands when they went out together. When Snow White would say: ‘We’ll never leave each other,’ Rose Red would answer ‘Not as long as we live,’ and their mother would chime in by saying ‘You must always share whatever you have.’”

Although “Snow-White and Rose-Red” is about two little girls living with their mother, a poor widow, in a small cottage by the woods, the main area of interest is the representation of the bear throughout the story, a symbolic interpretation of royalty before the Church destroyed this

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146 This tale is a completely different version of Snow White – it should not to be confused with the Grimm fairy tale “Snow White” – as the story has nothing in common with the other one other than the fact that she shares her name and has an encounter with a dwarf.
mighty beast’s image. The story establishes fair-haired Snow-White as quiet and gentle, preferring to spend her time indoors, doing housework and reading. Whereas, dark-haired Rose-Red is outspoken and lively and prefers to be outside, frolicking in the fields and catching butterflies. They are both very good girls who love each other and their mother dearly, and their mother is very fond of them as well. One winter night, there is a knock at the door. Rose-Red opens the door to find a bear. At first, she is terrified, but they let the bear in, and they quickly become quite friendly with him. The bear comes back every night for the rest of that winter and the family grows used to him. Eventually, the bear tells them that he must go away for a while to guard his treasure from a wicked dwarf. Throughout the summer the girls repeatedly encounter a dwarf and rescue him from some peril each time; however, the dwarf is consistently ungrateful. Then one day, they meet the dwarf once again. This time, he is terrified because the bear is about to kill him. The dwarf pleads with the bear and begs it to eat the girls. Instead, the bear pays no heed to his plea and kills the dwarf with one swipe of his paw. Instantly, the bear turns into a prince. As stated previously, before the lion the bear was the embodiment of kingship in northern Europe, and according to Stephen O. Glosecki “It was the most anthropomorphized animal of the North,” something the bear prince embodies.149 The dwarf had previously put a spell on the prince by stealing his precious stones and turning him into a bear. The curse is broken with the death of the dwarf. Snow-White marries the prince and Rose-Red marries the prince’s brother.

As the tale winds to its conclusion, the truth of sharing with each other brings prosperity to both sisters. Though he treats them harshly, the girls extended similar kindness to the dwarf. And in the end, their compassion established with the bear and the dwarf alike lead to marriage and wealth for both girls, a happily ever after that follows wise moral decisions. The sisters share

equally in good fortune, with Snow White marrying the bear prince and Rose Red wedding his brother, and the great wealth stolen by the dwarf is divided between them. To this extant, the sisters share a home together and have their mother joins them, where she “lived for many years with her children in peace and happiness.” Together, they live in great contentment, preserving their close family ties. The Grimms’ blend of bourgeois, Protestant, familial, Christian values with folk tales testify to their international ties by acting like the French authors who made folk tales more aristocratic, but they still provide strong Germanic roots by presenting the bear as a prince. This depiction of reward for good character exemplifies another story theme, the good always receive a blessing and the wicked their just punishment (as depicted in the downfall of the dwarf). Like bestiaries, this story reflects an element of Biblical truth, as do many other aspects of the story, such as the value of extending hospitality and the importance of aiding those in need.

The story appears intentionally crafted to impress on children the importance of family and the rewards of good, dutiful, and loving behavior. Even though the family is in impoverished conditions, the family is content, kind to one another, and sympathetic toward those in need. Such as their offer of hospitality to a stranger (the bear), saying “You are very welcome to spend the night at the hearth. Then you’ll be protected from the cold and the harsh weather.” Showcasing Snow White’s and Rose Red’s upright deeds, purity of heart, and sincerity is expressed using the bear, and is further displayed when the story clarifies that “He (the bear) would lie down at the hearth and let the children tease him as much as they wanted. They had become so accustomed to his arrival that the door was never bolted until their big black friend had returned.” As the story unfolds, it is apparent that Snow White and Rose Red were always safe around the noble bear and

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150 Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, *The Annotated Brothers Grimm*, 386.
even if they linger too late in the woods (traditionally a dangerous place) or fall asleep by a cliff’s ledge, no harm ever befalls them because “the angel that watches over good children” is with them.153 Presumably, the pagan noble kingship can be seen linked to Christian charity as both being sources of order. The bear is not evil, but can be trusted, Europe’s Judeo-Christian, Greco-Roman, Germanic-Celtic compromise holds. Similar to anecdotes from bestiaries, many religious overtures are depicted throughout this fairy tale. Not only does an angel protect them, a lamb and a white dove, animal symbols often used for God sit around their hearth – giving the impression that God blesses their household.154 The Grimms presented their Germanic bourgeoisie ideals in this portrayal of romanticizes family life—suggesting that no disharmony can disrupt these peaceful bonds of love—meant to convey the beauty of close family relationships.

The Brothers Grimm created a medium in which to collect fairy tales, preserve them for generations to come, and instill values of morality and judgment through the application of nonhuman animals by creating an accessible reference guide of legends and stories that capitalized on the educational format of bestiaries – an effort at teaching universal values is made, though not necessarily achieved. As stated by W.H. Auden, alluding to the Brothers Grimm’s tales, “…among the few indispensable, common-property books upon which Western culture can be founded – that is, excluding the national genius of specific peoples as exemplified by Shakespeare and Dante – it is hardly too much to say that these tales rank next to the Bible in importance.”155 Appearing as simple children stories (albeit they are not), these tales utilize creatures to inspire people and to establish a sense of purpose and direction, much like their predecessors before them – book of beasts. In their 1819 Preface the Brothers Grimm conclude, “This, incidentally, is only said in

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154 Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, The Annotated Brothers Grimm, 378

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opposition to the so-called revisions which seek to make fairy tales more literary and more attractive, not against the sort of free interpretation which transforms these tales into works of art which belong to our time – for who would care to set boundaries for art?"156

PART III: MODIFICATIONS AND ADAPTATIONS

“As long as the fairy tale continues to awaken our wonderment and project counter worlds to our present society where our yearnings and wishes may find fulfillment, it will serve a meaningful social function not just for compensation but for revelation: for the worlds projected by the best of our fairy tales reveal the gaps between truth and falsehood in our immediate society and provide us with comforting counsel about how we can insert ourselves cunningly into our daily struggles to turn the course of the world's events in our favor.”157


As one of the oldest known forms of literature, the stories of magic and transformation that we call “fairy tales” (though they usually contain no fairies) are also one of the most popular and enduring. There is no notion exactly when fairy tales originated in oral cultures thousands of years ago, but it is known they were metaphorical stories that stemmed from basic human experiences and included important information that reinforced common bonds of people living in small clans and tribes.158 Fairy tales do not belong to children. They are part and parcel of a general civilizing process that established various tale types some of which were directly composed for children. Every society has developed some sort of civilizing process to motivate its members to cooperate and co-exist in peaceful ways. Tales are motivators, and as they were told and retold over vast periods of time, they were woven into the texture of the humanizing procedure, retained in our memories, and assumed different forms (i.e. Cosmic Hunt, bestiaries, folk tales, and literature) for social purposes that determined the nature of the genre. They play an intricate role in acculturation, that is, in forming and reflecting the tastes, manners, and ideologies of members in a particular society.159 Though many ancient tales might seem to be magical, miraculous, fanciful, superstitious, or unreal, people believed them, and they were and are not much different from

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159 Zipes, Art of Subversion, x.
people today who believe in miracles, religions, cults, and even nations. Bestiaries capitalized on animals in order to establish and indoctrinate the populace in behaviors and manners that were seen as appropriate, and fairy tales followed suit. Fairy tales survive because they present experiences in vivid symbolic form.

The brothers Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm’s claim to fame is most certainly their collection of folk tales, *Kinder und Hausmärchen*, but they were also interested in their mother tongue – the Germanic language itself. With Romantic enthusiasm, “Jacob Grimm in the preface to the first edition of his grammar, calls upon every native-born German to forsake the pedantry of schoolmasters’ rules and speak the language as he learned it at his mother’s knee. He emphasizes his wish to describe rather than prescribe…” The brothers saw it as their task as linguists and literary historians to preserve the pure sources of German folk tales and to reveal the debt or connection of literate culture to the oral tradition. The Brothers saw old German literature and folk tales as repositories of authentic truths concerning German culture. For instance, many of their informants were woman – family friends, servants, mothers, and grandmothers who had at their disposal a rich repertoire of folklore. They believed that a philological understanding of old German literature and tales would enable Germans to grasp the connection between the customs, laws, and beliefs of the German people. As Robert Meeks wrote in *Grimms’ Goblins. Grimms’ Household Stories* in 1876:

> Fairy Tales are the earliest cultivators of the purest bias in the youngest and freshest of soils; they are the especial prerogative and boon of children’s libraries. Their world-wide popularity, their boundless influence, form a striking contrast to that immense flood of writing distinguished by bad taste and low aims, which, if not positively pernicious, is at best vulgar trash. With no higher standard than the reading of Fairy Stories, children would

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ever, from these sources, learn how good and holy is virtue and benevolence – how bad and wicked is craft and cunning. Nay, moral lessons may be learned from these sources, not only by the little world of wondering, believing minds, but by many minds that have long since passed the age of wondering.¹⁶²

It is little wonder why Einstein is credited as having said: If you want your children to be intelligent, read them fairy tales. If you want them to be very intelligent, read them more fairy tales.

In the early 1800s, when the Brothers Grimm first wrote their collection of stories, the peasantry, was the foundational basis of society and the economy. Ultimately, the agriculturally rooted peasantry was considered a more stable, healthy, strong, and biologically valuable group than any other occupational group such as a fishers, hunters, or especially urbanites.¹⁶³ The peasant was seen as the link to ancient German beliefs and customs – essentially folk heroes that preserved time honored traditions. Peasant life was quintessentially folkish, and peasants were the true carriers of the völkische Bewegung (folkish movement). According to Marc Soriano and Julia Bloch Frey, “Peasant children were raised in contact with the realities of existence, in the promiscuity of misery and ignorance… It didn't occur to parents to keep the children from listening (to folk tales) during those long evenings when someone told those fabulous stories which were not particularly meant for their ears.”¹⁶⁴ But the stories also pleased the peasant children, who tended to sympathize with the animals of the stories more readily, perhaps because the families worked the land and were closer to nature, and could identify with animals more readily.

As far as one can tell, the animals of folk tales made up a literature of transition which was quite naturally familiar to both adults and children. For instance, Reynard’s nefarious deeds and trickster tactics were greatly enjoyed by the peasants and simple village folk during the medieval period, who undoubtedly supplemented the stories with social and political underpinnings. A facet of essentially all tales that contain animal characters is the unquestioned acceptance of communication between human and animals (or nonhuman beast, creature, or monster). One explanation that could justify this is that the animal is often the emblematic representation of a particular aspect of the human character, since the fairy tale is first and foremost about people. Martin Hallett and Barbara Karasek suggest that, “The essential quality of an animal is its otherness; the ability to communicate notwithstanding, the animal symbolizes the unknown, a portrayal of the shadowy world of instinct and nature.”

The theme and the structure of employing animals, beasts, and monsters in "warning tales" left their mark on literature. Using fear and intimidation, cautionary stories encourage children to obey parental authority, by celebrating docility and conformity while discouraging curiosity and willfulness. “Tales of warning” can be applied to all those stories, fairy tales, and fables whose purpose is to dissuade children from ominous hazards such as water, the forest, etc. So that the syncretic and anthropomorphic mind of the child can assimilate the lesson, the story materializes the danger by populating the tale with wild animals or troubling personages, which means that beasts and monsters become associated with dangerous places. A "song" by le petit Coulange is furnished with mythical beasts and creatures to provide the listener with these premonitions:

... En faveur des petits enfants  
Je veux gronder les gouvernantes  
Qui pour les rendre obeissants

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Leur font des peurs extravagantes
   Et qui, contentes du succès,
Les rendent peureux 'a jamais.

On leur fait peur du loup garou,
On leur fait peur de la grand'bete;
   Le dragon va sortir d'un trou
Qui pour les avaler s'apprete.
Enfin ces petits malheureux
'ont que des monstres autour d'eux.

To speak out for the little child
   I feel that I must scold the nurse.
For to keep him meek and mild
She threatens with a monster curse,
And happy to have calmed the strife
Leaves him fearful all his life.

He's haunted by the boogey-man;
He's haunted by the werewolf's cry.
The dragon's coming from his den
To gulp him down. And by and by
The frightened child is weak and cowed,
Surrounded by a monster crowd...166

In the classroom, “Little Red Cap” has been used as an educational tool since the mid-1800s, and throughout the early 1900s, Germans utilized the tale to reinforce maternal authority and masculine superiority. The beginning of the tale provides a moral lesson – listen to your mother – but it also shows what happens when you do not follow her rules. Although the child is innocent and young, whereas the “beast” is brutish and uncouth – “what big ears you have,” “what big eyes you have,” “what big hands you have” 167 – Red Cap talked to a stranger, strayed from the path,

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had her grandmother eaten, and was herself eaten.\textsuperscript{168} Luckily for them, a male hunter happened to pass by and save them both from the dangerous wolf. This played strongly in the highly patriarchal society of the Brothers Grimm during the 1800s. According to Bettina Arnold, “Men were born to wage war to protect racially desirable women whose role was to bear children and maintain a nurturing home environment: this was the simple and essentialist message sent by the state, backed by the authority of several millennia of selectively interpreted and (mis)represented historical and archaeological evidence.”\textsuperscript{169} As with many generations past, the story of “Little Red Cap” was used to teach and enforce gender and kinship roles. “Little Red Cap” is assuredly the most recognizable contemporary cautionary tale and has been studied and analyzed for a long time.

Few have taken the story literally and claim the tale is about real werewolves devouring children, others state the story is about pregnancy envy, and more suggest it is about human passion and pubertal desire.\textsuperscript{170} Folklorists and cultural anthropologists such as Edward Burnett Tylor saw Little Red Riding Hood in terms of solar myths and other naturally occurring cycles, proclaiming that the wolf represents the night swallowing the sun, and the variations in which Little Red Riding Hood is cut out of the wolf’s belly represent the dawn.\textsuperscript{171} In this interpretation, maybe one that the Brothers saw connecting their German heritage, there is a relation between the wolf of this tale and Fenrir, the wolf in Norse mythology that is said to swallow the sun at Ragnarök.\textsuperscript{172} As Jack Zipes points out:

Perrault’s tale of ‘Little Red Riding Hood’ had an unusually successful reception in the 18\textsuperscript{th} century. In fact, it was one of the few literary tales in history which, due to its

\textsuperscript{168} In the French version, they are both eaten, and the ending is not a happy one.
universality, ambivalence, and clever sexual innuendoes, was reabsorbed by the oral folk tradition. That is, as a result of its massive circulation in print in the 18th and 19th centuries and of the corroboration of peasant experience, it took root in oral folklore and eventually led to the creation of the even more popular Grimms’ tale, which had the same effect.\footnote{173}{Jack Zipes, ed. \textit{The Trials and Tribulations of Little Red Riding Hood, 2nd ed.} (New York: Routledge, 1993) 31.} 

The theme of the voracious wolf and of creatures released unharmed from its belly is also reflected in another Grimm tale “The Wolf and the Seven Young Kids”, which follows the general theme of restoration of a similar tale, the biblical story, “Jonah and the Whale”. A mother goat leaves her seven kids at home while she ventures into the forest to find food. Before she leaves, like the cautionary tale it is, she warns her young about the Big Bad Wolf who will try to sneak into the house and gobble them up. The mother says, “Be on your guard against the wolf and don’t let him inside.”\footnote{174}{Brothers Grimm, \textit{Complete First Edition}, 23.} She explains to the young children that they will be able to recognize their true mother by her white feet and sweet voice. Before long the wolf comes and tries to fool the children and after multiple attempts, he succeeds, and the children are duped and eventually open the door and let him in. The wolf jumps into the house and gobbles up six of the kids. The youngest child hides from the wolf in the grandfather clock and does not get eaten. The mother goat comes home and is distraught to find the door wide open and all but one of her children missing. She looks around and sees the wolf, lying on the ground of a meadow fast asleep. He ate so much; he fell into a deep sleep and cannot move. The mother goat calls to her youngest child to quickly get her a pair of scissors, a needle and some thread. She cuts open the wolf’s belly and, much like “Little Red Cap”, the six children spring out miraculously unharmed. They fill the wolf’s belly with rocks, and the mother sews it back up again. When the wolf wakes up, “he thought he had better have a drink of fresh water to help himself, and he looked for a well.”\footnote{175}{Brothers Grimm, \textit{Complete First Edition}, 25.} He goes to take a drink but falls
in and drowns under the weight of the rocks. The family lives happily ever after. The story, which many believe is older than “Little Red Cap” and the basis for Red Riding Hood, warns about strangers and teaches the lesson that the wicked ones are always punished in the end. Medievalist Willine B. Clark provides commentary on the second family of bestiaries (refer to Chapter I) and states, “The Devil, who always looks malignly at the human race, and constantly circles the sheepfolds of the Church’s faithful in order to afflict and destroy their souls, is like the wolf.”

The kids are representative of innocence and the sweet voice and white feet of the mother represent purity, which the wolf, much like the Devil, intends to destroy.

There are multiple fairy tales that involve wolves, but some stories are older than others, with origins possibly thousands of years old. Ethologists have stated that fables and fairy tales about wolves, such as Aesop’s the “The Boy Who Cried Wolf” are likely based on genuine risk of wolf attacks at the time. The tale concerns a shepherd boy who repeatedly tricks nearby villagers into thinking a wolf is attacking his town’s flock. When a wolf actually does appear and the boy again calls for help, the villagers believe that it is another false alarm and the sheep are eaten by the wolf. The moral stated at the end of story is, “a liar will not be believed, even when they speak the truth.” Obviously, wolves are dangerous predators, and fables and folk tales serve as a valid warning not to enter forests or areas where wolves were known to frequent, and to be on the lookout for such. As Zipes suggest, “Little children were attacked and killed by animals and grown-ups in the woods and fields. Hunger often drove people to commit atrocious acts… there was a strong superstitious belief in werewolves and witches, uncontrollable magical forces of

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nature, which threatened the lives of peasant populations… consequently, the warning tale became part of a stock oral repertoire of storytellers.”

Both wolves and wilderness were treated as enemies of humanity in those regions and eras, but wolves were not the only predators or animals used to teach lessons to the listeners of such tales.

The bear figures prominently in the folklore of Europe. The Eurasian brown bear ranges from Spain to Siberia and as far south as India. In ancient times, bears were exported to the Roman Empire by the Germanic peoples, whose descendants persevered much ursine lore. Glosecki asserts, “Ursiform ornament has a long history in Scandinavia, from Paleolithic petroglyphs through Neolithic clubs to brooches found on Gotland (an island east of Sweden) and on to the sword hilts and spear sockets of the Vendel period.”

Icelandic sagas suggest totemic relationships (see Levi-Strauss above) between humans and bears – humans have bear fathers, mothers, and sons. Authors in Medieval Folklore while describing onomastic (i.e. relating to the study of the history and origin of proper names) relations with bears state, “there are many such euphemisms – sweetfoot, winter sleeper, grandfather, forest king – coined for the one that wintered in the underworld, summered upon middle earth, and haunted heaven forever in the constellation called the Great Bear by many besides the Romans.”

The Great Bear, also known as Ursa Major, is a constellation in the northern sky, whose associated mythology dates back into prehistory (i.e. Cosmic Hunt). Its Latin name means "greater she-bear," referring to and complementing it with nearby Ursa Minor, the “lesser bear”. In antiquity, it was one of the original forty-eight constellations listed by Ptolemy in the second century CE. In addition, it is one of the few star groups mentioned in the Bible, “He is the Maker of the Bear and Orion, the Pleiades and the...”

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180 Zipes, ed. The Trials and Tribulations, 18-20.
181 Glosecki, “Bear”, in Medieval Folklore, 32. In Swedish prehistory, the Vendel Period (550 CE–790 CE) comes between the Migration Period and the Viking Age.
182 Glosecki, “Bear”, in Medieval Folklore, 32.
Ursa Major, along with asterisms that include or encompass it, is significant to a plethora of world cultures, often as a symbol of the north.

While the bear was powerful and noble in prehistory and antiquity, especially in Germanic cultures, ursine ornamentation and clothing have not always been evinced as a symbol of strength and supremacy. Possibly following the medieval church’s regulation on conquering the bear metaphorically and physically, the Brothers Grimm and others such as the Norwegian tales collected by Peter Christen Asbjørnsen and Jørgen Moe developed stories that included ursine creatures, people, and monsters. Resembling the bestiaries they followed, these stories invigorated their tales with these beasts, and incorporated didactic lessons and moralistic teachings straight from the bible.

The Brothers Grimm tale “Bearskin” tells the story of a soldier with no war to fight in, parents that were dead, and brothers who had no place for him. When all seemed lost, a green-coated man with cloven hooves appeared to him and offered to make him rich if he would not cut his hair, clip his nails, bathe, or pray, and wear a coat and cloak that he would give him for seven years. The devil explained that if he survived, he would be rich and free, but if he died during the time, the devil would have him. The desperate soldier agreed, and the devil gave him the green coat telling him he would find its pockets always full of limitless money and then a bearskin, telling him that he must sleep in it and would be known as Bearskin because of it. Bearskin set out and gave much money to the poor that they would pray for him, to live out the seven years. After

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184 The number seven has significance in almost every major religion and appears in many folk tales. In the Old Testament the world was created in six days and God rested on the seventh, creating the basis of the seven-day-week we use to this day. In the New Testament the number seven symbolizes the unity of the four corners of the Earth with the Holy Trinity. The number seven is also featured in the Book of Revelation (seven churches, seven angels, seven seals, seven trumpets, and seven stars). The Koran speaks of seven heavens and Muslim pilgrims walk around the Kaaba in Mecca (Islam’s most sacred site) seven times. In Hinduism there are seven higher worlds and seven underworlds, and in Buddhism the newborn Buddha rises and takes seven steps.

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several years, he grew so revolting that he had to pay heavily to get any shelter. In the fourth year, he heard an old man lamenting and persuaded him to tell his tale: he had lost all his money, did not know how to provide for his daughters and could not pay the innkeeper, so he would be sent to jail. Bearskin paid the innkeeper and gave the old man a purse of gold as well. The old man said that he would marry him to one of his daughters in gratitude. Reminiscent of the bible, this first half of the bear story already suggests a moral lesson. As Proverbs 19:17 state, “whoever is kind to the poor lends to the Lord, and he will reward them for what they have done.”185 The oldest ran away, screaming, from the sight. The middle one said he was worse than a bear that had tried to pass itself off as human. The youngest one agreed to fulfill her father's promise. Bearskin gave her half a ring and promised to return in three years. Her sisters ridiculed her at length.

At the end of the seven years, Bearskin found the devil again and demanded he fulfill his promise. The devil then proceeds to bathe Bearskin, clip his nails and cut his hair until he is as good as new. Bearskin then demands that the devil say the Lord's Prayer. The devil warns Bearskin not to push his luck as he has already won their bargain and disappears. The reference to seven years throughout the story and the devil washing him “good as new” afterwards is possibly related to the biblical message, “Elisha sent a messenger to say to him, ‘Go, wash yourself seven times in the Jordan, and your flesh will be restored and you will be cleansed.’”186 Clean and with his money, he dressed himself as a fine gentleman and went to the old man's house, where the older sisters served him, and his bride (dressed in black) showed no reaction to him. He told the old man that he would marry one of his daughters. The two older sisters ran off to dress splendidly, and Bearskin dropped his half of the ring into a wine cup and gave it to his bride. She drank it and realized that he was her bridegroom. They married. Upon realizing who he was and what they gave up, one

sister hanged herself in rage and the other drowned herself. That night, the devil knocked on the door to tell Bearskin that he had gotten two souls for the price of one.

Using the bear seen in bestiaries as a basis, the story expands on its description and utilizes it to create a lesson on manners and behaviors. First, as the Book of Beast states: “The bear cub is born as a shapeless and eyeless lump of flesh, which the mother bear shapes into its proper form by licking it (the origin of the expression "to lick into shape").”\(^{187}\) The story takes this one step forward and explains that transformation is an essential part of life. The soldier cannot remain a warrior if there are no battles to be found, he must grow and adapt to the environment and life around him. Second, it is suggested that bears do not mate like other animals; like humans they embrace each other when they copulate. The story explained this by the youngest daughter accepting and agreeing to marry Bearskin in the middle of his seven years, in which the rest of the family saw him less than human and more like a bear. Lastly, by utilizing the bear-like creature as an allegory to redemption the crucial moral of the story could be described as, it is best not to judge one by their physical appearance. The story is reminiscent of tales that follow the theme of "animal brides and grooms" found in folklore throughout the world.

A similar tale from Norway, “East of the Sun and West of the Moon” provides insight into the culture and society in which it was written. A White Bear approaches a poor peasant and asks if he will give him his prettiest and youngest daughter; in return, the bear will make the man rich. The girl is reluctant, so the peasant asks the bear to return, and in the meantime, persuades her. The White Bear takes her off to a rich and enchanted castle. At night, he takes off his bear form in order to come to her bed as a man, although the lack of light means that she never sees him. When the girl grows homesick, the bear agrees that she can go home as long as she agrees that she will

\(^{187}\) White, Book of Beasts, 46.
never speak with her mother alone, but only when other people are about. At home, they welcome
her, and her mother makes persistent attempts to speak with her alone, finally succeeding and
persuading her to tell the whole tale. Hearing it, her mother insists that the White Bear must really
be a troll, gives her some candles, and tells her to light them at night, to see what is sharing her
bed. The youngest daughter obeys, and finds he is a highly attractive prince, but she spills three
drops of the melted tallow on him, waking him. He tells her that if she held out a year, he would
have been free, but now he must go to his wicked stepmother, who enchanted him into this shape
and lives in a castle east of the Sun and west of the Moon, and marry her hideous daughter, a troll
princess.

In the morning, the youngest daughter finds that the castle has vanished. She sets out in
search of him. Her quest for the prince leads her to interact with three separate individuals who
ultimately lead her to the four Winds, with the North Wind being able to assist her in finding the
castle. Upon her arrival, the girl meets the troll princess in which the prince is forcibly betrothed
to. Eventually the peasant’s daughter is able to trick the troll and she is allowed to talk to the prince,
in which the prince tells her how she can save him. He will declare that he will marry anyone who
can wash the tallow drops from his shirt since trolls, such as his stepmother and her daughter, the
troll princess, cannot do it. So instead, he will call in the youngest daughter, and she will be able
to do it, so she will marry him. The plan works, and the trolls, in a rage, burst. The prince and his

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188 A troll is a mythological creature in Norse mythology and Scandinavian folklore. In Old Norse sources, beings described as trolls dwell in isolated rocks, mountains, or caves, live together in small family units, and are rarely helpful to human beings. Trolls were used in “warning tales" in Scandinavia, cautioning people about mountains and caves.

189 The heroine receive help from the four winds, figuratively traveling to the four corners of the earth in search of her lover. While the winds are often portrayed in conflict with each other, in this tale they work together to help the girl achieve her goal. In European folklore, each of the four winds has a different personality. The gentle East Wind brings warmth and rain. The vigorous West Wind brings dry weather. The South Wind brings heat and drought. The North Wind is the strongest of the four and brings winter and bitter cold to Northern Europe. The genders of the winds are malleable and often not designated as they are in this tale. Gertrude Jobes, Dictionary of mythology, folklore and symbols, vol. 2 (New York: Scarecrow Press, 1962), 1682-1683.
bride free the prisoners held captive in the castle, take the gold and silver within, and leave the castle east of the Sun and west of the Moon.

While the same moral as “Bearskin” – it is best not to judge one by their physical appearance – can be utilized in the beginning of the story, Asbjørnsen and Moe employ the rescue of the “bear” as an allegory to redemption. Symbolically, removing the stains on the shirt serves as a visual representation of the girl’s redemption, as she rights past wrongs by saving the prince. The story is comparable to the French story “Beauty and the Beast” or the Roman tale of “Cupid and Psyche”. As Maria Tatar states:

The two antithetical allegorical figures in the title have traditionally resolved their differences in what can be seen as a heteronormative myth of romantic love, yet the story’s representational energy is also channeled into the tense moral, economic, and emotional negotiations that complicate all courtship rituals and do not yield to easy solutions. There is something unapologetically contrived, if not perverse, about choreographing human courtship rituals using humans and a beast. And yet nearly every storytelling culture maps out dating practices with animal partners.  

The story provides an insight into the possible economic or moralistic struggles of their time. Many arranged marriages possibly felt like being taken away by a monster, and tales like this provided comfort in the form of a channel of socially acceptable consultations. In East of the Sun West of the Moon, our heroine has to be coaxed into marrying the bear, as her father “kept on telling her how rich they would be and how well she herself would do. Finally she agreed to the exchange.” 

As expressed earlier, these tales mirror social practices of culture, and that desire for wealth and upward mobility more than likely helped motivate parents to sell their children to “beasts”. It has constantly been shown in fairy tales the acts that adults and parents will go through, such as

192 Tatar, Beauty and the Beast, xiii.
sacrificing their own children, to achieve social mobility or for their own betterment. Aesop gives us one last lesson from the bear: “A Bear was once bragging about his generous feelings and saying how refined he was compared with other animals. A Fox who heard him talking in this strain, smiled and said, ‘My friend, when you are hungry, I only wish you would confine your attention to the dead and leave the living alone.’” The moral? A hypocrite deserves no one but himself.

Summarizing each selected story shows how the altered sense of morals of each of the texts utilizes and modifies animals in order to display warnings, societal mirrors, or even deeper agency to the tales. Anthropologist Irving Hallowell establishes that there are at least eight characteristics of the bear which led to his anthropomorphism: the bear has sagacious qualities; he competed with man for food; he not only stood on his hind legs and used his paws like arms, but drew one leg up under his body; his body and facial expressions showed emotion, such as whining and tears; his excrement was similar to that of humans, although larger; he walked on the whole sole of his foot (was plantigrade) and left a similar impression; he masturbated; and when skinned, his proportions resembled those of man. Before the term animal became frequent in the English language, there was “beast” and “creatures,” beings that differentiated topographically. Inhabitants of the earth, waters, or airs and were also sentient and capable of communication. Job 12:7-10 states, “But ask the animals, and they will teach you, or the birds in the sky, and they will tell you; or speak to the earth, and it will teach you, or let the fish in the sea inform you. Which of all these does not know that the hand of the Lord has done this? In his hand is the life of every creature and the breath of all mankind.” If Little Red Riding Hood frames the relationship between humans and beasts

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in terms of predator and prey, the “animal grooms and bride” stories contrastingly tell us that humans can become beasts and vice versa. Our tales suggest that the beasts and the monsters are in the exotic somewhere, but as Tatar explains, “These days we have begun to recognize the downside to being at the top of the food chain. In a curious twist, anthropocentric ideologies have backfired to turn us into the monsters, with animals as our innocent victim.”¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁷ Tatar, Beauty and the Beast, xxvii-xxviii.
Conclusion

A MAN and a Lion traveled together through the forest. They soon began to boast of their respective superiority to each other in strength and prowess. As they were disputing, they passed a statue carved in stone, which represented “a Lion strangled by a Man.” The traveler pointed to it and said: “See there! How strong we are, and how we prevail over even the king of beasts.” The Lion replied: “This statue was made by one of you men. If we Lions knew how to erect statues, you would see the Man placed under the paw of the Lion.”

One story is good, till another is told. (Aesop’s Fables, The Man and The Lion)

The study of commonalities in bestiaries, folk tales, and fairy tales suggest a very strong anthropological epistemology; however, nonhuman animals within these narratives actually engage in more complex phenomenon of symbolism. Diachronic evidence of animals guiding and teaching humanity how to behave and act turns into an examination of those processes, and it is not simply sufficed to stipulate that nonhuman animals lack a role in creating society and culture. Harriet Ritvo suggests that, “Historical research on animals has been thriving within the discipline of history; historians’ sense of their fields has expanded to include such topics. And at the same time that this widened perspective has enriched the discipline of history, it also has made a similar contribution to ‘animal studies.’”198 The premise that nonhuman animals are not central actors in shaping history or crucial in establishing mores and ethics of civilization follows the presupposition that animals are “dumb beasts” with a dearth in importance. As this paper suggests, that is not the case. Rather, animals, since prehistoric times, have been vital to our continued existence not solely as subsistence, but also as defining characters of humanity’s moral spectrum and guiding compass. Beginning in caves, artwork and oral tales concerning creatures that later developed into bestiaries and fairy tales continue to inspire and direct humankind today. All life is

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shaped by the nonhuman animals that get utilized every day, whether physically or metaphorically. The proof is in the stories told to children, the tales used to shape the masses of medieval Europe, or the performances still presented today in cultures and countries all over the world.

*Nosce te ipsum.* It is often forgotten the degree in which our engagements with animals built the world in which our lives have unfolded since the very beginning. Nonhuman animals are featured in our stories of creation, scientific accounts of evolution, art, and literature. Currently, while a third of the land on the planet is occupied by animals that are used by humans for food or labor, wildlife and nature are still the crucible that supplies important insights and lessons for humanity.199 As Bruno Schulz sums up eloquently in *The Street of Crocodiles:* “Animals! the object of insatiable interest, examples of the riddle of life, created, as it were, to reveal the human being to man himself, displaying his richness and complexity in a thousand kaleidoscopic possibilities, each of them brought to some curious end, to some characteristic exuberance.”200 The themes of bestiaries, folk tales, and fairy tales can coalesce around any number of narrative threads, but the one proposed in this thesis centered around the prominent role of nonhuman animals in perpetuating societal mores and morality. Daniel Lord Smail states, “if humanity is the proper subject of history, as Linnaeus might well have counseled, then it stands to reason that the Paleolithic era, that long stretch of the Stone Age before the turn to agriculture, is part of our history.”201 To postulate continuity between oral composition of prehistory and humanistic historical writing suggests a catalyzing effect on culture. Semiotics, zoomorphic, and


theriomorphic narratives of prehistory and antiquity suggest that complex political entities are not needed to reconstitute the lessons of the past that carry on in social memory.

As the fable above suggests, whether past lives become “historical” lives depends not on the subjects themselves—be these animals or humans—but on those writing about them who then choose to construct a history. This paper has tried to evince how conceiving the animal is integral to conceiving the human, how animals and people interact is behavior/culture making, and how encounters with humans and animals transform both participants. George Lakoff and Mark Johnson write:

A great deal of everyday, conventional language is metaphorical, and the metaphorical meanings are given by conceptual metaphorical mappings that ultimately arise from correlations in our embodied experience. In short, metaphor is a natural phenomenon. Conceptual metaphor is a natural part of human thought, and linguistic metaphor is a natural part of human language. Moreover, which metaphors we have and what they mean depend on the nature of our bodies, our interactions in the physical environment, and our social and cultural practices. Every question about the nature of conceptual metaphor and its role in thought and language is an empirical question.202

Allegories, parables, and representation of beasts and critters in fairy tales and bestiaries have been prescribed a metaphorical status that gives these creatures’ agency and power in our world. Whether that symbolism is metaphorical, physical, or esoterical nonhuman animals hold a special place in our figurative world and in our literature dimension. As Susan Cranes voices, “The animal’s trace, even when faint, is revelatory.”203

However, the experiences of those without a voice—animals and certain humans—have been marked in the material culture of the past.204 Hence, other histories are possible. Humanity’s books, literature, and paintings that involve and sometimes create animals establishes a world that

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204 Kean, “Challenges for Historians,” 64.
is uniquely human. C. McShane and J. A. Tarr ponder, “Was it the kings who hauled the craggy blocks of stone?” Implicit in the rest of their essay is that horses were involved in creating such landscapes and, by implication, histories. They say, “urban historians have paid too little attention to these ‘four-legged workers’.” Whereas these four-legged workers have quietly carved an important niche throughout military history, from Alexander’s horse Bucephalus or the Carthaginian Hannibal’s war elephants during the Punic Wars, the word “animal” contains within it an old cultural contradiction. We use animals as metaphors and anthropomorphize them, this is because we see similarities that may derive from our being animals too. When certain voices assert that “humans are animals,” they are challenging the idea of human exceptionalism, imbuing the concept with something more: with soul as opposed to soulless beasts, with reason as opposed to irrational brutes, or with language and culture as opposed to animals that merely communicate and are driven by instinct. Although humanity has until recently identified animals by their absence of a soul, the word is taken from the Latin noun anima, meaning “soul, spirit, or breath.” Aristotle’s De Anima bestowed all worldly beasts with a soul even as it established hierarchies by ranking them. Fairy tale worlds tap into this philosophy and build on it, creating universes in which living beings exist in a state of connected roles of student or teacher. While wisdom and power are distributed democratically across the animals, vegetables, and mineral worlds within folk narratives, hierarchies remain and instill the reader with topics and themes of morality, warnings, and behavioral guidance. To end with, I think a phrase often credited to Saint Francis of Assisi recapitulates the main points of the paper, “If you have men who will exclude any of God's

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206 Tatar, Beauty and the Beast, xxi.
creatures from the shelter of compassion and pity, you will have men who will deal likewise with their fellow men.”

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