INFORMATION TO USERS

This manuscript has been reproduced from the microfilm master. UMI films the text directly from the original or copy submitted. Thus, some thesis and dissertation copies are in typewriter face, while others may be from any type of computer printer.

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleedthrough, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send UMI a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

Oversize materials (e.g., maps, drawings, charts) are reproduced by sectioning the original, beginning at the upper left-hand corner and continuing from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps. Each original is also photographed in one exposure and is included in reduced form at the back of the book.

Photographs included in the original manuscript have been reproduced xerographically in this copy. Higher quality 6" x 9" black and white photographic prints are available for any photographs or illustrations appearing in this copy for an additional charge. Contact UMI directly to order.

U·M·I

University Microfilms International
A Bell & Howell Information Company
300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346 USA
313/761-4700 800/521-0600

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Order Number 9423215

Le Vau's Ménagerie and the rise of the *animalier*: Enclosing, dissecting, and representing the animal in early modern France

Iriye, Masumi, Ph.D.

The University of Michigan, 1994

Copyright ©1994 by Iriye, Masumi. All rights reserved.

U·M·I
300 N. Zeeb Rd.
Ann Arbor, MI 48106

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

LE VAU'S MENAGERIE AND THE RISE OF THE *ANIMALIER*: ENCLOSING, DISSECTING, AND REPRESENTING THE ANIMAL IN EARLY MODERN FRANCE

by

Masumi Iriye

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
(History of Art)
in The University of Michigan
1994

Doctoral Committee:

Professor Nathan T. Whitman, Co-chair
Professor Graham Smith, Co-Chair
Professor David Bien
Professor Joel Isaacson

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

© Masumi Iriye 1994
All Rights Reserved

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES iv

INTRODUCTION 1

CHAPTER

1. **A BRIEF HISTORY OF ANIMAL COLLECTIONS** 6

2. **VINCENNES AND VERSAILLES: THE SHIFT IN ANIMAL SPECTATORSHIP** 22

   The Sérail des Bestes Sauvages 23
   The Ménagerie at Versailles 31
   The Ménagerie of the Duchesse de Bourgogne 47

3. **PERCEPTIONS OF ANIMALS IN SEVENTEENTH CENTURY FRANCE** 54

   The New Philosophy 54
   The *De Animalibus* Debate 56
   La Fontaine and Animal Souls: the Discours à Madame de la Sablière 61
   The Fables of La Fontaine 69
      Picturing the Fables 74
      François Chauveau 77
      Chauveau and Oudry: "The City Rat and the Country Rat" 79
   Oudry's Illustrations of the Fables 83
      Montenault and the "livre de luxe" 83
      The La Fontaine of Painting 90

4. **ART AND SCIENCE** 104

   Founding of the Académie Royale des Sciences 104
   The Académie and Perrault's Project for Anatomy 109
   Perrault's Observatoire 114
   The Réglement of 1699 120
   The Jardin des Plantes 122
   Pierre Dionis: Popularizer of Anatomy 125
   Visitors at the Jardin des Plantes 128
   Duverney: A Gentleman-Anatomist 132
   The Académie's Reading Public 135
   Perrault's Natural History of Animals 137

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

5. THE *ANIMALIERS*: LE BRUN, DESPORTES, AND OUDRY 152

Artists and the Representations of Animals 152
Charles Le Brun: the Physiognomy of Animals 155
François Desportes 158
The Exotic Animal: Les tentures des Indes 160
Jean-Baptiste Oudry 168
La Peyronie and the "Suite d'Histoire Naturelle" 170
Maternal Imagery: La Lice et ses Petits 181

5. EPILOGUE: THE MENAGERIE AND AFTER 190

BIBLIOGRAPHY 208

FIGURES 228

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

INTRODUCTION

The starting point for this dissertation lies in a paper I presented in Prof. Nathan T. Whitman's seminar on Versailles (University of Michigan, Fall Term, 1988). That study took as its focus the royal Ménagerie. Besides the architectural novelty of the zoo -- it was the first major animal observatory of its kind -- I was intrigued by other issues as well. Why was a large-scale zoo included among the earliest projects at Versailles, where the young Louis XIV had just established residency? Could the panoptic tower of the Ménagerie be seen as a metaphor for the absolutist ambitions of the French king and his minister, Colbert? Was this a message set in stone, sent to the recently fractious groups of aristocrats, parliamentarians, and other frondeurs?

It became clear that attaching any grandiose political readings onto the zoo, however tempting this might be, in the end would not work. In the first place, the structure in question was tucked away, deep in the park: it was certainly not a public monument. Next, what appeared far more relevant than its symbolic importance, tenuous at best, was its very real function as a compound for animals. And, following this line of reasoning, I stumbled upon an

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

entirely different field of inquiry: the history of animals in art and thought.

Animals have always existed in some relationship to humans, and therefore share with people a complex history of interaction. This relationship has often been unbalanced, proscribed in terms of domination and subordination: owner-pet or owner-work animal, observer-observed, hunter-hunted. But many of these relationships, which we take so much for granted today (unless we are anthropologists or animal rights' activists) were, in the seventeenth century, hotly debated issues in intellectual circles. Philosophers, writers, and scientists, all considered animals as serious subject matter. Did they have souls, could they think? What would animals reveal if they could speak, or if they were opened up on the anatomists' table?

This intense scrutiny of animals in the various intellectual circles coincided with a major development in the history of art: the sudden rise in importance of the *animalier*, or animal specialist, and the prominence at the Parisian Salons of the large numbers of paintings with animal subject matter. Thus my attentions were drawn to the significance of these parallel developments. What were the possible intersections or connections between philosophy, literature, science, and art? How could the works of François Desportes or Jean-Baptiste Oudry, two artists who rarely make it into art history surveys today, command so much respect and popularity in the late seventeenth to mid-

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

eighteenth centuries? And, how could the works of the *animaliers* and their contemporaries in philosophy, literature, and science help to illuminate each other, even if no direct links could be established between them?

These are the questions which lie at the heart of this dissertation. But while these issues appear to emphasize the contextual aspects of this investigation, thereby pointing to the methodological influences of cultural and intellectual history, this study is based on one of the fundamental beliefs of the history of art: that an art object is never a mere illustration of an event (the common mistake of cultural historians) but rather, exists in an important relationship to other objects and their histories, and that this formal relationship must be considered as a vital part of its essence.

Each chapter, therefore, investigates one aspect of the intellectual preoccupation with animals, using a key example from the artistic production of the period as a way of focusing the discussion. At the same time, I treat those objects under investigation not simply as material examples of the preceding account, but as developments in a major artistic trend, in this case, a movement which will culminate in what could be called a history painting of animals.

After a very brief account of animal collections prior to the seventeenth century, I turn to a comparison of the animal compounds at Vincennes and Versailles in order to

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

dramatize the significant changes which took place in the expectations of how animals were to be observed. A new, detached viewing of animals in a peaceful setting replaced the more active, aggressive mode of spectating in the arena of the animal fight.

Chapter Two considers the philosophical debate surrounding the presence or absence of the animal soul, and how this informed the writings of Jean de la Fontaine. A comparison of the illustrations by François Chauveau and Oudry for the poet's Fables reveal to what extent the later artist relied on an animal's ability to convey expression in order to highlight the meaning of the accompanying text.

Although an animal's facial expression is not at issue for anatomists, what is revealed by its skeletal system is. The third chapter looks at the fledgling Academy of Science and the role played by the new discipline of comparative anatomy. Of major importance here is Claude Perrault's Histoire naturelle des animaux, a deluxe folio edition with lavish illustrations, for in many ways it relies on the language of art to give substance to the scientists' findings.

And finally, I turn to painting and other major artistic productions of the *animaliers*. In this concluding chapter, I show how the preceding discussions of the ways in which animals figured in collections, philosophical debates, literature, and anatomical treatises help us to better understand the sudden outpouring of animal pictures which

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

culminated in some of the most riveting canvases of the nineteenth century by artists such as Théodore Gericault and Eugène Delacroix. For the first time, animals could emerge as subject matter in their own right, no longer mere emblems, perhaps of the non-present human, but as actors in dramas staged in nature or in more domestic scenes with the barn or yard as backdrop.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

CHAPTER 1

A BRIEF HISTORY OF ANIMAL COLLECTIONS

In general, compounds for animals from antiquity onwards could serve three major purposes. Ferocious beasts were used in animal combats of the imperial ampitheater. Non-ferocious animals and birds, on the other hand, were used as ornamentation in gardens or extensions to the cabinet of curiosities of collectors who could afford them. And a third use for animals combined elements of the other two. This was the parading or displaying of exotic beasts as a non-violent form of public entertainment.[1] All three functions drew attention to the fact that animals were to be observed, in the dramatic, violent arena of the fight, the peaceful, contemplative context of a royal park or the gardens of the well-to-do, or finally, in the triumphant

---

[1] Animal compounds in parks were usually a number of small dwellings scattered throughout. The best general study of the history of zoos remains Gustave Loisel's three volume work, Histoire des ménageries de l'antiquité à nos jours (Paris, 1912). Alfred Franklin's La vie privée d'autrefois (Paris, 1899), specifically concerned with the history of animal collecting in the Paris area, contains much of the information given in the Histoire, but Loisel's is a more detailed account. Loisel is mostly interested in the inventories of zoos, that is to say, not in the zoos themselves as architectural compounds, although he does devote one chapter to the question of zoo architecture.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

processions of the victorious ruler. Although animal combat would remain an important feature of popular entertainment in the West well into our century, fights between bears, lions, dogs, and other creatures would increasingly belong to the marginal realm of the fair or travelling circus alone. At some point in the seventeenth century, I will argue, courtly attention focused increasingly on the peaceful type of animal observation, and royal and aristocratic attendance at the animal combat dwindled. The purpose of this introductory chapter is to discuss the factors involved in the emergence of a disinterested viewing of animals. I will begin with a discussion of the ways in which animals were displayed in Roman antiquity, as these provided the model for animal compounds -- both private and public -- in early modern France.

A General history of animal collections: Antiquity

George Jennison, in his study of animal spectacles in ancient Rome,[2] uses inventories of animals in the collections of rulers in order to narrate the history of ancient Rome. The author's main thrust is that the transition from Republican to Imperial Rome in the first century B.C. and the subsequent expansion of the Roman world is mirrored in the parallel developments of animal shows. He asserts further that the very personality of each

---

[2] Animals for Show and Pleasure in Ancient Rome (Manchester, 1937).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

respective ruler determined the type of spectacle offered. For example, those known for their cruelty were more apt to desire exceptionally violent and vicious massacres of animals in various combinations with other animals or humans, while those rulers of a more pacific temperament favored public displays of animals emphasizing the religious nature of the event, with killings of beasts and people kept to a minimum. This literary device which uses the treatment of animals by members of the ruling class as a metaphor for the larger domain of a ruler's treatment of his people and indeed as an index of the ruler's own character is a common one. As we shall see, it is in use frequently among historians of the French monarchy, and still persists today.[3]

In ancient Rome, creatures were exchanged as gifts (most commonly exotic birds) or collected for the purpose of populating private park grounds. The wealthier Romans could amass lions, bears, tigers and other large, exotic beasts to add interest to their immense gardens. During the Imperial period, only the emperor was allowed to own an elephant,

[3] This device is not limited to rulers alone. As Alex Potts points out ("Natural Order and the Call of the Wild: the Politics of Animal Picturing," Oxford Art Journal, XIII [1990], 12-33), the lower orders of society were also identified with certain types of animals (mongrels for example) and animal practises (cock fights, bear baiting, and other such entertainments). Thus, the systems of control, such as requisite rabies shots for dogs and fines for those dog-owners who did not comply, which were developed in the nineteenth century in the name of public health can actually be seen as a method of controlling not so much the animals, but the people who owned them.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

designated as the imperial animal. The rather extensive vocabulary distinguishing various types of animal enclosures suggests that animal collection was well-developed. Thus, a *coeptum venationis*, *roborarium*, and *therotrophium*, for example, designated areas for a game reserve, an enclosure with oak posts for tethering animals, and a game park surrounded by walls, respectively. The vocabulary of collection was specialized enough to include *glirarium* (a park for dormice) and *cochlearium* (a sunlit island for snails). Besides parks for animals, aviaries were also considered essential in the households of the well-to-do. Although information is scanty, animals in the parks and gardens of non-rulers were more likely to have served the non-violent purpose of pure ornament, even functioning as objects of study, than those creatures belonging to the rulers. This difference in the way animals were treated, depending on the social importance of their owners, will also remain evident throughout the history of animal collection.

The first exotic animals brought into Rome definitely recorded as a spectacle were four elephants from Pyrrhus, defeated during the second invasion by Marcus Curius Dentatus (275 B.C.). These elephants took part in the Triumph of Curius. From this moment on, it becomes clear that the animals displayed in triumphal parades were to be understood as standing in for the defeated foreign

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

territory.[4] Thus, animals from Africa were especially prevalent in these public displays.

Animals sent to the rulers of Rome as gifts, or seized as war booty, were divided into two groups. The non-ferocious animals, including elephants, were transferred to zoological parks open to the public. Zoos of the Roman emperors attained enormous proportions. Octavius-Augustus's (29-14 B.C.) collection of 3500 exotic animals appears paltry next to the zoo of Trajan which housed 11,000 creatures.[5] Although these numbers may be inflated in the accounts of the imperial biographers, the lists of the various animals included in each emperor's zoo makes apparent the importance of animals in adding to the prestige of the owner.

By far the most grandiose compounds for animals were the amphitheaters. Ferocious beasts or animals chosen for their spectacular quality -- for example ostriches for their speed or elephants for their size -- were used in animal combat in the amphitheaters as part of the ceremony of funeral games, triumphs, or festivals to the gods. However, the first animals to appear in the Games were native Italian ones, sometime in the early second century B.C., where they were used in *venationes*, or hunting spectacles, providing visual entertainment and making up part of the religious or

---

[4] Jennison, Animals, 44.

[5] Loisel, Histoire, I, 102ff.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

magical rites. These animals were chosen by their sheer availability, since some animal spectacles demanded the participation of thousands of creatures. The most lavish of these was perhaps that of Titus (79-81 A.D.) who in 80 A.D., as part of the dedication ceremony of the Colosseum, offered one hundred days of shows including a *venatio* in which no less than nine thousand animals were killed in one day.[6]

Evidently, Roman rulers recognized the popular appeal of the spectacle of animal combat and did their best to offer increasingly lavish ones. Thus, Augustus "had the ordinary desire of the Roman noble to win popularity by the giving of shows, and to attain distinction by outdistancing others in this line" and Claudius (41-54 A.D.) realized that "to please the public by lavish spectacles was one of the ways in which it might be reconciled to the oddities of the Emperor."[7] Nero, (54-68 A.D.) who won the hatred of the senatorial aristocracy, perhaps surprised no one with his delight in the "ghastly magnificence in the public execution of criminals condemned to the beasts."[8] Indeed, it seems that Roman rulers also were quick to recognize the symbolic possibilities of animals and their display, and accordingly took advantage of public shows of beasts. Commodus (180-92 A.D.) the son of Marcus Aurelius, in an account by the Roman

---

[6] Jennison, Animals, 72-73.

[7] Ibid., 68-69.

[8] Ibid., 70.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Senator Dio, used the animals beyond a doubt for their symbolic purpose: "[the emperor], having decapitated an ostrich with a sword, came to where the senators. . . were sitting in the amphitheater, and held up the head of the bird in his left hand, and his blood-stained sword in his right, saying nothing, but smiling and nodding, to make them feel that this was what he would do to them."[9]

Many centuries later, in 1796 (an IV), Bernard Lacépède summed up the history of animal collections prior to the founding of the national zoo in Paris. It was nothing but "sterile curiosity," he asserts, which motivated the earliest zoos. Writing from the perspective of the eighteenth century, a period when there was a general awareness for "what this science [i.e., natural science] can do for the prosperity of the social body," when travel to distant lands was easy, and knowledge was increasing, the author can only think of zoos as having a necessarily didactic function, thus of great utility for the public. Anything else would be vain luxury, typical of a period which prized such display:

> Sumptuous zoos [were constructed] in which, during the reign of ignorance and prejudice, barbarism wished to recreate an image of its prisons and by only enclosing useless, dangerous and already well-known animals, by only displaying them forcefully restrained, degraded by bondage, mutilated by irons, merely provided a vain cloak for vanity, a sterile amusement for mindless

---

[9] Ibid., 87.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> curiosity, a sort of school of hard and sometimes ferocious feelings for hearts of little affection.[10]

These are harsh words for a spectacle which had been intended originally as entertainment, albeit offered for the purposes of a display of the emperor's range of power. We need to investigate how animal spectatorship evolved to a point where this traditional mode of viewing animals, the spectacle of ferocious animals chained behind bars and awaiting combat, could become reviled as barbarous, not celebrated for its dynamism and powerful display of force.

The history of animal collecting in Italy

In the previous section, animals were considered primarily as objects of display for a large public, either in the arena or in triumphal processions. The other purpose of collecting animals, that of ornament or study, was a concurrent development. Unlike the animals observed only for their potential for violence or as emblems of power, animals caged in parks or smaller specimens -- alive or dead -- contained in the cabinets of curiosities, were subject to a different form of scrutiny. This other type of observation was inspired by a desire on the part of the viewer to understand the outer form of the animal, its inner workings, and its habits. In short, it was an apparently

---

[10] Bernard G. E. de la Ville, Conte de Lacépède, "Lettre relative aux établissements publics destinés à renfermer des animaux vivans," La Décade philosophique, VII (an IV), 449.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

disinterested, or scientific, mode of examining an object of the natural world.

Italy in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries gives a good example of this form of collection and observation of the animal kingdom. Venice, with its ties to the East, was reknowned for its menageries of exotic animals.[11] Under the Medici, the Florentine zoo achieved great fame. The tradition of animal combat certainly persisted simultaneously. Cosimo, and subsequently Lorenzo, offered lavish spectacles, including fights pitting lions, tigers, and bears against bulls, horses, boar, and hunting dogs. Many exotic creatures were featured in frescoes produced for the Medici. One of the best known is a depiction at Poggio a Caiano of Lorenzo's giraffe, given to him by the Marmeluk sultan in 1486.[12]

The Medici Pope, Leo X, brought magnificence to the menagerie in Rome. Giovanni da Udine used as models for the multitude of creatures covering the walls and ceilings of the papal apartments some of the birds and animals from the zoo. Giorgio Vasari comments particularly on the artist's work near the *Loggie*:

> [Giovanni] portrayed from life many parrots of various colors which his Holiness had at that time, and also

---

[11] For a discussion of animal collections in fifteenth and sixteenth century Italy, see Loisel, Histoire, I, 197ff.

[12] Many years later, in 1825, the Pascha of Egypt, Mohammed Ali, sent a giraffe to France, the first time such a creature was seen in that country. Gabriel Dardaud, Une Girafe pour le roi (Paris, 1985).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> baboons, marmosets, civet cats, and other strange creatures.[13]

One of the notable animals belonging to the Pope was an elephant which had been brought to him on his election by Tristao do Cunha, ambassador of Manoel I, King of Portugal. The beast made a grand entry into Rome on March 12, 1514. When it reached the court of the Pope, the elephant stopped and bowed to its knees three times. This impressive spectacle ended, however, in an unrehearsed shower of water given to the Pope and his attendants by the ungrateful animal.[14]

But animal collections on a less magnificent scale were also of great interest to artists. Perhaps the best example in Italy of the disinterested observer of animals is Leonardo, whose studies of living and dissected animals filled many notebook pages. With his attention to the appearance of both the external and internal characteristics of both human and animal bodies, it is no surprise that he should have been one of the earliest to develop the study of comparative anatomy.

Thus the forms of the collection and display of animals in the West by both rulers and those who could afford them had been established in Ancient Rome. The example of fifteenth and sixteenth century Italy shows how the

---

[13] Lives of the Most Eminent Painters, Sculptors and Architects, trans. Gaston du C. de Vere, VIII (London, 1912-1915), 78.

[14] Loisel, Histoire, I, 203.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

traditions of viewing animals were basically the same. Likewise, in the early history of animal collections in France, we again see the same patterns repeated: the wealthier the owner, the more lavish the collections and the less likely that animals were to serve as anything but material for animal combat or evidence of the far-reaching powers of their owners. More modest collections tended to be extensions of the cabinet of curiosities, and the animals, whether dead or alive, were to be contemplated in a more disinterested manner, as any other precious object in the collection.[15]

The history of animal collecting in France

Until the reign of Louis XIV, rulers of France followed the traditional models of animal collection.[16] Descriptions of royal châteaux included references to aviaries and various compounds for animals scattered throughout the parks, and anecdotes concerning a favorite dog or two of the royal master typically appear in chronicles of kings in the history of France. Some kings were as adept as some of the

[15] For the greater public in any country, however, the travelling fair or fights between wild beasts in amphitheaters provided the most typical spectacles of animals. The cabinet of curiosities or animal pavilions in a private park remained the privilege of the monied classes.

[16] Loisel's three volume study is still the best source of information for the history of animal collecting in France. Pierre Loevenbruck, Animaux captivs: la vie des zoos (Paris, 1954) offers a history of zoos specifically in France, but this is only a very general study and does not add any new information to what Loisel offers.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Roman emperors we have seen in seizing on the symbolic potential of animals. Henri Sauval repeats the lively account of Pepin the Short who entered the ring with a fierce lion and bull, decapitating both. Turning to his men, the king proudly proclaimed:

> Is such a man as I capable of being your Master? Size adds nothing to courage, or to valor; remember what little David did to big Goliath; likewise what Alexander, smaller, than he did to the lion of Basarie.

The courtiers answered:

> Yes Sire, you are capable of leading us, and not only us, but even all the people on earth.[17]

At the same time, it is important to keep in mind the prejudices of those reporting the anecdotes, for these accounts reveal to us a lot about the people doing the telling. As stated earlier, the relationship between ruler and animals is a common device used by narrators to underscore certain qualities -- positive or negative -- of the ruler vis à vis his people. A king especially hated is more likely to accumulate around himself, either by contemporaries or after the fact, tales confirming his despicable qualities in the accounts of his atrocities towards animals. Henri III provides a good example. Henri Martin clearly establishes that at least in the mid-nineteenth century, Henri III was certainly not the most

---

[17] Henri Sauval, Histoire et recherches des antiquités de la ville de Paris, II (Paris, 1724), 681.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

popular of kings in French history.[18] The entire section on this ruler lists his treacheries on the political and religious fronts, as well as the outrageousness of his court:

> Nothing in our history offers the least analogy to the court of Henri III: we must return to the more depraved epoches of Roman antiquity to find a similar mixture of debauchery and ferocity, of madness and bloody weakness. . . . Henri III, like his mother, encouraged the arts, so long as they prostituted themselves to his vices. This is one more trait of resemblance to the court of the Roman emperors.[19]

It comes as no surprise that Jules Michelet should find proof of the monarch's depravity in his passion for lap-dogs, considered a woman's weakness:

> He became a woman to the ends of his fingernails. He loved the costumes of women, perfumes, pet dogs, he wore earrings. He had the manners, the charms, and, like women, he loved strong young duellists, the good swordsmen whom he though more capable of protecting him.[20]

Franklin adds "the odious son of Catherine [de Medici] willingly abandoned himself to less innocent fantasies" including buying four calves for the sole purpose of watching them be slaughtered by greyhounds. It is

---

[18] Henri Martin, Histoire de France depuis les temps les plus reculés jusqu'en 1789, nineteen volumes (Paris, 1838-54), X. French historians from the nineteenth century give by far the most colorful (and opinionated) accounts of their country's history, and also remain the best sources of information concerning animals at court. Unfortunately, much of this information is undocumented, and so should be read with caution.

[19] Franklin, Vie privée, 56f.

[20] Histoire de France, VII, "La fin du siècle" (Lausanne, 1966), 215-216.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

impossible for the reader, as was undoubtedly Franklin's intent, to feel any sympathy for this monarch, who with his brother Charles IX, also amused himself with animal combats between guard dogs, lions, bears, and bulls in the Louvre gardens.[21] The spectacle of animal combat is thus equated with barbaric pleasures suitable only for a king with no morals.

On the other hand, a monarch's positive use of animals could support the popular appeal of the king himself. Jules Théodore Ernest Hamy, in his report of the founding of the Museum of Natural History in 1793, cited both good and bad examples in the upkeep of animals. Echoing Lacépède's words about the conditions for wild animals in ancient Rome, Hamy writes of the sixteenth century, "lions and other exotic animals, collected only to satisfy a vain love of display, were huddled together in some outbuilding belonging to the royal residence."[22] However, there had been exceptions in the past, most notably Louis XI:

> Louis XI knew, when he thought proper, how to direct his efforts to more effective ends than those which his councilor [Commines] attributes to mere caprice, and the very choice of the animals brought to the royal ménagerie -- elk and reindeer from Scandinavia, horses and mules from Spain and Sicily, Spanish or Barbary dogs, Tunisian ostriches and falcons, canaries and turtle doves from Africa -- shows that it was something more than meaningless curiosity that animated the inhabitant of the manor at Plessis-Les-Tours.

---

[21] Franklin, Vie privée, 44.

[22] Hamy, Les anciens Ménageries royales et la Ménagerie nationale fondée le 14 brumaire an II (Corbeil, 1793), not paginated.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> Louis XI had, it seems to me, wider and loftier views. I imagine that the great mind thought, in its isolation, that it might be possible to enrich the kingdom of France with some of these interesting and useful animals of which numerous and choice specimens were brought him at great expense from the South and North by Guillaume Moire, Gabriel Bertran, Robert Sante, and his other purveyors. . . .[23]

Hamy, writing at a time when the officially promoted form of animal spectatorship incorporated a more scientific approach to observing the animal kingdom than that favored by earlier rulers, is able with hindsight to attribute to the popular Louis XI an appreciation of animals which would actually be more in keeping with a person of the eighteenth century than of the fifteenth. The very presence of the phrase "interesting and useful animals" belies this. For in the post-Revolutionary period, the argument for collecting animals and stocking zoos is based on a firm belief in their public utility as didactic tools.

To return to the period in question, that is to say, in the moment just preceding the France of Louis XIV, we find no mention of the terms "interesting" and "useful" with respect to animals which were to populate royal zoos. While an animal might be appreciated for its exotic qualities, it would not be praised for its ability to arouse interest of any sort besides sheer pleasure, which is surely not what Hamy had in mind. An "interesting" animal could later come to mean one which has much to reveal in terms of its personality, anatomical structure, or habits, for example,

---

[23] Ibid, n.p.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

but in France of the fifteenth century, "interesting" animals were those which caught the attention of the ruler for purely superficial reasons. For so far as royal animal collections are concerned, there is no sense prior to Louis XIV that animals were to serve anything than a purely ornamental purpose. That is to say, animals could be valued for their exotic quality alone. We shall see how this would change towards the end of the seventeenth century.

In the non-princely collections of animals in France, we must wait until well into the seventeenth century before we find a wide-spread appreciation of animals which goes beyond mere delectation of an exotic being. And at the popular level as well, travelling fairs were most successful if they could show animals either noteworthy for their exotic nature, or because they had some other astonishing attribute, for example, performing bears or trained monkeys. Again, it is not until the end of the seventeenth century that spectatorship of animals revealed a profound change.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

CHAPTER 2

VINCENNES AND VERSAILLES: THE SHIFT IN ANIMAL SPECTATORSHIP

The major royal compound for animals when Louis XIV first came to power was the Sérail des bestes sauvages designed by Louis Le Vau at Vincennes. This was a simple stabling of ferocious beasts with an attached amphitheater. Several years later, Le Vau built the royal Ménagerie at Versailles, a monumental free-standing structure built for the contemplation of wildlife at rest. The size and design of the zoo -- it was a veritable mini-château -- made it the the first of its kind in Western Europe. This dramatic shift in the architectural environment and function of these two royal animal compounds points to a shift in the nature of animal spectatorship as well. I will argue that just as the form of the Ménagerie was unique in the history of western architecture, the type of viewing involved there was likewise of a novel nature.

I have chosen for discussion the Sérail at Vincennes for various reasons. As an arena for animal combat, it serves to represent the traditional form and function of royal zoos until the construction of Louis XIV's Ménagerie

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

at Versailles. Furthermore, it was the first building for animals erected by Le Vau, and one of the first royal projects completed by the architect under the direction of Colbert.[1] These two men would be responsible for the construction of the animal compound five years later at Versailles.

The Sérail des bestes Sauvages

From the beginning, it appears that the intention of Colbert, who remained the driving force behind the renovation of the old medieval fortress château, was to invest a large sum of money in the project: in 1652 he wrote to Mazarin that with the governorship of Vincennes, he could "have an estate for himself where he could put in security a considerable sum of money. . . ."[2] However, it was not until 1654, right after the restoration of some semblance of order into the capital following the Frondes, that building

---

[1] Louis Le Vau's early career is associated with commissions from members of parlement. This was followed by his entry into the circle of Nicolas Foucquet and other financiers. Major royal commissions followed. A succinct summation of Le Vau's career is given in Anothony Blunt, Art and Architecture in France, 1500-1700, revised fourth edition (Middlesex, 1982), 222ff.

[2] Cited in Jean Cordey, "Colbert, Le Vau et la construction du château de Vincennes au XVIIe siècle," Gazette des Beaux-Arts, CXXV (1933), 274. This article remains the only source for information on the Vincennes Sérail. Monographs on the château and parc as for example Alain Erland-Brandenburg and Bertrand Jesatz, Le Château de Vincennes (Paris, 1989) and F. de Fossa, Le Château historique de Vincennes, two volumes (Paris, 1907-09) do not make any mention of the animal compound.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

actually began. This year also marked the naming of Le Vau as architect of the Louvre.

The great ambitions of Colbert and Mazarin to transform Vincennes into a huge royal residence evinces as well the need to establish a strong image of monarchy embedded in stone, where the court could live under constant scrutiny of the king. Of course, it was ultimately the château of Versailles that fulfilled this need, but in 1652 Vincennes could be seen as a good candidate for such a building. Vincennes had been famous for its salubrious air and many illustrious royal visitors had stayed in the château over the course of history, giving a pedigree to the site that could not be rivaled by the "little house of cards" at Versailles.

The desire to turn Vincennes into the grand royal residence is clearly evident in the planned extensions of the park in 1659. There were ambitious plans also revealed in the documents relating to grandiose schemes to build a canal from the Marne to the château, divert the Marne from Chelles to Paris, double the road to Saint-Mandé with a waterway which would have allowed ships to pass right into the porte de Paris, establishing an efficient communication and supply route. The plans concerning the canal and waterways were never realized. Had they been, Vincennes,

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

not Versailles could have become the great royal residence of French kings.[3]

The major works of 1654 were chiefly concerned with setting up apartments for the king and court. The old lodgings, situated between the donjon and the corner tower (*tour du roi*), were too narrow and in a dilapidated condition, having suffered neglect for a period of years. Financial considerations seem to have played no small part in the choice of plan. Le Vau's most economical of three plans submitted to Colbert was chosen; this kept many of the old foundations, and the old *corps-de-logis* was preserved and doubled, not replaced with a brand new one, the intention of Le Vau in an earlier plan. While work commenced on the arguably most important aspect of the château, the King's pavilion, another building was simultaneously erected in the park. This was the Ménagerie, situated by the gates of Saint-Mandé.

The Ménagerie[4] of 1654 was a little farm of domestic animals and an adjacent vegetable and fruit garden to provide food for the king's table. Colbert's interest in every aspect of a building project, which continued in his supervision of the Versailles programs, extended to details

[3] Poncet de la Grave, Mémoires interessans pour servir à l'histoire de France, (Paris, 1788-89), I.

[4] The original meaning of the word "ménagerie" designated an area built near a country house in order to raise domestic animals and fowl for the purpose of consumption. The Vincennes Ménagerie is a good example of this type of structure.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

of the Vincennes "farm" as well. In a letter of 7 July 1754,[5] Colbert's report as to the state of the animal kingdom in the Ménagerie demonstrates not only a great concern for producing an accurate inventory, but care is also taken to identify the particular species of certain animals. Cordey finds these remarks "bien curieuses" coming from the pen of the future great minister but this is in fact typical of Colbert's interest in all facets of the Crown's commissions.

The early Ménagerie at Vincennes served a completely functional and unexceptional role. Four years later, in 1658, a new building for animals was erected nearby for an entirely different purpose. Now, it seems that financial matters presented less of a problem, and money could be spent on a building for which there were no existing foundations, and furthermore, for a structure that appeared

[5] Cited in Loisel, Histoire, II, 96 and Cordey, "Colbert," 280. The letter is worth citing in full. "La mesnagerie est établie; nous avons trois veaux qui sont nourris par six vaches, avec force oeufs frais. Le premier serait excellent à présent. Je fais apporter toute industrie pour les conserver jusqu'à ce que le Roy vienne à Compiègne, afin que l'on en puisse envoyer trois en trois semaines consécutives. J'ay écrit à M. de Broglio pour avoir encore des vaches de Flandre et M. de Bourges (Léon de Ventadour II, archbishop of Bourges) m'en fait venir d'Auvergne. Nous avons six douzaines de pullets d'Inde, autant de poules et pullets qui sont fort bien nourris et qui seront excellens, cent moutons ou brebis pour avoir des agneaux de bonne heure. La petite truie d'Inde a fait six cochons dont trois sont morts, et les autres trois auront peine à échapper parce qu'elle n'a point de lait. J'establis à présent deux volières de gros pigeons. J'auray soin que le faisandier vienne s'y establier au mois d'aoust. . . . Il y aura toute sorte de légumages." By 1744 the Ménagerie was in a sorry state (A.N., O^{1}1880B).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

not to have any direct function concerning the comfort and security of the royal family. That year, a construction memo concerned "many little vaulted cages and separate courts, fit for housing many little animals, in the form of a sérail" (Fig. 1).[6] On May 21, Colbert informed Mazarin of the next project at Vincennes, a "sérail pour nos bêtes." Germain Brice included a description of this sérail (although he uses the term ménagerie) in his guide book to interesting things to see in Paris and the environs:

> At the entry of the Parc is the Ménagerie, where various wild beasts are raised and which are often made to fight one another in a courtyard around which are galleries which enable you to look at this Spectacle safely.[7]

The plan[8] consisted of a large, long, and narrow rectangular courtyard surrounded on two long sides and one short side by a series of nineteen loges and one small corner stable (Fig. 2a, b, c). The loges opened out onto

---

[6] Cordey, "Colbert," 282. Loisel (Histoire, II, 96) evidently did not have access to this memo for he attributes the decision to create a compound for savage animals to Louis XIV in 1661, the year the king decided to govern alone.

[7] Germain Brice, Description nouvelle de ce qu'il y a de plus remarquable dans la ville de Paris (Paris, 1684), 209.

[8] A.N., $O^1$1899, pièces 7, 9, and 10 dated 1753 provide detailed plans for the Sérail. Its position in the parc is made clear in a plan of Vincennes which includes the château, parc, and environs, dated 1696 (A.N., N II Seine 199). Jean Cordey includes a copy of a plan dated 1694 in his article on Vincennes but which has apparently disappeared from the archives. This was confirmed by M. Claude Troquet, historian of Vincennes in a paper entitled "La Ménagerie de Vincennes en 1674," delivered April 4, 1993 in Vincennes.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

the courtyard through grilled entrances on one side; on the other, a small narrow courtyard which allowed the animals to get air separated each loge from a facing one. The loges were all vaulted, with the exception of two for birds of prey. A vestibule located on the short side of the large courtyard not occupied by loges allowed access directly to the court and side stairs which led to a second level of galleries provided for spectators. The inclusion in the plan for an audience, as well as a 1694 plan of the Sérail which labels the large courtyard the *cour des combats* makes it quite clear that this structure was not a simple building for the raising of livestock. Rather, this Sérail des bestes sauvages, with animals which had either been transferred from the Tuileries' defunct animal compound or received from foreign countries as gifts or purchases, provided the form of entertainment which belongs to the long history in royal spectacle; the presentation of bloody fights between savage animals for a sizeable audience.

The Vincennes Sérail follows the model of animal combat discussed above, with the emphasis on the excitement of bearing witness to the violent encounters of savage beasts. There are four documented animal shows. In March 1663, the son of the king of Denmark was given the spectacle of a lion fighting a bull. On July 18 of that same year, the young queen Marie-Thérèse in July "having arrived at Vincennes received first the pleasure of a combat of a lion with a bull, then that of other animals, then a hunt in the

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

park. . . ."[9] In 1682, two shows were organized for which more data is available. For the first, the Persian ambassador was treated to a fight to the death between elephants and the royal tiger. The carcass of the vanquished tiger was dissected by members of the Académie des Sciences which had been founded in 1666. It is interesting to note the two strains of animal spectatorship at this juncture. On the one hand, the older form of purely visceral entertainment, on the other, the painstaking dissection by scientists.

The second spectacle, celebrating the birth of the Duc de Bourgogne, included dogs fighting first a bear and then a bull, and the valiant efforts of a cow against a tiger given as a pet by the Moroccan ambassador to the queen.[10] Amazingly enough, the cow won, after which it also vanquished a lioness, a second tiger, and finally was challenged by a lion. One eye-witness account of this fight demonstrates the great degree to which animals could arouse interest and excitement on the part of the spectator: "Elle l'attaqua, et quoiqu'on luy eut dépouillé la hanche, et qu'elle en fut demeurée boiteuse, elle ne laissa pas de le vaincre. . . ."[11]

---

[9] Poncet de la Grave, Memoires, II, 139. The Sérail was also called the Ménagerie of Bel-Air.

[10] Cordey, "Colbert," 98f.

[11] Mercure Galant, August 1682. Cited in Loisel, Histoire, II, 99.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

This rather prolonged discussion of the animal combats in the Vincennes Sérail serves to emphasize the traditional mode of animal spectatorship before the advent of the Versailles Ménagerie. At Vincennes, the distance between animal and humans is highlighted. Like the bear-baiting or the display of exotic animals in travelling fairs familiar to Parisians in the seventeenth century,[12] spectators derived principal enjoyment from experiencing the excitement of bloody combat or the pleasure of seeing some exotic beast. Strangeness itself, that is to say, was a spectacle.[13] The architectural space of the Vincennes Sérail emphasized the fact that the animals were not considered as anything but sacrificial items for the public.

At Versailles, an entirely new type of setting for animal spectatorship was created in 1663, and one which would have a far-reaching impact on future zoos. Unlike the Sérail at Vincennes, the royal zoo at Versailles was not a simple stabling for animals without any architectural interest, functioning merely as a setting for animal combat. Rather, the entire edifice was conceived as a mini-château, providing comfortable surroundings from which to view animals. It is my concern in this following section to discuss ways in which the formal and functional shifts

---

[12] See Emile Campardon, Les Spectacles de la foire (Geneva, 1970).

[13] Michel Foucault, The Order of Things (New York, 1973), 131.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

between the animal compounds at Vincennes and Versailles serve to suggest that fundamental changes had occured in people's awareness of animals.

The Ménagerie at Versailles

Despite the changes wrought by subsequent occupants, the grandiose château of Versailles remains the enduring symbol of its first inhabitant, Louis XIV. Today, the entrance court with its stepped façade embedded in which is the original modest château of Louis XIII, the garden façade with Louis Le Vau's brilliantly conceived Enveloppe which contains Mansart's somewhat later Galerie des Glaces, and the extent of the parc itself which begins with the Fountain of Latona, stretches to the Bassin d'Apollon, and emerges along the Grand Canal and over to the Grand Trianon at the end of one of the canal's arms, do indeed appear to merit for the entire complex the name of Palace of the Sun King. However, one element in this compound which dates back to the earliest days of Louis XIV's tenure at Versailles no longer exists. Victim to the angry Revolutionary mobs which destroyed so many symbols of monarchy, the Ménagerie, the royal zoo, has vanished with barely a trace.

In 1899, Jean J. Marquet de Vasselot could still write of the Grotto and two small pavilions of the Ménagerie which

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

had survived the destruction during the Revolution.[14] The rocaille work in the grotto was in good condition, and one of the only extant examples of this type of decor in France which had been so fashionable in sixteenth century Italy.[15] The two garden pavilions which replaced the dairy at the base of the courtyard, suffered damage at the hands of some unknown "vandal" who cut holes in the walls for windows. At the beginning of this century, an anonymous writer sent in a heated denunciation of those who threatened to tear down the grotto which was now reportedly in bad condition:

> [The two pavilions] suffered a fate more horrible than the salle des rocailles; they were completely "restored". . . . The delicate pediments, the fine moldings have disappeared; some energetic masons levelled all that, and we now have the nice spectacle of two little buildings, very white, very bare, with very naïve roofs, without style, without grace; they are dreadful.[16]

Alfred Marie's exhaustive study of Versailles[17] and Gérard Mabille's proposed reconstruction of the zoo[18] as well as numerous other studies concerned with the history of royal animal compounds, make evident the prominent place in

[14] "La Ménagerie du Château de Versailles: la grotte et les pavillons," Revue de l'Histoire de Versailles et de Seine-et-Oise, V (1899), 81-96.

[15] Ibid., 87.

[16] "La Ménagerie de Versailles," La Construction Moderne, 2e série (1904-05), 91-94.

[17] Naissance de Versailles, I, Le château--les jardins (Paris, 1968). With Jeanne Marie, Versailles au temps de Louis XIV (Paris, 1976).

[18] "La Ménagerie de Versailles," Gazette des Beaux-Arts, CXVI (1974), 5-36.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

France's cultural heritage which the Ménagerie would have occupied had it survived. Besides its significance in the oeuvre of Le Vau and thus its significance to the understanding of architectural developments of the period, the Ménagerie also has much to tell us about the place of animal spectatorship in aristocratic life as well as the changing attitudes towards animals in contemporary philosophic and scientific discourse. Not only a site for aristocratic leisure, it was also a working laboratory for scientists such as Claude Perrault and provided living models for artists including Jean-Baptiste Oudry. The Ménagerie as scientific laboratory and artist's studio will be discussed in subsequent chapters. Here, I will examine the Ménagerie from an architectural point of view, with special attention to the type of viewing promoted by this very innovative building.

In late 1661, Louis XIV embarked on the renovation of Versailles following a period of neglect of more than twenty years. Changes were most significant in the gardens and in 1662, Le Vau constructed a new Orangerie. But the first major free-standing edifice to be erected at Versailles was the architect's Ménagerie, begun around 1663 (Fig. 3).[19]

---

[19] The date of commencement for the Ménagerie is not firmly documented. The Comptes des bâtiments do not start until 1664, when payments for work done at the zoo make it clear that much work had already been completed prior to the start of the Comptes. Le Vau is mentioned as architect of the zoo by Petit, contrôleur des travaux de Versailles, in a letter to Jules-Hardouin Mansart.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Although the floor plan of the Ménagerie has been preserved, the complete destruction of the building has caused problems in reconstructing the elevation. Mabille's proposed reconstruction is problematic. Although there are quite a few contemporaneous prints of the exterior of the zoo, the author discounts these because the elevations and depictions of the courts differ from engraving to engraving. Rather, Mabille prefers to rely on texts, not visual representations. Thus, he presents Bruzen de la Martinière's description of the zoo[20] as evidence that the *corps-de-logis* consisted of a large unshuttered opening, not the closed door in the engravings of Pérelle, Langois, Aveline, and Mariette. Mabille accepts the engravers' depiction of a very low ground story since this is supported by evidence of the site itself: a fall in ground level at the location of the octagonal pavilion necessitated the partial burial of the entrance façade on the eastern side. The author also dismisses the engravings for evidence of the roof, in particular the proportions of the dome of the octagonal salon. The printed views of the Ménagerie give great importance to the dome (Fig. 4a, b, c). If, however, Mabille's reconstruction is correct, only the lantern of the dome should be visible from a head-on vantage point. In the engravings, each artist not only takes a higher vewing position which would make the dome visible, but even

---

[20] Grand Dictionnaire Géographique (Paris, 1768).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

enlarges the dome in order to emphasize it.[21] Certainly the existing prints are not consistent in their depictions of the external views of the Ménagerie. However, what was important in 1663 was above all the program of entry into the zoo itself.

From the large expanse of the gardens, southwest of the Versailles château, one first passed through a long walkway, grilled at each end, into the *cour d'honneur*. The central opening of the court façade, which was flanked by two pavilions, was completely taken up by a straight stair leading to the second and major floor (Fig. 5). It is at this level that the gradual revelation of the Ménagerie's plan will reach its dramatic conclusion. When the visitors reached the head of the large flight of stairs, a three-bayed gallery lined with paintings by Nicasius lay before them, which tapered off at the end because of the two small corner spaces closed off by convex walls on either side of the doorway (Fig. 6).[22] This funnelled space opened up dramatically into the *Salon octogone*, and the visitors could

---

[21] It is perhaps more useful to consider the resulting disproportion not so much as a gross inaccuracy but rather as an example of the symbolic importance of the dome in French châteaux. That is, by enlarging the dome, intentionally or not, the engravers emphasize the royal presence at the Ménagerie. The covering of château pavilions in France played a major role in the development of the symbolism of royal architecture. See for example, Nathan T. Whitman, "Fontainebleau, the Luxembourg, and the French Domed Entry Pavilion," Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians, XLVI (1987), 356-73.

[22] It is unclear what function these two spaces served.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

now find themselves in the observatory of the Ménagerie. Clearly, visitors were expected to follow this prescribed path through the central staircase vestibule, for there is no other access to the main story of the octagonal pavilion. However, even though Le Vau was following seventeenth century conventions for the château's entry and layout of rooms, the addition of an octagonal observatory at the end of the gallery resulted in an innovative palace form.

The octagonal salon was the most vital section of the Ménagerie, the central point from which the outer courts radiated.[23] Any one of the four *porte-fenêtres* opened out on to a balcony which wrapped around the exterior perimeter of the château, enabling spectators to command a panoptic view of the animal courts radiating out from the structure.[24] Alfred Marie notes that for the first time, an

[23] On the bottom level was a vaulted *salle fraîche* revêted in rocaille and with four alternating windows and niches. A turning fountain was placed in the center and a stone bench ran around the perimeter. As noted earlier, the only access to this grotto was achieved only by using the side entrances. The prescribed path through the main entry would have led directly upstairs. Thus, this lower level was clearly seen as separate for the grand drama which unfolded into the upper room. For information on the grotto, see: A. Félibien, Description de la grotte de Versailles (Paris, 1676); Vasselot, "La Ménagerie," 81-96.

[24] Michel Foucault discusses panopticism as a form of control by observation (Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison, trans. Alan Sheridan [New York, 1979]). He uses Jeremy Bentham's ideal prison, the Panopticon, as an example of the type of architecture supporting this mode of observation. The prison would successfully ensure the visible prisoner and the invisible viewer. The panoptic tower does resemble the octagonal pavilion at Versailles. Foucault suggests that although Bentham may not have been directly inspired by the Ménagerie, there are many features

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

actual zoological compound was located at a French court not for the "barbarous pleasure" of watching wild animals fight, but the more "refined pleasure" of viewing animals and birds in a peaceful setting.[25] As we have seen, this is quite innovative and suggestive indeed. Unlike the Vincennes Sérail, this was no enclosure for ferocious beasts destined for combat. For the Ménagerie was initially intended exclusively for a modest collection of birds.

The zoo was the point around which the courts of the zoo were organized. Six of the radiating courts contained the Ménagerie's animal collection: the other two were occupied by a farm and the entrance court respectively. A grilled inner court, the area between the château of the zoo and the animal courts, permitted spectators to observe the animals from ground level. The first enclosure, situated to the north of the entrance court (the lower right court on the plan, Fig. 3) was called the Quartier des cigognes, for swans were housed at this location.[26] The next space was allocated for demoiselle cranes. As is evident from the plan, at the base of this court was an elaborate structure,

---

in common: "one finds in the program of the Panopticon a similar concern with individualizing observation, with characterization and classification, with the analytical arrangement of space. The Panopticon is a royal menagerie; the animal is replaceed by man, individual distribution by specific grouping and the king by the machinery of a furtive power." Discipline, 203.

[25] Marie, Naissance, 42.

[26] For information on the Ménagerie's courts, see Loisel, Histoire, II, 108ff.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

an aviary for smaller birds. Thus, this court was called the Cour de la Volière. Large birds, especially aquatic ones, occupied the third court, called the Cour des Pélicans. Half of this enclosure was taken up by a large pond. The next court, also inhabited by large birds, was a sort of "keystone" in the arrangement. This was given the name Cour du Rondeau by virtue of the large circular pool of water in the center. The fifth court was the Cour des Autruches. Besides ostriches were herons, egrets, and guinea fowl. The next enclosure was broken up into smaller spaces for more varieties of birds. The seventh and largest court was really a little farm. Here, food for the king's table was produced.

A print by Pietre Boël (Fig. 7) shows the sixth court with demoiselle cranes along with water fowl and birds of the chicken or pheasant family. None of these birds are outstanding in either color or exotic nature and the majority are monochromatic birds from Europe.[27] This is intriguing given the tradition from Imperial Rome onwards for collecting animals from exotic locations to signify the power of the Empire. Louis XIV certainly could have chosen to bring together a more brilliant array of birds and animals. And in 1668, the first of many exotic quadrupeds made its appearance at the zoo: this was the elephant sent to Louis by the King of Portugal. However, the very

[27] The identification of the birds at the Ménagerie was provided by Brian Barnes.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

earliest zoo population of 1664 at Versailles consisted solely of birds, and even when exotic beasts became added to the list of zoo denizens shortly afterwards, birds above all seem to have attracted much of the attention of two of the most famous contemporary commentators at the Ménagerie, Madeleine de Scudéry and Jean de la Fontaine.

Scudéry uses the literary device of a group of gentlemen and gentlewomen walking in the park grounds of the château, engaged in polite conversation. In her Promenade de Versailles[28], the narrator in company of a beautiful stranger and her family tours the grounds of Versailles, and the group eventually finds itself at the gates of the Ménagerie. Telamon, the learned member of the group and self-appointed guide is reminded of Alexander, "who after having learned so many important things from his excellent teacher, subsequently gave him a way of studying carefully nature and all the animals, and of preparing that wonderful natural History which he left to posterity."[29] This leads to a discussion of the wisdom of Louis XIV in founding his academies for the study of the sciences and the arts. The group enters the Ménagerie and follows the path described above. To the delight of the narrator, the octagonal salon contains paintings of the birds and animals which are caged

---

[28] Madeleine de Scudéry, Promenade de Versailles (Paris, 1669).

[29] Ibid., 94.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

outside, "as if in preparation for what was going to be seen, or as a reminder after having seen it."[30]

As we have noted, besides the panoptic view from above, visitors to the Ménagerie could also walk around an inner court at ground level. This was formed by fencing off in the animal courts triangular portions nearest the octagonal salon. The characters of the Promenade do just this, and the beautiful stranger "who naturally loved birds" was immediately charmed:

> [She] admired the pretty *poules d'Egypte*, and birds called *Demoiselles* for their good grace and their beauty; they are tall, erect, their plumage is a silvery gray, they have white crests, black chests and orange eyes.[31]

The one non-avian creature which did arouse attention was notably a quiet one, remarked upon for its beauty, not its ferocious qualities:

> [There was] a certain animal called champas, more beautiful and better marked than a tiger, as sweet and affectionate as a dog.[32]

La Fontaine also considered the park at Versailles ideal for polite conversation. In the company of Boileau,

---

[30] Ibid., 94.

[31] Ibid., 95. The description of the quadrupeds, on the other hand, is much more summary, and a little suspect as to accuracy. For Scudéry refers to many exotic beasts, but in actuality these were only just making their appearance at the zoo at the time of her writing. The most exotic was the elephant mentioned above which died in 1681 and was subsequently dissected by Perrault.

[32] Ibid., 96.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Molière, and Racine, he wanders the grounds beginning with the Ménagerie:

> [It is] a place full of all sorts of birds and quadrupeds, most very rare and from distant lands. They admired into how many types a single species of bird multiplied, and glorified the artifice and diverse imaginations of nature, which played among animals as with flowers. That which pleased to no end were the Demoiselles de Numidie and certain fishing birds who had extremely long beaks with a skin underneath which served as a pouch. Their plumage is white, but of a white more clear than that of swans: close-up they even seemed flesh-colored, and the color shifted towards the pink near the root. You cannot see anything more handsome. It is a type of cormorant.[33]

This is an entirely different record of spectator experience than what we have seen at Vincennes. The creatures here are not valorized and made interesting for their fighting prowess. Rather, La Fontaine, like Scudéry, is at great pains to celebrate the beauty of placid creatures as creations of nature. No longer partaking in a type of Roman circus, the sophisticated visitor to the Versailles Ménagerie becomes a connoisseur of fauna.

Claude Denis, in his heroic poem describing Versailles, set aside a significant portion devoted exclusively to the Ménagerie.[34] The 134 lines are essentially a list of the

---

[33] La Fontaine, Preface to Les amours de Psyché et de Cupidon (Paris, 1669). As many writers have observed, La Fontaine was describing a pelican, not a cormorant.

[34] Explication de Toutes les Grottes, Rochers, et fontaines du Chasteau Royal de Versailles, Maison du Soleil, et de la Menagerie, en vers heroique (Paris, n.d.), not paginated.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

inhabitants of the six courts and dairy of the zoo. The section concerning the zoo begins:

> Après tant de beautés desirez vous scavoir
> de la mesnagerie, et l'ordre et le pouvoir.
> L'abondance est partout, cette maison royale,
> fait voir qu'en toute chose, il n'est rien qui l'egale.

This poet, a lesser talent than La Fontaine or Scudéry, nevertheless does convey the impression of abundance in his poem, and importantly, the idea that identifying each of the creatures is essential for a real appreciation of the zoo. He emphasizes the beauty of these birds and animals as well as the great variety of species. Thus he presents himself as the new type of animal spectator, observing the external markers and character of each creature.

Besides the great innovations of a structure designed for the purpose of allowing visitors to observe non-combative animals organized by species, as opposed to the rather arbitrary selection of animals at Vincennes based solely on size and ferocity, the spectators themselves were provided with comfortable surroundings. Unlike the Vincennes Sérail which simply had room for a three-tiered balcony located above the animal stalls, the Ménagerie was outfitted with suites of apartments on the major story,[35]

---

[35] Being rather small and with possible living quarters only on one story, it did not offer the comforts of a full-fledged château, although the requisite suites of chambre, anti-chambre, and cabinet were preserved. The complete revamping of these rooms would occur at the end of the century.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

and a *salle-fraîche* or grotto with playing fountain in the octagonal space below the viewing pavilion.

Thus the Versailles Ménagerie takes on the appearance of a pleasure pavilion, with the added enticement of animals to be observed. This little structure provided an element of surprise after a long promenade through the Grand Parc. The visitor followed a carefully laid out scheme, the end of which was an ideal vantage point, where small, not very remarkable but peaceful birds were put on display.[36] Even when, after 1668, animals such as one might have found at Vincennes arrived at Versailles, the Ménagerie did not serve as a temporary shelter for participants in animal combats: rather, these animals, like the birds, were meant to be observed and appreciated for their aesthetic qualities, not their potential for violence. The important fact is that an animal compound is no longer to be used for the blatant display of raw, corporeal power. Instead, the viewer is led seductively to the contemplation of wild life at rest.

This new form of spectatorship in turn necessitated an innovative architectural expression. And indeed, the Ménagerie was the very first modern zoo. As discussed above, zoological collections had always existed in the gardens of rulers and aristocrats. However, these took on the form of smaller, separate edifices housing exotic birds

[36] Marie (Versailles, 192) asserts that this lay-out was originally intended to represent the "king of creation ruling all the animals," and those present embodied the symbol of the god Pan.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

or quadrupeds. Their presence was necessary for anyone hoping to create an image of power: gifts of foreign birds and animals demonstrated by extension the full range of the owner's sphere of importance. Louis's zoo, however, provided a novel space in which birds, and subsequently animals of all sorts, were united within a single structure designed for privileged spectators. With the Ménagerie, the modern notion of a zoo as a compound of animals brought together for human contemplation was first realized on a grand scale. Although rare foreign animals were subsequently included, the very earliest zoo population at the Ménagerie proclaimed that the barbaric pleasure of fierce animal combats and the intention of foreign conquest implied by the stabling of exotic beasts were not on the agenda of Louis XIV. Rather, he offered a non-violent spectacle in which the viewer was to engage in a less aggressive, more contemplative activity.

By introducing a new form of animal spectatorship into aristocratic leisure, what Norbert Elias has called the civilizing process[37] entered into the very nature of viewing itself. Much has been written about the aristocratic, parliamentary, and religious threats to monarchical authority in the mid-seventeenth century (the Frondes, 1648-53). Whether the Crown succeeded in its attempt to control potentially rebellious factions without itself becoming

[37] The Civilizing Process, trans. Edmund Jephcott (New York, 1978).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

hopelessly enmeshed in the process is not at issue here. Rather, it is to be noted that during Louis' reign, the drama between factions, which heretofore had been played out on the battlefield, was now to be incorporated into an increasingly particularized court etiquette. Direct contacts between bodies were replaced by emblematic gestures or subtle changes in dress. This civilizing process affected every aspect of court life at Versailles including the viewing of animals. The descriptions of the animals at the Ménagerie by Madeleine de Scudéry and Jean de La Fontaine are in great contrast to the excited accounts of bloody combats at Vincennes detailed in the journal reports. The Ménagerie provided the architecture for the new way in which courtiers were to observe animals.

The Versailles zoo was the site of important ambassadorial visits and extravagant fêtes. In May 1685, the doge of Genoa paid a visit.[38] Earlier, in July 1664, Cardinal Chigi listened to Italian music played in his honor in the Salon of the zoo and dined in the same place in 1674. The account of the Cardinal's first visit, as recorded in the Gazette de France, again underlines the different type of spectacle provided by the animals at the Versailles zoo:

---

[38] Even the general populace was admitted, but with restrictions. Franklin (Vie privée, 125) states Parisians were allowed entry to the Ménagerie once a year, on the Sunday of Pentacost. On the other hand, Loisel asserts that "the bourgeois and even the *simple peuple* could see the king's animals, but they needed to buy tickets and could only visit when Louis was not there" (Histoire, III, 120).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> [His Eminence] also went to visit the Ménagerie, where he admired the great diversity of Animals which he saw there, as well as the layout of the place; and after being continually refreshed by different spirits, he heard an excellent performance of Italian Music which was the conclusion to all these Amusements: so that He left this royal House to return to Vincennes with a marvelous satisfaction.[39]

These gentle pleasures are far removed from the spectacle of brutality provided by bloody combats. Rather, looking at animals had become incorporated into the refined set of courtly entertainments.

Besides these duly recorded ambassadorial visits, another important ceremonial function of the Ménagerie was its use in the great fêtes at Versailles. In the grandiose fête called "Les plaisirs de l'isle enchantée" (1664) exotic beasts -- for example, bears, elephants, and camels -- were featured, following the more traditional use of animals from foreign territories to illustrate the far-reaching power of the monarch.[40] However, these beasts were dressed up as friendly mounts for personnages elaborately dressed as seasons, hours, and other themes (Fig. 8). Furthermore, as we have noted above, many of these animals were not yet housed at the Ménagerie, but were sent in from other compounds, perhaps Vincennes.

André Félibien describes the last great fêtes given by the king at Versailles in the year 1674 to celebrate his

---

[39] Gazette de France, July 12, 1664, 688.

[40] For a detailed analyses of Louis' fêtes, see Marie-Christine Moine, Les fêtes à la cour du Roi-soleil. 1653-1715 (Paris, 1984).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

victory over the Franche-Comté. On the third day of these festivities, on July 19, "the king went for a walk to the Ménagerie, where he gave a collation to the Ladies of the Court":

> It is a place situated in the grand Parc of Versailles at one end of the Canal, facing the Trianon. There you can see all which can make country life agreeable and amusing by the raising of Animals of all types of species.[41]

Louis, the triumphant monarch, brings the court to the animals in the private seclusion of his royal residence. This is a pastoral celebration of martial success.

The Ménagerie of the Duchesse de Bourgogne

In 1699, the king restricted access to courtiers and entourage and gave the zoo to the young Duchesse de Bourgogne. The ensuing redecoration campaign, led by the newly appointed Surintendent des Bâtiments Jules-Hardouin Mansart and completed in December 1700, resulted in a more comfortable pleasure pavilion, where the contemplation of animals now was perhaps of secondary importance (Fig. 9a, b). In order to make the grotto directly accessible from the central entrance, the wall in the basement story stair vestibule was knocked down. It appears that the grand

[41] Les Divertissemens de Versailles donnez par le roy à toute sa Cour, au retour de la conqueste de la Franche-Comté, en l'année 1674 (Paris, 1674), in his Description du Château de Versailles, de ses peintures, et d'autres ouvrages faits pour le Roy (Paris, 1696), 405. A similar account is given in the author's Description sommaire du château de Versailles (Paris, 1674) likewise in the Description, (1696), 327.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Baroque induction into the octagonal salon was no longer considered vital, for the upstairs observatory was now only to be reached by two minor side-stairs; square in the south pavilion, circular in the north. Thus the earlier plan which, by funneling visitors into the octagonal pavilion on the second story, emphasized the zoo's function as animal observatory, was abandoned in favor of one which maximized the element of pleasure and retreat.

The new decoration emphasized this desire to create a suitable environment of retreat. The painting programs provided scenes of children playing and of love.[42] Mirrors and arabesques by Claude III Audran filled in the spaces. Mansart had originally planned a less pleasurable, more weighty iconographic scheme for the ceiling of the octagonal salon, but after submitting his plans, the king made his much cited response from Fontainebleau on September 10, 1699:

> It seems to me that there are things to change, that the subjets are too serious and that something of youth must be mixed in with what is done there. Bring me designs when you come, or at least your thoughts. There must be something of childhood throughout.[43]

The new distinction of the rooms at the Ménagerie reflects the general shift in the iconography at Versailles

[42] A whole team of artists worked on these programs. For the ten representations of children's games: Nicolas Bertin, Antoine Dieu, Joseph Cristophle, and Noël Hallé. For the scenes of love: Louis Boulogne the younger, Louis Boulogne the elder, and Antoine Coypel.

[43] Cited in Sidney Fiske-Kimball, "Le décor du Château de la Ménagerie," Gazette des Beaux-Arts, LXXVIII (1936), 252.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

around this time: the northern rooms of the zoo were designated the *appartement d'été*, those in the south wing, the *appartement d'hiver*. The two side pavilions were given a new elegance and congeniality. Cabinets and fireplaces were added to each wing. On the basement level, the kitchens were amplified and located in the south wing entirely. A square stair was inserted in the south wing between the anti-chamber and square cabinet. Another cabinet, this one rectangular, preceded the large chamber. In the north wing, the design is more complex. Here, the stair is round, and the following suite of three rooms are of various shapes: oval, rectangular, and octagonal. In the upper story, a chamber replaced the old staircase vestibule. With the elimination of the old stair, a corridor connecting the two wings was made possible. In this way, the zoo was the first of its kind to acquire autonomy: here, zoo and residence were combined into the smallest possible building that had all the requisite components and at least moderate comfort of a true château.

Much more is known about the renovations of the interior of the second building campaign. The new decor reflects what would become a standard treatment of interior space in French palaces; symmetrical wall membering, double doors *en enfilade* balanced by false doors, windows rising the entire height of the wall, low marble frames for the

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

fireplace, and mirrors over the mantle.[44] Marie describes the jewel-box results:

> All of the decoration was made of mirrors which were hung on consoles, often very long, where the most beautiful precious objects from the royal collection were gathered, and what was not mirror was entirely covered, walls and ceilings, with the arabesque paintings of Audran.[45]

The animal courts were also reorganized, and the replacement of one with a little garden connected to a dairy for the Duchess suggests that the animals themselves were not considered vital to the new function of the Ménagerie as pleasure pavilion. Certainly, they were neccessary in so far as they provided the atmosphere suitable for a pastoral retreat. However, the emphasis given now in accounts of the zoo is not on the descriptions of the animals, but on the comportment of the Duchesse.

The Ménagerie of 1664 had provided one of the focal points in the grand layout of the entire Versailles palace-garden complex, providing an element of surprise after a long promenade through the Grand Parc. The visitor followed

[44] Fiske-Kimball, The Creation of the Rococo (Philadelphia, 1943), 53.

[45] Marie, Versailles, 196. The consistent use of a large round-headed mirror on the mantle of the anti-chamber in the *appartement d'été*, and the high rising oval mirrors supporting a vase and cherubs who cling to the cornice in the chamber was an innovation of 1698 and of major importance in the history of palace decoration. Before this date, only a few other examples of a mirror replacing the traditional painting on a mantle can be cited, and these tended to be small (see Fiske-Kimball, Creation, 57). After its use in the Ménagerie, this was subsequently repeated at Meudon, Marly, the Trianon, and Versailles proper (see Fiske-Kimball, "Le Décor").

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

a carefully plotted plan, the end of which was an ideal vantage point, where peaceful birds and animals were to be observed and appreciated for their beauty and quiet natures. By 1700, the function of the Ménagerie had changed, and its importance lay not in the induction of the visitor into the centralized viewing point and the contemplative appreciation of fauna at peace. Rather, the mini-château took on supreme importance as a pleasure pavilion, offering the opportunity to play house in the pastoral mode. Indeed, at the Ménagerie, the Duchess of Burgundy may be considered a prefiguration of Marie-Antoinette as shepherdess at the Trianon later in the century. Brought up to date with mirrors and grotesques, the zoo provided a glittering retreat from the outside world. By this time as well, those large wild beasts which had been denied access to the grounds in 1664, were now welcomed to the compound in large numbers, following the suppression of the Sérail at Vincennes. Paradoxically, the zoo's historical function as a home for savage and exotic animals was restored to the Ménagerie at Versailles at the precise moment when the building itself was being transformed into a pastoral haven for the aristocracy, something a zoo had never been before.

In the eighteenth century, the zoo as an architectural structure was firmly established as a necessary element in aristocratic garden design. Among the most important were those in Austria, which were directly inspired by the

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

example at Versailles.[46] In 1716, the menagerie of the Belvedere was founded by Prince Eugene of Savoy (Fig. 10). This zoo was conceived as a series of enclosures fanning around a central point, however, in this case a large fountain. The Chinese-style zoo château was situated to the side of the courts. At Schönbrunn, Francis I established the imperial zoo in 1752 (Fig. 11). This was a large walled circular space divided into enclosures for animals. The octagonal zoo château, erected in 1750 at the central point, and drawing inspiration from both the Versailles and Belvedere menageries, is still extant. Its current function, a café for the visitors to the zoo, is entirely in keeping with its original use, which was to provide an area of relaxation and comfort for spectators. Looking at exotic animals brought together in a designated area of the royal park and identified by an architectural structure was now a well-established leisure activity.

In conclusion, the Ménagerie at Versailles, in its dramatic break with the traditional form and function of royal animal compounds, intended to embody a type of viewing that likewise opposed an earlier form of spectatorship. One significant body of people turned the zoo into a vital observation center. For the Ménagerie came to serve as a working laboratory for anatomists of the Académie des Sciences, founded in 1666. Ultimately, it would be this

[46] For information on animal collections in Austria, see Loisel, Histoire, II, 56-72.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

society of scientists dedicated to presenting the underlying mechanics of animal bodies to an increasingly interested public which would fundamentally alter the relationship between the human and animal worlds in late seventeenth century France.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

CHAPTER 3.

PERCEPTIONS OF ANIMALS IN SEVENTEENTH CENTURY FRANCE

In early modern France, animals became the subject of great interest in intellectual circles as well as with the aristocratic and general public. With this chapter, I discuss the broader realm of the philosophic preoccupations with animals. In particular, I will turn to the works of Jean de la Fontaine, a writer who addressed the issue of animal sentiment, and whose Fables required artists to come to terms with animals as protagonists in a visual drama.

The New Philosophy

In France around 1640, only a few savants could offer a conception of science totally opposed to Medieval and Renaissance Scholasticism. This branch of philosophical thought was founded on the need for resemblance or metaphor to understand the natural world, and had its roots in Aristotle.[1] By the 1660's, seeing and demonstrating replaced interpretation as the functions proper to knowledge. A direct, objective analysis of the physical world eliminated any need for a mediating device between the

[1] Michel Foucault, The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences (New York, 1970), Chapter 2.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

observer and the observed. This paradigmatic shift in intellectual values marked a new, modern period. With his emphasis on disinterested observation, the separation of mind from the body, and thus the detachment from all that is subjective, René Descartes codified the philosophy of the new science.[2] His call for rational thought found great popularity "as much for the definition of rules of learning as for the conversion of the fashionable public to these new society games":

> The rejection of the authority of the Ancients, the distrust of erudition, the search for evidence in reasoning and the certainty of facts were the cardinal virtues indispensable to modern savants, and not only in the eyes of the savants themselves, but also in the eyes of an increasingly larger public, which took to the young science of its time with a completely new passion.[3]

However, during the crucial period from the 1640's to the 1660s when Cartesianism was first opened up for debate,

---

[2] Discours sur la méthode, (Paris, 1637).

[3] Jacques Roger, Les sciences de la vie dans la pensée française du XVIIIe siècle. La génération des animaux de Descartes à l'Encyclopédie (Paris, 1963), 163. Although Cartesianism did assume wide popularity in intellectual circles as well as in the "fashionable public," this new philosophy posed an interesting challenge for the women of the salon. Erica Harth, in her Cartesian Women: Versions and Subversions of Rational Discourse in the Old Regime (Ithaca, 1992), describes the simultaneous attraction and misgivings which Descartes held for these intellectual women. Although the mind detached from the body suggested that the mind was sexless, thus making it possible to bring down the barriers denying women access to the male-dominated realm of scholarship, a detached mind also demanded the negation of feeling and emotion, an untenable situation for these women.

Cartesianism's role in establishing the modern approach to scientific thought for the Académie, in direct opposition to the Faculté will be discussed in the following chapter.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

various competing philosophies existed concurrently. For one thing, the thinking of the Ancients proved quite tenacious. Other challenges were posed to Descartes when the new philosophy had just begun to take hold. The philosopher Pierre Gassendi attempted to reconcile the new demands of objectivity, which assumed the transparency of the natural world, and Scholasticism, with its dependence on resemblance or metaphor as a mediating factor between signifier and signified. Two of the most illustrious of the Gassendists were Père Ignace Gaston Pardies and Jean-Baptiste Du Hamel.

One of the hotly debated issues among these philosophers of the late seventeenth century in France revolved around the issue of a rational animal or one endowed with a soul, an intellectual preoccupation "as old as philosophy."[4] The *de animalibus* debate neatly demarcates the differences between the various competing philosophies of the period. What will become clear is the very pervasiveness of this preoccupation at many different levels of society.

The *de animalibus* debate

Descartes had offered a strong argument in his Discours sur la méthode against the ability of animals to reason, asserting that beasts were pure matter, acting on instinct

[4] Henri Busson, La religion des classiques, 1660-1685 (Brionne, 1948), 165.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

alone. This extreme theory reduced animals to living automatons or machines whose actions could thus be explained as easily as the workings of a clock.[5] Those unequivocally opposed to Descartes' animal-machine turned to Michel de Montaigne's defense of animals and their ability to reason. This view exalted the wisdom of animals and praised their virtues such as industry, fidelity, lack of artifice, and injustice.[6]

These two extreme theories raised two major problems for philosophers:

> By their paradoxical nature they ran counter to common sense, and by their irreligious consequences, to religious sense. The one, which gave to animals a reason equal to that of man, yet refusing them an afterlife, destroyed human aspirations to immortality; the other, which reduced to mechanical forces the most subtle actions of animal activity and even those for which tradition attributed feeling and thought, let it be understood that the most noble actions of thought could be explained by material forces.[7]

If even the subtlest activities of animals are reduced to pure mechanism, then everything including humans can be

[5] The best succinct account of the *de animalibus* debate is Busson's "Introduction historique" in Jean de La Fontaine, Discours à Madame de la Sablière (Sur l'âme des animaux), Busson and Ferdinand Gohin, eds. (Geneva, 1967), 9-41. The use of the watch to illustrate the machinal qualities of an animal derives from Thomas Aquinas. Bossuet was well aware of this analogy in his De la connaissance de Dieu. Busson, "Commentaire philosophique," in La Fontaine, Discours, 82, n. 33.

[6] A large section of Montaigne's Apologie de Raymond de Sebond (1580) is devoted to a discussion of the ability of animals to reason and feel emotion. La Fontaine, whose Fables are filled with references to animals acting rationally repeats many of the same arguments.

[7] Busson, "Introduction", 19.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

explained by matter and movement. This conclusion was clearly untenable for it would prove the absence of a soul in people.

The related question of the presence or absence of a soul in animals also gave rise to two competing points of view. For the Cartesians, the animal-machine was also the animal of pure matter, a being without a soul.[8] Countering the Cartesian attack was the equally extreme theory that animals had souls which were part of a universal one. This view, like the one which took for granted the presence of intelligence in animals, enjoyed wide currency among the ancients and found many supporters among thinkers of the seventeenth century.

But a third approach to the related questions of animal rationality and an animal soul, and one which found a middle position between the other two, proved ultimately to be more popular primarily because it proved to be acceptable by the

---

[8] For example, Jean M. Darmanson, La Beste degradée en machine, divisé en deux discours (Amsterdam, 1691). The Cartesian attacks the "opinion commune" which blurs the separation between animals and humans, for we must accept as given the unquestionable divide between these two beings. The universal Christian beliefs are the existence of an infinitely perfect God and the immortality of the soul, and thus popular opinion leads to "pernicious consequences." The total distinction of animal and human means that only humans, created in God's image, are capable of knowledge and passion. If this should be true of animals, then there must be no God, and if the soul of an animal is deemed immortal, then ours cannot be. Animals serve us in a bodily fashion and so have no need for a soul: "why should we want God to give animals a soul in order to move a body which already moves by itself," that is, like a machine?

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

proponents of the other two theories. This idea, first expressed by the Scholastics, and expounded upon by the Père Pardies in his Discours de la connaissance des bestes,[9] argued that there existed two types of souls. According to this idea, animals did indeed possess a soul, but it was mortal and thus inferior to the human one. The positing of an "âme matérielle" -- the rather shocking idea of a physical, thus measureable, soul -- found great success since it carved a middle ground between the other two opposing ideas and even appealed to both at the same time: "there was something in [this theory] for automatists and animists, depending on the word at which they were looking."[10] Gassendi's corpuscular theories and formulation of a "matière subtile" even made it possible to describe the very fabric of this animal soul. This theory as elaborated upon by Pardies and Du Hamel would have a great influence on the poet Jean de La Fontaine.

---

[9] Paris, 1672, 14-18: "Mais ces Messieurs, bien loin d'accorder la raison aux Bestes, leur refusent même la connoissance, et le sentiment: Ils font un jeu de Marionettes de tous ces mouvemens si reglez: Les Bestes, à leur avis, sont de petites Machines qui ne se remuënt que par ressorts. . . . Mais si ces Philosophes ont refusé la connoissance aux Bestes; Dieu merci il s'en trouve d'autres qui l'accordent aux Plantes et aux Elemens." Antoine Dilly responded directly to this text in De l'ame des bêtes (Lyon, 1676): animals follow instinct alone, and this is easy to establish. Dilly asks whether we have ever seen a monkey or an elephant using microscopes in order to contemplate a mite, and the fact that animals cannot tell the Doric order apart from the Corinthian just serves as more proof that they are not reasoning beings. De l'ame, 140ff.

[10] Busson, "Introduction," 23.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Cartesianism had achieved a quick and sudden success as the new philosophy, and with its emphasis on experiment and observation, was linked to the new science as well. But for many philosophers as well as for the aristocratic and general public, the heavy premium paid for purely rational thought eventually proved unsatisfactory:

> Born from an imperious need for clarity, very satisfying for an intelligence seeing things from on high, a mechanist conception of life was destined to collide, at each moment, with facts revealed by observation and for which it could not account.[11]

The ultimate demise of the Cartesian animal-machine idea occurred precisely because the complete separation of mind and body with all its subjective emotions proved impossible for everyone except for the most dedicated Cartesians. Intellectuals such as Madeleine de Scudéry as well as the general public simplified the formula of the Cartesian animal-machine, and came up with many proofs against it. Examples abounded, for anyone could cite the tricks taught to pets, or the animaux savants for which travelling fairs were noted.[12] As far as the debate about animals was

---

[11] Roger, Sciences, 164.

[12] Emile Campardon, Les spectacles de la foire, two vols. (Geneva, 1970). Scudéry gives a colorful example of this in her "Histoire de deux caméléons" (Paris, 1688). Harth (Cartesian, 98-106) reads Scudéry's account as a sort of alternative to Claude Perrault's Description anatomique d'un caméléon (Paris, 1669). The opposition of female/salon and male/academy gave rise to two different types of languages and ways of observing animals. Harth sees Perrault's disinterested scientific gaze as ultimately masculine, while Scudéry, although up to date on the new scientific techniques (observation and experiment) found herself

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

concerned it was the philosophy of Gassendi and his followers which replaced that of Descartes in popularity by the end of the century.

La Fontaine and Animal Souls: the Discours à Madame de la Sablière

Access to Gassendi's ideas was not difficult in late seventeenth century Paris. Besides the writings of Pardies and Du Hamel, others such as Antoine Menjot and Nicholas Denys adopted and expanded upon his theories. La Fontaine was undoubtedly familiar with at least a few of these works,[13] and furthermore, he was a frequent participant in the salon of Madame de la Sablière[14] which included many Gassendists as members, notably Bernier, who had translated some of Gassendi's Latin texts into French, and Marin Cureau de la Chambre whose Traité de la connoissance des animaux[15]

---

excluded from the Academy and chose the older language of metaphor as an oppositional stance.

[13] Certainly Du Hamel's at least. Busson, "Introduction," 27.

[14] Marguerite Heissein de la Sablière (1636-1693), niece of Antoine Menjot, had received La Fontaine at her salons in the rue Neuve-des-Petits-Champs since 1672. See Menjot d'Elbenne, Madame de La Sablière. Ses pensées chrétiennes et ses lettres à l'abbé de Rancé (Paris, 1923). Her salons were diverse, with Cartesians (Rohault, Roberval) mixing with Gassendists (Menjot, Bernier). Although an object of contempt for the satirist Boileau, she earned the highest praise from many savants including the abbé Olivet (Histoire de l'Académie française (Paris, 1730), 331) and Charleval (in Menjot d'Elbenne, Madame de La Sablière, 150).

[15] Paris, 1647 and summarized in 1664.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

energetically defended Montaigne's arguments in favor of an animal soul.

The subtitle to La Fontaine's Discours à Madame de la Sablière,[16] "Sur l'âme des animaux," immediately places the fabulist in the fray of the debate concerning rational animals and the possibility of an animal soul, and may be read as a direct response to Descartes' thesis of the animal-machine in part five of his Discours.[17] La Fontaine begins with a summation of the Cartesian platform: "Ils disent donc/ Que la bête est une machine" (29-30). If the animal's body is dissected, he says, Cartesians will show to the curious observer how each bodily part functions, how each part is made to trigger other parts, and will conclude that the workings of an animal are as easy to explain as the mechanisms of a clock. For beasts have no passion or will, and they certainly cannot reason. This might seem a logical argument, warns La Fontaine, but real-life situations reveal how this is untrue.

---

[16] La Fontaine's Discours à Madame de la Sablière comes at the end of Book Nine of his Fables.

[17] There is nothing surprising that current events should have such an important part in the Discours of La Fontaine, since this was already evident in the Fables: "current events often suggested to the poet allusions to news items, reflections on political events, judgments on philosophical problems. In fact, among these doctrinal questions, taken up in the second collection of Fables, nothing was more fashionable, around 1675, than that of the nature and functions of the soul of animals." Busson, "Introduction," 9-10.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

In order to disprove the Cartesian platform, he proceeds to give four examples which give evidence of an animal "esprit." In the first, he praises the old stag who uses multiple stratagems to escape the hunting dogs with such finesse that the hunters take him for a much younger creature:

> Que de raisonnements pour conserver ses jours!
> Le retour sur ses pas, les malices, les tours,
> Et le change, et cent stratagèms
> Dignes des plus grands chefs, dignes d'un meilleur sort! (76-79)

This celebration of the powerful drive for self-preservation is seen as something coming from the intellect (*raisonnements*) not mere instinct. Next, La Fontaine gives the example of maternal devotion exemplified by the partridge who feigns injury in order to draw the hunter and his dogs away from her brood: when she has lured the enemy far enough away,

> Elle lui dit adieu, prend sa volée, et rit
> De l'homme qui, confus, des yeux en vain la suit. (90-91)

Leaving behind these images of the hunt, La Fontaine then shows how beaver colonies exemplify the communal spirit in providing benefits for all, for by working together in set tasks, a dam is built and the colony is protected from the torrents of the river. Not only is their work durable, it is a "masterpiece," the "fruit of their art," and "knowledgable work" (92-115):

> Que ces castors ne soient qu'un corps vide d'esprit,
> Jamais on ne pourra m'obliger à le croire. . . (114-115)

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

In the final example of how animals are more than mere machines, La Fontaine turns to an account he received "from a king full of glory," the newly crowned King of Poland. This story demonstrates the sophisticated military art of warrior animals, "cousins of the fox":[18]

> Jamais la guerre avec tant d'art
> Ne s'est faite parmi les hommes,
> Non pas même au siècle où nous sommes;
> Corps de garde avancé, vedettes, espions,
> Embuscades, partis, et mille inventions
> D'une pernicieuse et maudite science,
> Fille du Styx, et mère des héros,
> Exercent de ces animaux
> Le bon sens et l'expérience. (127-135)

These four impassioned examples offered a variety of proofs of animal "esprit" -- self-preservation, maternal devotion, communal spirit, and military cunning. But, laments La Fontaine, this is still not enough for the Cartesians, who insist that the actions of the animals in the four examples cited by the poet could just as easily be explained by reflex or reaction (*ressort*) alone. For animal memory is corporeal: an object seen by an animal passes directly to the brain where it seeks "an image traced there before. . . without the aid of thought" (148-150). In complete opposition to this is the human memory which is neither material nor mechanical, but rather intelligent and reflective:

---

[18] Busson ("Commentaire," 53-54) identifies these animals as "boubaks" from various sources: Guillaume Le Vasseur, Description d'Uranie (Rouen, 1560; Paris, 1651) and Jean Sobieski (c. 1646), by indirect route.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

La volonté nous détermine,
Non l'objet, ni l'instinct. Je parle, je chemine;
Je sens en moi certain agent;
Tout obéit dans ma machine
A ce principe intelligent.
Il est distinct du corps, se conçoit nettement,
Se conçoit mieux que le corps même:
De tous nos mouvements c'est l'arbitre suprême.
(153-160)

Similar sentiments had been espoused earlier:

[Q]uand la bête penserait
La bête ne réfléchirait
Sur l'objet ni sur sa pensée. (61-64)

That is, for Descartes, animals reflect neither on external sensation, nor on the act of thinking itself.[19]

One final piece of evidence must be presented, and so La Fontaine offers the tale, in the form of a fable or edifying story, entitled "Les deux rats, le renard, et l'oeuf."[20] In this eighteen-line anecdote, two rats come across an egg, but their treasure is threatened by the sudden appearance of a fox. Because carrying the cumbersome

---

[19] Busson, "Commentaire," 65, n. 61.

[20] A break in the text and a vignette by Chauveau clearly separate this tale from the rest of the Discours. This story thus follows the same format as the Fables.

In his notes to the Pléiade edition Jean-Pierre Collinet (La Fontaine, Oeuvres complètes, I, "Fables, contes et nouvelles" [Paris, 1991]) writes: "It matters little that others attribute the same stratagem (of the rats) to beavers, to bubaks, or to dormice: the theory of animal-machines will never give rise to an account of such inventive powers. Fontenelle, without doubt, might have suspected the authenticity of the fact. But, exercising his privilege, the poet let it pass and set it up as a fable, accompanied by a commentary in which he proposed his own hypothesis, not only on the intelligence of animals, but on the nature of their souls and on the degree of kinship with that of humans, and joined the whole thing to his Discours in the guise of an appendix." Oeuvres, 1240.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

object with their paws or rolling it along would be both extremely difficult and hazardous to the safety of the egg, "Nécessité l'ingénieuse/ Leur fournit une invention" (190-191): one rat lies down and takes the egg in its arms while the other drags the egg-carrying one by its tail. This is vivid proof of animal intelligence and the edifying principles embodied in this tale of ingenuity under the threat of imminent danger:

> Qu'on m'aille soutenir, après un tel récit
> Que les bêtes n'ont point d'esprit! (198-199)

The poet ends the Discours with his own theory concerning animal sentiment, but he presents this modestly. He insists on the conditional mode (*je donnerais, j'attribuais*, etc.) as if to suggest that he is certainly not a professional philosopher or even an amateur savant, but rather a simple bystander drawing the sensible conclusion from facts presented to his face.

La Fontaine's theory is as follows: animals are not machines for they can reason, however they cannot do so to the same degree as humans. Animals think, but do not reflect on the object of their thought, and reflection, "in the etymological sense of the term, the return of thought on itself" is a purely human faculty.[21] Thus La Fontaine's animal *esprit* exists in the intermediary point between pure

---

[21] Busson, "Introduction," 30.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

sensation and pure reason. It is a "matière subtile,"[22] "quintessence d'atome, extrait de la lumière. . ." (209): in choosing these specific terms, La Fontaine clearly identifies the source of his inspiration in Gassendi and his followers.[23]

Likewise, the poet's reasoning for the dualism of human soul relies on Gassendism. All living beings -- "sages, fous, enfants, idiots,/ Hôtes de l'univers sous le nom d'animaux" (222-223) -- share one soul in common.[24] But the second soul is just between ourselves and the angels, and it is this spiritual soul which distinguishes humans from animals. In summary, then, this thesis thus finds an intermediary position between Montaigne (who reduces the

---

[22] This term appears throughout philosophical and scientific writings of the period. It has to do with the body, and signifies something very fine, massless, and unbound: Gassendi used the term to describe atoms. Cartesians also resorted to the idea of a "matière subtile" to explain animal life: A. Le Grand, Dissertatio de carentia sensus for example. Busson, "Commentaire," 95.

[23] La Fontaine's terms and development of his argument follows the Gassendist formula and can be traced to Gassendi's own writings as well as Bernier, Abrégé and Du Hamel, De corpore animato (1673). La Fontaine was most probably familiar with this latter text. Collinet, Oeuvres, 1240, Pardies, Discours de la connaissance des bêtes (1672), and Thomas Willis, De anima brutorum.

[24] "These five terms [wise men, madmen, children, idiots, animals] designate in descending order of their spiritual value the inhabitants of the universe who share the animal soul: the *wisemen* who possess reason, *madmen* who used to possess it and still possess some glimmers of it, children who will, but do not yet, possess it, *idiots* who by accident never possessed it, and *animals* who by nature never possessed it." Busson, "Commentaire," 98.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

distance between human and animal) and Descartes (who radically separates them).[25]

La Fontaine's Discours à Madame de la Sablière thus reveals that the poet had a more than superficial knowledge of the contemporary debate concerning the presence or absence of intelligence and a soul in animals. Further, we have seen how deep was this concern of the poet to fully demolish the tenet of the Cartesian animal-machine. For although La Fontaine would not commit the ultimate heresy of completely erasing the difference in rational and spiritual matters between humans and animals, he demonstrated how respectful he was of what reason animals did possess. Clearly, therefore, it comes as no surprise that La Fontaine should be best known as author of the Fables. Most of these edifying tales feature animals as protagonists, and although the fable had a long pedigree in the history of literary forms, the fact that La Fontaine was a vigorous defender of animals as rational beings must be taken into account. La Fontaine's interest in the contemporary debate concerning animals is undisputed. It remains to be seen whether the same can be said of the artists who illustrated the Fables.

---

[25] This theory cuts "a middle path reconciling the idea of a continuity in the chain of beings with that of an hierarchy in the nature of the soul: an unstable, and delicate synthesis." Collinet, Oeuvres, 1240.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

The Fables of La Fontaine

La Fontaine's Fables were reworkings of existing fables and moral tales, above all those of Aesop[26] whose works had been illustrated from Antiquity onwards. The French poet's fables were ostensibly written for children: the Premier recueil was dedicated to the six-year-old dauphin, and the last book to the eight-year-old duc de Bourgogne. The use of the fable form, which occupied a lowly position in the hierarchy of literary genres, would appear to be appropriate for a work meant for a young, unsophisticated audience. However, "La Fontaine fooled no one, least of all himself," and this collection of poems is certainly "no merely childish entertainment."[27] For the fable arises from an old literary tradition in which irony plays a large role, and the capacity of the fable to impart difficult ideas in a "low" style gives it all the complexity which characterizes the pastoral.[28]

---

[26] La Fontaine drew from the Graeco-Latin tradition (Aesop and Phedrus) as well as a non-Western one. Among these, Bidpaï (called Pilpay by La Fontaine) a "legendary brahman" (1678) and Lokman, gnomic arab poet, also legendary. La Fontaine could have been alerted to these eastern versions of the fable at the salons of Madame de la Sablière by Bernier, the doctor-philosopher, who had recently returned from a trip to India. Pilpay was published in 1644 by Gilbert Gaulmin in his Livre des lumières ou la Conduite des rois. Collinet, "Notice," 1045.

[27] Marcel Gutwirth, "Beast Fable," in David L. Rubin, ed., Sun King (Washington, D. C., 1992), 107.

[28] On the pastoral tradition see, William Empson, Some Versions of Pastoral (London, 1935).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Some favorite themes in the fables are of a philosophical bent: the futility in trying to mask, or go against one's nature (for example, II, 18; IV, 5; V, 21; IX, 12); vices will be punished (I,2; IV, 11; IX, 10). The poet meditates on the cruelty of the world which rewards the strong and destroys the weak (X, 11; XI, 1) and celebrates the gift of friendship (VIII, 11; XII, 15). But La Fontaine also addressed many specific issues relevant to contemporary life. Court life is a favorite topic, and figures in numerous fables, with king and aristocrats either in human or animal form, usually in a non-flattering matter (IV, 3; VII, 15; XII, 13).[29] However, La Fontaine was never censored or reprimanded for this veiled hostility to the monarch and his entourage. David L. Rubin contrasts La Fontaine's criticisms to Boileau's benign humor vis à vis politics:

> La Fontaine stands the conventions of extra-textual reference, dialectical imagery, and irony [the three characteristics of the panegyric] on their heads, not merely to delight the reader or to extend the possibilities of literature for its own sake, but in order to suggest a reasoned critique of royal policy and the royal person. Though La Fontaine's art was exceedingly subtle, the values he implied were surely not overlooked or misinterpreted by Colbert or his successor as mécène. Not actually censored because not overtly seditious, La Fontaine nevertheless enjoyed a bare minimum of royal patronage or other signs of favor

---

[29] A sort of inverse or counter theme to his criticisms of rulership are several fables which condemn the blindness and ignorance of those ruled themselves (III, 2 and 4 for example).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> in sharp contrast with the more domesticated ironist Boileau, historiographer royal and much else besides.[30]

In the hands of La Fontaine, the genre of fable becomes a powerful instrument capable of addressing a whole spectrum of ideas and arousing a wide range of emotions in the reader. But besides the efficacy of this pastoral genre in conveying this multitiude of thought in a simple manner, the fable is of course noteworthy in that in many instances, animals are the main characters. Indeed, animals and humans -- and for that matter, the small number of both plants and inanimate objects as well -- are all equivalent in terms of their relationship to one another. Humans, that is to say, are just another creature in the natural universe: the tradition that would grant a person a higher position in the natural hierarchy on the basis of the possession of a soul and a mind alone will not work in the world of the fable, because we cannot assume that animals, trees, and even objects might not have those attributes as well. In light of what we know to be La Fontaine's great familiarity with and interest in the contemporary philosophical debate concerning the possibility of an animal soul and the animal's ability to reason, his choice of fable as literary genre for his arguably most important written production attains a greater resonance.

For, in many of the fables, La Fontaine appears to draw attention to the very question of a thinking, rational

[30] "Icon and Caricature: Poetic Images of a Sun King," in Sun King, 135.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

animal. In the very first fable ("La cigale et la fourmi"), which will be discussed at length below, the cicada uses a very curious phrase. Begging the ant for a little help in hard times, the cicada promises to pay back the loan with interest, "on my word as an animal."[31] With these words, this poor insect calls attention to her very status as animal, her condition of "animalness." It is telling that La Fontaine should in the very first fable insist on an animal's awareness of its state of being an animal.

Other references to the contemporary debate concerning rational animals are scattered throughout the Fables. In "Le lièvre et la perdrix" (V, 17), the poet humorously depicts a scene from a hunt from the point of view of the hound:

> Enfin il [the hare] se trahit lui-même
> Par les esprits sortant de son corps échauffé.
> Miraut sur leur odeur ayant philosophé
> Conclut que c'est son Lièvre, et d'une ardeur
> extrême. . .
> (13-16)

More frequently, the verb used for the thinking animal is "raisonner", not "philosophier":

> . . . Pour un pauvre Animal,
> Grenouilles à mon sens ne raisonnaient pas mal.
> (16-17)

These lines concluded "Le soleil et les grenouilles" (VI, 12), one of those numerous fables in which the poet reprimanded the monarch or his lack of concern for the

[31] This translation is from James Michie, La Fontaine: Selected Fables (New York, 1979) cited in Gutwirth, "Beast Fable," 114.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

people over whom he rules. But in the most direct attack on those philosophers who denied reason to animals, La Fontaine offers "Les souris et le chat-huant" (XI, 9), the rather grisly poem of the owl who cunningly bites off the legs of captured mice, in order that they remain alive while in captivity, but are unable to run away: in this manner, the finicky bird can have his mice freshly-killed any time he wants, and will not have to suffer dead meat that has been lying around for a few days.

> Cet Oiseau raisonnait, il faut qu'on le confesse. . . (16)
> Sa prévoyance allait aussi loin que la nôtre. . . (25)
>
> Puis, qu'un cartésien s'obstine
> A traiter ce Hibou de montre et de machine!
> Quel ressort lui pouvait donner
> Le conseil de tronquer un peuple mis en mue?
> Si ce n'est pas là raisonner,
> La raison m'est chose inconnue.
>
> (28-33)

La Fontaine thus couches this literary genre of antique provenance in modern terms, letting his animals speak and act in stories concerning not just moralizing anecdotes of a general nature, but also political events, acts of the king, and contemporary debates about animals. La Fontaine's animals do not stand for specific human qualities: they are in themslves made of a complex web of characteristics, making them worthy participants in the drama at hand. We must look at how the illustrators of the Fables came to terms with a text that was at once tied to an antique

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

tradition and innovative in its insistance on the contemporary world and the ability of animals to reason.

Picturing the Fables

The first collection comprising the first six books of La Fontaine's Fables was issued in 1668, with François Chauveau[32] charged with the task of illustrating the 124 fables. The second set was published between 1668 and 1694, and consisted of the remaining six books for a total of 115 fables. The engraver had four different aesthetic traditions -- one native and the others from abroad -- established by the various editions of Aesop's Fables from which he could draw.[33] The French versions (for instance the fourteenth century Ysopets)[34] tended to present the Greek fables as a form of provincial literature: the fables chosen for illustration tended to be those which had animals

---

[32] François Chauveau (1613 - 1676). Born into a family of impoverished *petite noblesse*, Chauveau's success as an engraver enabled him to sustain a bourgeois lifestyle. However, his only official honor was to be *reçu* to the Royal Academy of Painting in 1663. He was a contemporary of Michel Lasne, Claude Mellan, Abraham Bosse, Grégoire Huet, Stefano della Bella, and Robert Nanteuil, all from the generation of Louis XIII. Bassy, "Le texte et l'image," in Histoire, II, Le livre triomphant (Paris, 1984), 143.

[33] The following discussion draws heavily from Alain-Marie Bassy's excellent study, Les "Fables de La Fontaine." Quatre siècles d'illustration (Paris, 1986).

[34] There are many French versions of the Fables. The most famous of the Ysopets was set to verse by Marie de France in the twelfth century; Les Fables du très ancien Esope phrygien en rythme françoise (Paris, 1542). Collinet, "Notice," 1044.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

as the protagonists and any human figures were depicted as rural types. The illustrations are simple, with the minimum of detail and the use of visual shorthand or synecdoche.

In Italy of the sixteenth century, the renewal of the mythological tradition was very much apparent and this is reflected in the editions of Aesop produced there. These were the first collections of fables to be published as luxury books.[35] Gabriele Faërno's Fabulae centum (1564)[36] is a prime example. This mannerist work relies on the contortion of forms and element of disquiet in order to draw out the frightening aspects of the moral (Fig. 12). This is in direct contrast to the English illustrations of Aesop, which are inspired more from the burlesque than the dramatic qualities of the fable. John Ogilby's Fables of Esope (1651) abounds with caricaturish human figures, monstrous animals, and grotesques. For example, the illustration for "Les membres et l'estomac" shows a grotesque headless body

---

[35] Armand Despres, Les éditions illustrées des Fables de La Fontaine (Paris, 1892).

[36] Faërno's Fabulae centum ex antiquis auctoribus delectae were published in Rome and illustrated by engravings most probably by Ligorio. These were subsequently translated by Charles Perrault. Collinet, "Notice," 1044. Other Italian fabulists included: Francesco Filelfo, Fabulae (Venice, 1480); Lorenzo Bevilacqua, called Abstemius, two works called Hecatonmythium (Venice, 1495 and 1495); Cesare Pavesi, called Il Targa (1558: he was the first author to use the vernacular for these apologues), Giovanni-Maria Verdizotti, Cento favole morali (Venice, 1570) with engravings by the author. This last edition has been in the collections of the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris at least since the time of Chauveau, who therefore would have had access to it. Despres, Les éditions, 8.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

with an inflated stomach which has become a head. Chauveau's illustration of this fable is much tamer, showing instead a man sitting against a small hillock in apparent gastric pain (Fig. 13).

The Flemish, on the other hand, drew heavily from the Italian examples. Aegidius Sadeler's Theatrum Morum (1608) shows the imprint of Faërno (Fig. 14). The major contribution of the Flemish and Dutch engravers of Aesop, and one which will be important to bear in mind when we turn to Oudry's illustrations of La Fontaine, is the treatment of landscape and the rustic environment. Alain-Marie Bassy observes that the Northern illustrators were fascinated by the situation of the character in the setting, not the drama created by the tensions between characters.[37] These characters are usually animals (that is, avoiding those fables which have human protagonists), and the setting is rural: there is no apparent interest in the exotic. In these illustrations, it is the familiar (the rural landscape) in conjunction with the unusual (the action of the fable) which engage the viewer. Monstrous elements (serpents, dragons) also alternate with reality to maintain interest by variety.[38]

[37] Bassy, Les "Fables" (Paris, 1986), 32.

[38] There was also the tradition of the emblem which went beyond national boundaries. However, Bassy argues that in the Fables of La Fontaine, the emblematic tradition would not have served artists very well. No animal, vegetable, human, or god achieves "sign-value," embodying ideas which are constant, which would have enabled them to "enter into a

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

François Chauveau

In general, Chauveau's illustrations of La Fontaine's Fables have more in common with the French and Flemish traditions discussed above, with their penchant for the commonplace and the rural, than with the mythological tradition of the Italians or the burlesque humor of the English. Furthermore, throughout Chauveau's oeuvre there is evidence of borrowings from the theater (costume and stage design for example) and more importantly, an adherence to one of the hallmarks of French classical drama, the avoidance of violent or dramatic action. Besides older French and Flemish illustrations of the Fables and French classical theater, Chauveau had recourse to other sources close at hand as well. One of these was the sculptural program built for the Versailles Labyrinth, begun around 1666 and completed sometime during the years 1673-74. These sculptures attracted the attention of noted writers such as Scudéry, André Félibien, Charles Perrault, and La Fontaine,

construction in which the poles [that is, the signs] are invariable." If this were the case, only the combinations of signs and their conjunctions to one another could be studied. La Fontaine's animals are not emblematic: the character of each animal is not fixed and unvarying. Bassy, Les "Fables", 51. For example, the lion appears as a major character in sixteen of the fables. He may be magnanimous and wise (V, 19), greedy and cruel (I, 6; IV, 2), merely pathetic (III, 14; IV, 1), acting as king of the animal world (VII, 1; VIII, 14), or simply one of the participants in an animal conversation (II, 9 and 11). When the lion is holding court over other animals, the parallels to Louis XIV, or at least to kingship in general, are unavoidable. Indeed, this is intentional since the text identifies the lion in many cases as king.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

as well as of authors of guide books to Versailles and journalists.[39] Chauveau was evidently familiar with these sculptures, either from direct observation or from engravings concerned with them.[40] Another important source of inspiration was the travelling fair or circus: Chauveau's vignette for "Le singe et le léopard," for example, gives us some idea of how animals were exhibited in city fairs.

Chauveau's works appear as vignettes at the head of the fable, that is, like an alternate title or sub-title of the poem itself (Fig. 16). The essential element or characteristic is chosen, and what is often depicted is not the climax or outcome of the action, but the moment just before, thereby avoiding a "doubling" of the fable itself. These vignettes function, therefore, as insignias for the fable.[41] The compositions, choice of figures, and dramatic moment appear for the most part to be dictated by the very miniscule size of these vignettes. Each measures only 2-5/8 by 2-1/16 inches, thus necessitating a much reduced

[39] Scudéry, Promenade à Versailles; Félibien, Description (1674); Perrault, La Labyrinthe de Versailles (Paris, 1679); La Fontaine, Les Amours de Psyché. Perrault identifies the sculptural program as depicting various fables from Aesop and sees in the labyrinth a metaphor for love. For information on the Labyrinth, see Robert W. Berger, In the Garden of the Sun King: Studies on the Park of Versailles under Louis XIV (Washington, D.C., 1985), Chapter 4, 28-40.

[40] Chauveau did not rely on the Versailles program completely, but his vignette for "Le singe et le dauphin" (IV, 8) clearly was inspired by the sculpture, although he lowered the dolphin's head since it no longer needed to serve as a fountain.

[41] Bassy, Les "Fables," 88.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

background in order to focus attention on foreground action. Chauveau also tends to favor compositions which are parallel to the picture plane, unlike Oudry who as we shall see, makes frequent use of diagonal arrangements. Details in Chauveau's illustrations are also kept to a minimum, in order for the images to sustain the highest level of legibility.

Chauveau and Oudry: "The City Rat and the Country Rat"

In order to demonstrate the extent to which the format played a major role in determing to what degree the artist could represent the fable, it will be helpful to compare an illustration by Chauveau to one by Oudry, from the latter's deluxe folio edition (1755-59). For discussion I have chosen the fable "Le rat de ville et le rat des champs" (I, 9; Fig. 16). Chauveau places his two dark rats ("Autrefois le Rat de ville/ Invita le Rat des champs") in the lower right corner, set against a table covered by a carpet of some generalized Turkish design ("Sur un tapis de Turquie/Le couvert se trouva mis"). In the upper left quadrant of the picture surface, a door opens and a man in vaguely classical dress enters ("A la porte de la salle/ Ils entendirent du bruit"). Thus we see that Chauveau has included in his vignette all the necessary elements of the fable -- two rats, cloth-covered table, man entering -- and not much else. The foreground with the two rats is neatly separated

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

from the background, the space of the man, by the table which occupies nearly the entire right half of the composition.

Oudry's illustration for the same fable (Fig. 17), on the other hand, places the entire scene in the luxurious dining room of a Parisian hôtel and the human personage becomes a fashionably dressed galant. But besides the three major protagonists -- two rats and the man -- the artist has also lavished considerable attention on the supporting element of the scene: the interior itself. The rats sit on a table covered, not by a Turkish carpet as stipulated by the text and faithfully followed by Chauveau, but by a white linen tablecloth. The rug is to be found on the floor, a tactily seductive trompe-l'oeil object with its bunching and curling corner. An elaborately molded silver centerpiece with candles and a statuette of Venus and Cupid on top sits in the middle of the table. To the left is an elegant sideboard filled with platters and wine coolers. Hung on the back wall and partially visible at the top are two paintings, one oval and one rectangular, depicting scenes of love. In this representation of the fable, the moral itself, couched in the final two verses of the poem, attains a visual piquancy:

> C'est assez, dit le Rustique;
> Demain vous viendrez chez moi;
> Ce n'est pas que je me pique
> De tous vos festins de roi.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Mais rien ne vient m'interrompre;
Je mange tout à loisir.
Adieu donc; fi du plaisir
Que la crainte peut corrompre.

The luxuriousness of this city feast is characterized as befitting the king; and the rustic rat in brilliant irony denounces this vain display and with it all it represents. The rat's disclaimer of jealousy or discomfort with luxury in the final lines of the penultimate verse is completely undone by all the scepticism and criticism inherent in the deceptively simple word "But", the first word of the concluding quatrain. In the fable, an alternating a-b-a-b rhyme scheme is consistent throughout the six verses preceding the final one. In this last one, the a-b-b-a scheme places "loisir" and "plaisir" in direct textual confrontation: it is the simple country life of leisure free from worry that the rustic rat will choose over the vain pleasures and luxuries of the city. In yet another veiled criticism of the frivolity of courtlife, La Fontaine's "spokesperson", albeit a rat, celebrates the purity of life in nature, versus the constant interruptions and corruptions suffered by those who must partake of the "festins de roi."

The moral thus hinges on the opposition nature/leisure without worry and city/pleasure with fear. In Chauveau's vignette, the essentials of the narrative are present, but no room is made for the moral. Oudry, on the other hand, crams his illustration with an excess of luxury objects, all of which, including the costume of the man entering, identify the period as that of Louis XV. Chauveau's is a

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

generalized drama set for a classical stage:[42] the main actors are clearly identified, subsidiary figures do not detract from the action, in short, it is a legible narrative. In Oudry's, we are immediately drawn into the contemplation of luxury objects, and although the rats and the galant are easily identifiable, they are not clearly marked as the important elements to this drama. Rather, we become engaged in trying to seek out the subjects of the partially seen, blurry paintings which hang on the walls, identifying the small figures sitting on the silver centerpiece, marvelling at the texture of the Turkish carpet which is so casually flung on to the floor. That is, we become wrapped up in the very objects disdained by the rustic rat, the character who reminds us that there is a price paid for beautiful *objets de luxe*.

This comparison between the illustrations of Chauveau and Oudry reveals the tremendous differences between the two. The one significant characteristic shared by both is

[42] Bassy has identified French classical theater as one of the major inspirations for Chauveau's illustrations. From this milieu the artist was able to draw from costume design (that is, dress inspired by antiquity), scenery, and the use of machines (especially in those fables where one or more deities must appear). Some vignettes do indeed seem to be directly lifted from stage design, with the presence of framing curtains, space demarcated by columns or pilasters, and the antique dress of the human characters. See for example I, 14, "Simonide préservé par les dieux," 51; II, 17, "Le paon se plaignant à Junon," 95 (Juno appears *ex machina*); III, 8, "L'homme et l'idole de bois," 147. Chauveau's inspiration for classical costumes and the appearance of deities probably has more to do directly with French classical theater than with the indirect influence of the Italians. Bassy, Les "Fables", 41.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

that the two maintained the distance between humans and animals visually by not clothing the beasts.[43] In those fables which feature animals as the protagonists, both artists do grant their animal characters the ability to gesture and show expression. These similarities between Chauveau and Oudry, however, only emphasize the tremendous differences between the two. These are differences in scale, magnificence, inspiration, and the very conception of animals themselves.

Oudry's illustrations of the Fables

Montenault and the "livre de luxe"

Oudry made 276 drawings,[44] including a frontispiece, for a complete series of illustrations for La Fontaine's Fables.[45] The frontispiece was executed in 1752: the rest

[43] Unless of course the fable required this, as in "Le loup devenu berger" (III, 3). In the nineteenth century, for the illustrations of La Fontaine's Fables, animals become completely anthropomorphized (see for example the works by Grandville which will be discussed in the final chapter).

[44] See L'oeuvre de Cochin d'après Jombert fils (Paris, 1770).

[45] Hal Opperman, "Jean-Baptiste Oudry" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1972), 648-650. Opperman viewed the drawings, nearly all of them signed and dated, which were then in a private collection in New York. The collection has since been broken up and sold at auction. Opperman also argues that the engraved illustrations should be considered as belonging more to the oeuvre of Charles-Nicolas Cochin, not Oudry, as the engravings do not retain the "looser and more spirited" character of the drawings. "J.-B. Oudry," 99. However, as we have just seen, if the style could arguably be attributed to Cochin, the composition as well as one of the most important elements of the illustration -- the expression of the animals -- is completely due to Oudry.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

of the drawings date from 1729 to 1734. A small number of these drawings was based on cartoons for tapestries and furnishings for the Beauvais Factory or for the decor of the apartments of the Dauphin.[46] Thus, before the publication of the Fables with Oudry's illustrations, a number of these motifs had already made their appearance on the walls, chairs, and screens of aristocratic interiors. These were necessarily purely decorative endeavors. Although Oudry remained attentive to the pictorial surface in the full series of illustrations, these visual representations of the Fables are far more than merely decorative.

Around 1751, the publisher Louis Regnard de Montenault bought the drawings and with Oudry's approval decided to reproduce them in a deluxe edition of the Fables.[47] Charles-Nicolas Cochin made a series of drawings after Oudry

---

Comparison between the paintings and sketches Oudry made of animals and the animals who populate the printed edition of the Fables makes this clear.

[46] The most complete study of the the designs for the Manufacture of Beauvais is Robert Genaille, "Les Fables de La Fontaine en tapisseries de Beauvais. . .", Mémoires de la Société Académique d'Archéologie, Sciences et Arts du Département de l'Oise, XXVII (1933), 429-81. As Opperman points out, Oudry clearly had in mind the publication of an entire series of the Fables, since the drawings were executed for the most part in the order of the written Fables. Had they only been for tapestry designs, he would not have executed the entire series. Opperman, "J.-B. Oudry," 98.

[47] On the edition of La Fontaine's Fables with Oudry's illustrations, see: Roger Gaucheron, "La préparation et le lancement d'un livre de luxe au XVIIIe siècle. L'édition des Fables de La Fontaine, dite d'Oudry," Arts et Métiers Graphiques, II (1927), 77-82; Bassy, Les "Fables"; Despres, Les éditions.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

and oversaw a team of engravers.[48] In the *avertissement*, Cochin is praised for his role in transforming the unique drawing into the reproduceable engraving. Had Oudry's work fallen into the hands of a jealous collector, it would have been hidden from view, or worse, like so many productions of Antiquity, destroyed. With engravings, these drawings can be made known to the public, and thus give pleasure to a large number of people.[49]

The first prints were exhibited in the 1753 Salon, the same year in which Oudry showed his wildly successful La lice et ses petits which will be discussed in a later chapter. Whereas the painting of the mother dog received glowing descriptions in all the Salon *livrets* mentioning Oudry, only a few dealt with the engravings of the Fables. However, these mentions are all positive, with the authors extolling on the talents of Oudry and the team of engravers. In the "Explication des Peintures," the anonymous author remarked upon "six Engravings after the original Drawings of the Author, which make up part of the complete suite of an Edition of the Fables of La Fontaine, the first Volume of

---

[48] The most significant contributors to the project were: P. Aveline (thirteen prints); Charles Baquoy (eleven); P.-Q. Chedel (thirty-two); C.-N. Cochin (seventeen); L. Lempereur (fourteen); P.-E. Moitte (seventeen); P. F. Tardieu (sixteen).

[49] Jean de La Fontaine, Fables choisies mises en vers (Paris, 1755-59), v.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

which will appear this year."[50] Monsieur Estève, whose "Lettre à un ami" complains of the sheer number of animal paintings by Oudry hanging in the Salon (the artist displayed fifteen paintings plus five drawings) nevertheless speaks highly of the awaited deluxe edition of the Fables. Estève's emphasis on the preciousness of the edition and the attention to detail devoted to its production characterizes the forthcoming edition as something of a collector's item:

> This year we have even seen the execution of a project which the Public awaits with great impatience. These are the Fables of la Fontaine composed by M. Oudry & engraved by different Artists: these handsome Engravings shall ornament an edition of text which is currently in press & which will be very precious. Great care was taken that all that concerns the Typographie in it be well done: the drawings of M. Oudry are all equally handsome.[51]

The Abbé Laugier also refers to the lavishness of the new edition and the eagerness of the awaiting public:

> I stopped to consider in particular the Engravings which shall embellish the new edition of the Fables of la Fontaine. Many pieces were exhibited, they are after the drawings of Oudry, & if the remainder lives up to what I have seen, nothing will surpass this

---

[50] Explication des peintures, sculptures & autres ouvrages de Messieurs de l'Académie royal dont l'exposition a été ordonée, suivant l'intention de Sa Majesté par M. de Vandières (Paris, 1753). Collection Deloynes (Cabinet des Estampes, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris) V, pièce 53. In all following references to items in the Deloynes Collection, bracketed information is from annotations made by Mariette on the documents themselves. Reproduced in Opperman, "J.-B. Oudry," 198-200.

[51] [M. Estève], Lettre à un ami sur l'Exposition des Tableaux faite dans le grand Sallon du Louvre, le 25 Août 1753 (no place or date). Collection Deloynes, V, pièce 56. Reproduced in Opperman, "J.-B. Oudry," 201-202.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> edition which the entire Public awaits with impatience.[52]

Finally, the Abbé Le Blanc's glowing report on Oudry concludes with a much longer piece on the illustrations for the Fables:

> [The prints] very much merit at least some mention. The different hands which were used in them appear to have all been directed by the same mind: despite the variety of the burin, in each we find the sense of the Original; this is certainly sufficient praise & yet it is only to give justic to the cares which are taken by those to whom this suite of Engravings is entrusted; it will really be worthy of the Works of an Author whom we must regard as one of the greatest Painters we have had among our Poets. It is the genious of La Fontaine which excited the imagination de M. Oudry, as that of Homer inflamed that of Phidias, when in three verses of the Iliad this Sculptor conceived of the idea for his Olympian Jupiter. . . .[53]

These critically acclaimed images were equaly well received by royal authority. Vandières, the *directeur-general des bâtiments* and brother of Madame de Pompadour wrote to Montenault on 21 July 1754 expressing his approval:

> All those, Monsieur, who are concerned with the perfection of the arts and the glory of our literature applaud your zeal. I am willingly undertaking to ask the King on your behalf for permission to dedicate this beautiful editon of the Fables of La Fontaine to him, and to present him with some copies.[54]

---

[52] [Abbé Laugier], Jugement d'un Amateur sur l'Exposition des Tableaux de l'an 1753. Lettre à M. le Marquis de V[ence] (no place, 1753). Collection Deloynes, V, pièce 59. Reproduced in Opperman, "J.-B. Oudry," 205-206.

[53] Abbé Le Blanc, Observations sur les ouvrages de MM de l'Académie de peinture et de sculpture exposés au Salon du Louvre en l'année 1753, et sur quelques écrits qui ont rapport à la peinture. A. M. le president de B** (no place, 1753). Delyones Collection, pièce 63. Reproduced in Opperman, "J.-B. Oudry," 207-208.

[54] Cited in Gaucheron, "Préparation," 78.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

The four quarto volumes of the Fables were produced between 1755 and 1759. Each fable was accompanied by at least one plate. Most fables also terminated in a *cul-de-lampe*, these designed by the acclaimed flower-painter Bachelier and executed in wood block prints. The revelation that a technique which had been discredited in the eighteenth century had been used in this deluxe edition apparently raised enough eyebrows that Montenault felt compelled to include an explanation at the end of the final volume:

> [He] had wanted to revive an art which had fallen into barbarity and was nearly entirely extinguished. The *fleurons* and *culs-de-lampe* that people thought had been executed [in woodblock] from a desire to save money actually cost ten or twelve times more than they would have cost had they been done in *taille-douce*.[55]

Besides exhibiting the engravings at the Salon as a sort of preview to the final edition, Montenault also opened up a subscription to the four volumes on 30 June 1755 in the hopes of luring the public to purchase the set at a reduced rate. One could choose from three types of paper with a corresponding price: *papier ordinaire* for 216 livres, *grand papier*, 252 livres, and *très grande papier*, 288 livres. This was a considerable savings over the post-subscription prices of 300, 348, and 400 livres respectively.[56]

Three days before Oudry's death, on 27 April 1753, Montenault presented the first volume to the king. Besides scathing criticism over the typographic composition of

[55] Ibid, 78. Fables choisies, IV, 185.

[56] Fables choisies, I, 4.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Charles-Antoine Jombert,[57] this first volume was immediately popular at court. Yet, despite this initial success, and the critical acclaim for the illustrations and the edition itself, the public itself was slow in responding to the subscriptions. Montenault subsequently underwent a series of setbacks. Cochin, after his election to the post of Secretary of the Academy of Painting, abandoned his work on the Fables project.[58] The printing dates of the second and third were to be August 1755 and March 1756 respectively, but these were not printed until more than a year after the dates set. Two counterfeits in octavo editions by the brothers Elie Luzac (Leyden) and Walter Conrad (Dresden) appeared on the market. Finally, the Seven Years' War caused a general disruption of the book printing business. After the first three volumes had been printed, Montenault had spent more than 100,000 écus and was at the end of his resources. The final volume was three-quarters of the way completed and people had been waiting for three years for its publication. Montenault was forced to petition the king for help in producing this last volume. In return, the publisher offered the original drawings or one hundred

[57] Gaucheron, "Préparation," 79.

[58] Cochin's work on the illustrations tapered off within the first two volumes, and he did not contribute any work for the last two. He executed seven out of twenty-five engravings in the first book, four of twenty in the second, three of twenty-two in the third, none in Book four, two of twenty-one in book five, and only one of twenty-two in the sixth. Thereafter he ceased to contribute to the enterprise.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

copies of the edition. The Louis XV awarded Montenault 80,000 livres and the final volume appeared in June 1760.[59] The king received fifty editions on *très grand papier* and forty on *grand papier* for himself, and an additional ten on *grand papier* to be given as gifts to the great nobility.

The La Fontaine of Painting

Perhaps the most striking feature of Oudry's illustrations is the sheer number itself: 275 images for 239 fables is quite daunting indeed. But of equal note is the lack of repetition among these many prints. For what is astonishing is the tremendous variety within this oeuvre. Just as La Fontaine's Fables rely on diversity of meter, type of verse, tone, and length in order to sustain the reader's interest through twelve books of poems, so Oudry's images do not come from one mold, but rather, vary in terms, for example, of composition, setting, and tonal range. A discussion of each of these images, while a worthwhile endeavor, is not the intent here. Rather, I have selected only a few illustrations for prolonged investigation. I have chosen these particular fables for discussion primarily to show the range of Oudry's imagination, and the extent to which he worked with the text at hand. The artist did not just translate literally into visual terms the language of

[59] Gaucheron, "Préparation," 80; Opperman, "J.-B. Oudry," 650. The sum of 80,000 livres is apparently cited in a letter which Opperman did not have access to, but which was quoted to him by the present owner of the drawings.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

the fable, but examined the extent to which animals could express emotion and function as veritable actors in a visual drama.

The first fable I will discuss is perhaps one of the best known of all of Aesop's Fables, and certainly one of the most popular in the version by La Fontaine. Usually mistranslated as "The Ant and the Grasshopper," "The Cicada and the Ant" (I, 1)[60] is that familiar poem which until the seventeenth century French version had always celebrated hard work and thrift over the indulging in temporal pleasures of the bohemian. The cicada since Antiquity had represented "the passionate love of music and the devil-may-care attitude of poetry, condemned to remain forever poor in material terms, while the ant had always stood for the painstaking care in stocking up for the future."[61] This is the sense of Aesop's version of the fable: idlers who live only for the moment deserve to suffer and cannot expect to share in the rewards of hard work.

Chauveau's vignette follows to a certain degree this traditional interpretation of the fable (Fig. 15). The season is winter, for snow covers the ground and the trees are leafless. Beneath a large dark and gnarled tree, the two insects confront each other. The strange creature on the left (incidentally identical to the cricket in fable V,

[60] Gutwirth makes this clear. "Beast Fable," in Sun King, 107.

[61] Collinet, Oeuvres, 1059.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

4) is identifiable by virtue of its relative size alone as the cicada. In the upper two-thirds of the picture is a scene set in the background, separated from the foreground by the dark root of the tree. In this scene, three poor people warm themselves by a small fire to the left of a little cottage. The telling detail is the small puff of smoke which exits at the back of the cottage, partially hidden by the billowing cloud of smoke arising from the bonfire. Inside the hut, we are to assume, a fire warms the hearth where a family awaits a meal. Thus, cicada and ant are associated respectively, by their position vis à vis each other, to the poor people huddled around a fire outside, and the comfortable ones who sit indoors by the hearth.

Bassy characterizes the moral of a fable as particularly resistant to visual representation. A moral depends on the temporal configuration of before and after (if you do A, then B will follow). In this particular fable, the moral concerns absence (e.g., "pas un seul petit morceau"), and negation or non-presence cannot be represented except by heavy-handed symbolism. Furthermore, the very moralizing overtones which are embedded in abstract signs within the fable cannot be directly translated into images: how does one represent a smug ant? And finally, there are the sounds and noises of the discourse, in itself highly abstract since we are dealing with the verbal interaction of two insects. Clearly, illustrations of the

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

fables must rely on visual plays as rich and complex as the written text itself if they are to be suitable foils. Chauveau, as we have seen in this vignette, cleverly juxtaposes the separate spaces of the two insects and the human scene above. The viewer supplies the moral which cannot be spoken by the represented ant: the outcome of idleness must be want, the diligent one gets the hearth in winter. Chauveau sticks closly to much of the text of the fable, but ultimately remains ambivalent as to which lot is better: carefree in the summer and cold in the winter, or missing out on the joys of song but warm when the weather turns? For what is different in La Fontaine's version of the fable is that he leaves out the moral altogether and instead paints a picture of the miserly ant hoarding her grain and the joyful cicada who not unjustly counted on neighborly spirit to get her through the winter. Clearly, the final repartee of the ant is not to be taken as the triumph of the virtue of farsightedness over the sin of frivolity but rather the awful, cruel self-righteousness of a hardened creature who cannot enjoy the beauty of summertime and song:

> Vous chantiez? j'en suis fort aise:
> Et bien! dansez maintenant!

In other words, this fable, the very first in the series of 239, may be seen as a sort of frontispiece, an attestation of La Fontaine's commitment to the life of the poet, regardless of the pressures of day-to-day living and

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

the need to stockpile material goods in order to prepare for the future. Not that La Fontaine was in any way needy: his career was a successful one and he certainly never suffered any brush with poverty or want. However, as a poet in the age of Louis XIV, he depended on patrons for his survival. Nicolas Fouquet was his great benefactor until the spectacular fall of the financier, and although the poet remained faithful to the former Superintendant of Finances and never condemned him, it was to Versailles he went when Vaux-le-Vicomte was no longer a possibility. La Fontaine, although never an intimate member of court, nevertheless achieved a certain success in that milieu. The first six books of the Fables were dedicated to the Dauphin[62], and although Louis XIV personally vetoed his election to the Académie Française the same year in which Boileau, the royal historigrapher, was inducted, the king gave his approval the following year. Thus the life of even a successful poet revolved around courting patrons and ultimately winning royal approval. La Fontaine had to do this in order to survive, but he did not as a result feel he needed to pay lip-service in return. For many of his fables are startling in their thinly veiled criticisms and mockeries of court life and the handling of specific political events.[63]

[62] Other books were also dedicated to members of the royal family or those closely associated with it (the duc de Maine, the duc de Bourgogne, and Madame de Montespan).

[63] George Couton, La politique de La Fontaine (Paris, 1959).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Chauveau, using a sort of double-plot convention, conveyed a portion of the narrative of the fable, but did not capture either the implied moral or La Fontaine's underlying message: any sacrifice is worth the freedom of the poet. Oudry's illustration, engraved by Denis Sornique, is quite different from Chauveau's. We must see whether this is based on a different understanding of the content of the fable itself.

In Oudry's version (Fig. 18), the picture surface is roughly divided into two vertical halves by the device of a fluted column which sits on a pedestal. On this pedestal, in front of the column, sits a large urn filled with plants with a carving of putti on its side. Putti are also represented on the face of the pededstal. The left half of the image is nearly completely occupied by an enormous tapestry landscape which is tied at one corner to the column. To the right is a distant landscape. The bottom of the tapestry sits on a stone floor, forming a sort of carpet for a grasshopper (like Chauveau, Oudry does not represent a cicada) and an ant which sit atop it. It appears that beyond the confrontation of the two insects, nothing else of the fable is represented. But just as this fable, like so many others, is ultimately a confrontation between two creatures ("The Cicada and the Ant," "The Crow and the Fox," "The Wolf and the Dog," etc.), Oudry, like Chauveau, sets up other visual oppositions as well. But whereas Cheauveau's double-plot ultimately reflects on the literal unfolding of

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

the poem, Oudry does not introduce any action, human or otherwise, to supply a supporting narrative. Instead, the spaces within the frame break down into art and nature, the real and the artificial. These terms themselves immediately alert us to the possibility that Oudry has gone beyond the text of the fable to a narrative of his own, and one which concerns the artist's trade.

Bassy argues that this illustration may be read as a manifesto of Oudry's art.[64] The argument is worth summarizing here. The immediate focal point, by virtue of relative size and placement in the picture plane, is the pedestal frieze of the two putti disputing, a metonym for fables themselves. This frieze of putti, an architectural ornament, is set on top of the "real" landscape background. This is in contrast to the situation on the left where "real" insects are placed against reproduced nature. The positioning of the insects designates the "ant side" (that is, the portion on the right) as the one where a sentimental artistic representation (the putti) is imposed and opposed to living nature, the "cicada side" (the portion on the left) where the accord between realist art (tapestry reproducing nature so perfectly it is indistinguishable from the real landscape on the right) and the representation of real nature (the insects) are harmoniously realized. Thus, the ant represents ars imposed on natura, or the natural

---

[64] Bassy, "La Fontaine et ses deux reflets," 31-40.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

made artificial, whereas the cicada stands for natura on ars, in other words, artifice made natural.

Oudry's own position in all this is clear. The very use of a tapestry as the symbol of the cicada lets us know this. The artist was intimately associated with the tapestry works and was nominated to the post of *Dessinateur et peintre de la Manufacture de Tapisseries de Beauvais* in 1726. Oudry also made no secret of his alliances to realist art as developed in his conférence entitled Manière d'étudier la couleur delivered to the Painting Academy.[65] In Oudry's camp are artists such as Huet, Chardin, and Greuze, the "peintres du réel." But whom is Oudry opposing? Clearly, the makers of putti and allegories, the "peintres des Graces" as exemplified by Boucher. For in the eighteenth century, artists were caught up in the very problem of the true and the false in art.[66] This artistic debate found visual expression in the pages of the illustrated book.

Thus, this illustration, far from suffering from gratuitous ornamentation,[67] serves as Oudry's testament on the role of painting. First, that the fantastic element is not beyond the realm of the realists: "le véritable

[65] Jean-Baptiste Oudry, "Manière d'étudier la couleur en comparant les objets entre eux" in Henri Jouin, Conférences de l'Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture (Paris, 1883), 378-387.

[66] Bassy, "La Fontaine," 37.

[67] Collinet, La Fontaine, lxxi.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

merveilleux est en effet pour eux à chercher dans un `excès de réel.'" Secondly, the artists must stop "superimposing an affected art on nature and must on the contrary bring the natural to art."[68] In essence then, this image illustrates not so much the confrontation between thrift and frivolity, but the artistic beliefs of Oudry as laid out in verbal and written form in his conférence.

No other illustration by Oudry strays so far from the written narrative of the fable. Indeed, in many instances he used the device of multiple plates in order to include as many scenes from the written fable as possible. "Le renard et la cigogne" (I, 18) is one such example. This fable concerns a favorite theme of La Fontaine's, that the trickster will ultimately be outwitted. In the first of two panels (engraved by Aubert; Fig. 19), the crane stands to the left of the fox, displeasure clearly written on her avian features. On all fours the fox, the object of her annoyance, laps happily at clear liquid in a flat dish, his tail curled around him. The crane's long beak conveys at once her disdain at the fox's rudeness and offers the reason why she cannot partake in the meal. In the second scene (engraved by J. M. Flipart; Fig. 20), the fox, his back to us, turns to the right to look up helplessly at the gargantuan, long-necked vessel into which the crane, with

---

[68] Bassy, "La Fontaine," 38.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

arched neck and wings spread in pleasure, daintily dips her beak.

Chauveau, restricted by format, had combined these two episodes of the fable into one scene for his vignette (Fig. 21). Here, the crane, a much more generalized bird than Oudry's, dips her beak into the jar, while to her left the fox tries in vain to poke his snout in as well. In a clever reference to the elided episode, an empty plate and knife sit in the foreground. Craggy hills and trees stand in the middleground behind the crane and in the background behind the fox. Again, we see how Chauveau has reduced the action to its minimum elements and focused solely on the protagonists in the foreground.

Oudry likewise organized the composition around the animals. However, his visual narrative unfolds over two plates, not only suggesting a passage in time, but also enabling the artist to establish a change of place as well. For in the first, the fox is quite literally at home: he stands before the opening to a cave, the craggy rocks giving him pyramidal support. A cluster of trees with crisscrossed trunks forms the background behind the crane. In this very rugged, natural setting, the crane manages to look completely ill at ease. Her long body, here twisted inelegantly, was not meant for these cragged spaces. But in the second image, it is the fox's turn to be out of place. The elegant crane fits quite easily into this setting, the park grounds of some country château. Just as the fox was

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

buttressed by craggy cave in the first plate, the crane here stands before a fountain, whose curving spurt of water emanating from a grotesque repeats the graceful arch of her neck. The wildly growing trees of the first panel are replaced in the second with a neat row of trees with parallel trunks set equidistantly from one another.

From the text of the fable we know that the crane has gotten even on two counts: first, in her choice of receptacle, and second, by serving a repast of a sumptuousness unavailable to the fox. For the fox, facetiously called "le Galand" and "Sire," had served nothing but a clear broth, since he lived in miserly fashion, but the crane offered up a perfectly cooked roast, but chopped in small pieces and stuffed into a fox-proof vessel.

The staging of the crane's revenge in the context of an aristocratic park adds another element to the fable. La Fontaine made his sympathies clear: the so-called galant, the preposterous would-be gentleman-fox deserved what he got and we are not to pity him as he skulks off with tail between his legs and ears adroop. Oudry suggests that besides rude trickery, the fox had also committed a major breach of etiquette. If the rustic fox wanted to socialize with the likes of the truly aristocratic crane, then he must not skimp on expense or the comfort of his guests. In this particular illustration then, nature and civilization as represented by the cultivated park grounds, are set in

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

opposition to each other, but unlike the moral of "The City Rat and the Country Rat," it is civilized behavior which wins over uncouth nature in "The Fox and the Crane."

We have seen how Oudry's animals interact with one another and with their surroundings, in ways which reveal or make possible certain readings of the text. That is, the physical juxtaposition of these characters is all important. However, there is another way in which Oudry's animals uncover hidden meanings in the text. This is revealed in the fable "Le lion malade et le renard" (VI, 14).

La Fontaine's twenty-five line fable is divided into two parts. The first eleven lines, beginning with the royal writ ("De par le Roi des Animaux") concern the contents of the decree. Lines twelve to fourteen connect the two parts of the fable, moving quickly from the envoy's passage from "chaque espèce" to the House of the Fox. The second part, also eleven lines long, presents the wise observation of one of the foxes:

> Grand merci de son passeport.
> Je le crois bon; mais dans cet antre
> Je vois fort bien comme l'on entre,
> Et ne vois pas comme on en sort. (21-25)

This poem, a sort of diptych, presents on the one hand the reassuring promises of the lion, and on the other, the revelation that these promises are false. The "hinge" on this diptych is the envoy, the link between Majesty and subject.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

In Chauveau's vignette, the lion is barely seen in his dark cave in the background (Fig. 22). In the foreground is the meeting of the fox and the animal deputy (dog? ram?) bearing the edict of the Prince: "Bon passeport contre la dent;/ Contre la griffe tout autant" (9-10). The fox gestures to the many paw prints leading to the cave, and in the middleground we see two animals making that journey. Chauveau here relies on the maximum number of indicators to tell the story. These indicators are all literal renditions of the text depicting the two parts of the story as well as the element which links them. The animals go to the lion in his cave, and the fox reads the writ, pointing to the prints. Chauveau is primarily concerned in stressing the awful deception of the lion: the emphasis in the foreground on the centrally placed bearer of the royal edict promising safe conduct makes the ultimate fate of the trusting animals all the more horrible.

This is very different from Oudry's handling of the fable (Fig. 23). The characters have been reduced to the bare minimum: the lion in the upper left, and the fox in the lower right. The envoy, that hinging element in the text and so crucial to Chauveau's interpretation has been omitted. The composition is divided horizontally into two parts by the line of the hillock and the shading: the top half is in light, the lower portion is shadowed. The fox sniffs so suspiciously at the paw prints before him, we sense that he will not blindly follow them along the path to

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

the cave. And in front of his den, the lion crouches on his stomach, his features revealing such evil glee as he contemplates his pile of bones, we have no doubt as to what happened to the makers of the paw prints.

Chauveau's vignette focused on the lion's deceit, and did so by way of a singularly human artifact: the printed document. In Oudry's version, the cruelty of the lion is no less apparent, but we do not need the intermediary of the edict-bearing envoy. The artist has gone to the heart of the text to reveal that prudence is the best weapon against those who would abuse their position of power. Here, the story is not carried by the interaction of its characters, but by means of facial expression alone. In place of the envoy bearing a symbol from the world of humans, Oudry has substituted human expression itself.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

CHAPTER 4

ART AND SCIENCE

In the previous chapter we established the philosophical preoccupations with animals as best expressed by Jean de la Fontaine. Illustrations of his Fables revealed how an artist such as Jean-Baptiste Oudry could use expressions to convey the ideas expressed in the text. With this chapter I turn to the relationship of art and science, and the role of animals therein. I will look in particular at the founding of the Académie Royale des Sciences in 1666 and the decisive role it played in the establishment and dissemination of the new, experimental science. Its impact on the general public will be discussed, with emphasis on the importance of anatomy in the popularization of science. Of particular interest is Claude Perrault, whose deluxe folio edition on the anatomy of animals used both a textual and a visual language to give form to this new science.

Founding of the Académie Royale des Sciences

The Académie Royale des Sciences was founded in 1666,[1] the first royally approved institution for professional

[1] There was no royal ordinance or legal writ concerning the foundation of the new academy on December 22, 1666. The

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

scientists in Paris. Until this date, scientists -- professionals as well as amateurs and dilettantes -- had to convene in informal meetings which took place in the residences of one or another member. Throughout the seventeenth century, the degree of organization of these gatherings depended to a large extent upon the personalities guiding each respective meeting. These were invariably short-lived ventures.[2] After many of the more successful

---

first ordinance was not bestowed upon the scientific body until the reorganizing of the Academy in 1699. For the history of the Académie Royale des Sciences, see Alice Stroup, A Company of Scientists: Botany, Patronage, and Community at the 17th Century Parisian Royal Academy of Sciences (Berkeley, 1990). The major focus is on the botanical history project from its inception to ultimate failure, but the work offers good insights into the Academy's endeavors as corporate in nature and its relationship to external factors. Roger Hahn, Anatomy of a Scientific Institution: The Paris Academy of Sciences, 1666-1803 (Berkeley, 1971) discusses the relationship between the Académie and the evolving state apparatus of Louis XIV and Colbert. Roger Brown, Scientific Organizations in 17th Century France: 1620-1680, (Baltimore, 1934) details the relationship between amateur societies and Académie; Ernest Maindron, L'Ancienne Académie des Sciences (Paris, 1895) defines four periods of the Académie's development in its relation to the Crown, noting changes in membership. L'Académie des Sciences (Paris, 1888) by the same author extends the study through the Napoleonic period). Joseph Bertrand, L'Académie des Sciences et les académiciens de 1666-1793 (Paris, 1869) concerns the Academy of 1666 and 1699). Histoire de l'Académie des Sciences depuis 1666 jusqu'à son renouvellement en 1699 (Paris, 1709). This is the official account by one of the Academy's most illustrious secretaries.

[2] The most important proto-academy in France immediately preceding the founding of the royal institution was the one established by Henri-Louis Habert de Montmor (c. 1600-1679). This had regular meetings for only six years, from around 1657 to 1663. Before Montmor, Marin Mersenne (1588-1688) had organized conferences (c. 1635-48) around the new science. Albert J. George, "The Genesis of the Académie des Sciences," Annals of Science, III (1938), 372-401. Brown, Scientific Organizations, 31.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

meetings of amateurs failed for lack of unity and, most importantly, for want of funds, around 1664 a group of dissatisfied scientists led by Melchisedec Thévenot petitioned the Crown for the establishment of a body dedicated to experimental science. The stress placed on the type of science to be investigated points to a major division in the discipline of the period: a science based on deductive reasoning and that based solely on observable fact. This latter type of science, with its emphasis on experiment and induction, was touted as the "new" science, in opposition to the older knowledge "legislated by schools, councils, learned men, and the authority of saints, revelation, and Holy Writ."[3] Thus the practitioners of the new distanced themselves from the long undisputed acceptance of the lore handed down from Classical Antiquity which informed the deductive approach endorsed by the Faculté de Médecine in Paris.[4]

Thévenot and his colleagues, most importantly the astronomer Adrien Auzout, conceived of their organization as one for professionals, not dilettantes or amateurs. Their detailed petition to Colbert for a Compagnie des Sciences et des Arts (c. 1664/5) laid out plans that would explicitly

[3] Bernard Cohen, Revolution in Science (Cambridge, 1985), 147.

[4] For a contemporary discussion of the divide between the Ancients and the Moderns in matters of literature, art, and science, see Charles Perrault, Parallèle des Anciens et des Modernes en ce qui regarde les arts et les sciences, 4 vols. (Paris, 1688-1697).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

exclude all those but experts in the field. They appealed to Colbert's own ambitions to build a centralized state by underlining the utilitarian function a panel of professional scientists could perform in the realm of technology, which would consequently promote trade and productivity. Further, an organization funded by the Crown would guarantee loyalty, since the livelihood of its members would depend upon the State.[5] An alternative scheme was proposed by Charles Perrault, who had dreams of uniting all areas of French culture under one monolithic academic umbrella. This latter proposal, however, did not take into consideration the resistance of the already established organizations in language, painting, and sculpture. Thus the Compagnie became the accepted scheme, with the further stipulation that the glory of the Crown was to be celebrated.

This new academy of science found a major antagonist in the Faculté de Médecine in Paris, a rivalry which would continue well into the eighteenth century. Based on the medieval guild system, the Faculté had long enjoyed a complete monopoly in the area of science and medicine, indeed an uncontested position given the rapid demise of so many smaller, unofficial meetings of potential rivals. By allying itself with the new academy, indeed, by bestowing upon it the title of Académie Royale, the Crown thus presented itself as resolute in its support of the

---

[5] Hahn, Anatomy, 9.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

advancement of the new science and all the reforms for which it stood.[6]

The early meetings of the Académie Royale des Sciences reveal the excitement and industry of a group of scientists united at last in a professional organization with full government support. Claude Perrault's monumental Observatoire, which will be discussed below, was begun in 1667 and completed in 1672, and offered tangible evidence of the Académie's importance in the realm of science and Parisian culture in general.[7] One of the areas of investigation which was expanded and developed by the sevententh century Parisian scientists was that of anatomy, both human and animal. In the following section I will discuss in detail just what this new area of science was. It is important for this study because the anatomical projects of these scientists extended well beyond the boundaries of the Academy's walls.

---

[6] Colbert's successor, Louvois, was outspoken in his criticism of the Faculté, in 1686 explicitly ordering the Académie to challenge the findings of the medical faculties. Stroup, Company, 172.

[7] On the Observatoire see: Charles Joseph Etienne Wolf, Histoire de l'Observatoire de Paris de sa fondation à 1793, 1902; Michael Petzet, "Claude Perrault als Architect des Pariser Observatoriums," Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte, XXX, 1967, 1-54; Antoine Picon, Claude Perrault ou la curiosité d'un classique, 1988, chapter 10.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

The Académie and Perrault's Project for Anatomy

The Procès-verbaux for the early years of the Académie reveal that the presentations of anatomists occupied a significant portion of the weekly meetings. The minutes of January 15, 1667 include Perrault's Projet pour les expériences et observations anatomiques. The opening lines declare the importance of the study of anatomy:

> The truths. . . with which the King wants Physicians to occupy themselves. . . shall be the most basic as they belong and relate to what must be the foundation of the complete well-being of men, and the only thing which is also necessary for everyone; . . . those truths which are sought by contemplation and by the dissection of the body of humans and other animals must be considered the foundation. . . of all the others because they are the subject of the Use of simple as well as complex Medicines of which Botany and chemistry supply the knowledge.[8]

After linking the task of the scientist with the desires of the monarch, the text emphasizes the solid, fundamental nature of the science of anatomy. Not a dazzling discipline, that is, not something wondrous which would recall too well the magical claims of charlatans at the fairs or the quack remedies of the dilettantes, anatomy is to be overlaid with all the solemnity and respect due to the science which has everything to do with the well-being of

---

[8] This and the following exerpts from Perrault's Projet are recorded in the Académie des Sciences, Procès-verbaux (January 15, 1667). Perrault's mention of the King's desire and emphasis on the fact that anatomy will be the basis for the study of medicine (and thus botany and chemistry) makes clear the importance of medicine as a justification for much of the research undertaken by the Académie: it is for the good of the people as well as for the personal glory of the monarch.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

all humankind. The practise of anatomy in many ways encapsulates what the new Academy stood for: it is a peeling back of layers, revealing to the professionally trained eye of the scientist the inner workings of human and animal bodies.

Once the general claims for the importance of anatomy have been made, the more mundane aspects of how anatomy must be practised are elaborated upon. The systematic penetration of human and animal bodies in order to reveal the structure and use of various organs, without blindly deferring to the wisdom of the Ancients which incorporated much of the mythical and superstitious, is to be the endeavor of the professional scientist. In so doing, the seventeenth century French anatomist institutionalizes some of the major precepts of the founder of modern anatomy, Andreas Vesalius (1514-1564) while at the same time making a distinct break with him. Although the Paduan himself made a decisive move away from Galen, then the model for human anatomy, by emphasizing the absolute necessity for the anatomist to carry out dissections and observations himself rather than relegating the former to a surgeon and relying on books for the latter, Vesalius was unwilling to promote himself as the critic of the Ancients. His "non-revolutionary attitude"[9] prevented Vesalius from a complete reform of Galen's physiological doctrines, and furthermore,

---

[9] Cohen, Revolution, 179.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

his major work, De humani corporis fabrica (1543) was written neither in the vernacular nor in the current scholarly Latin, but like other Renaissance humanists, resorted to a refined and purified vocabulary and syntax. Thus Vesalius' decision to adopt the artistic prose of Cicero, his concern for philology and correct technical language rendered De fabrica, with all its major contributions to the practise of anatomy, difficult for his contemporaries to grasp. According to Cohen, this was the only major scientific treatise of the Renaissance and the century following which was immediately translated from Latin into a vernacular language (in this case, German) for publication.[10] Perrault and his colleagues, on the other hand, began their investigations with the very premise that the Classical texts were not to be relied on, and furthermore, since their studies were published for the most part in French, these seventeenth century scientists were clearly not so concerned with Ancient philology as promoting the greatness of French culture.

---

[10] Ibid., 486. Cohen emphasizes Vesalius' commitment to the humanist tradition in order to demonstrate the non-revolutionary character of the anatomist, despite the radical and revolutionary nature of the discoveries themselves. Whereas the great anatomist saw himself as merely reviving the work of the Ancients, modern scientists are apt to characterize Vesalius as the herald of the new, empirical approach to the discipline with its emphasis on actual dissections.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

After emphasizing the need for actual study and observation of dissections, Perrault then distinguished between two types of anatomical truths:

> These truths which we call anatomical are of two types; one is concerned with matters of fact (*choses de fait*), the other can be called matters of law (*choses de droit.*) The first consists of the knowledge of the Structure of organs, the other in the discovery of their use and their actions.
>
> As the knowledge of one of these truths serves to lead to the knowledge of the other, and that the structure of parts frequently takes shape from their use, likewise the uses and functions are to be found by observing the organs which give rise to them. . . .

The *vérités de fait*, which have to do with the structure of organs, rely on the evidence revealed from dissection and observation. The truths concerning *choses de droit*, on the other hand, have more to do with the reasoning based on the established facts. Perrault's distinction between the two types of fact "correspond roughly to the dividing line between anatomy and physiology" therefore "with a remarkable clairvoyance. . . underlining the intimate relationship between sensible evidence and reasoning in the scientific thought process."[11]

A detailed catalogue of body parts and bodily functions follows in a veritable crescendo of medical terms. This is the first time such professional language is used in this manifesto of the new anatomical procedures:

> Most of the organs in the brain, Thymus, Mediatin, Liver, Spleen, Epispoon, Pancreas, Atrabilious glands, Thoracic vessels, and Lymphatics are parts to which are attributed uses about which Anatomists disagree, and

---

[11] Picon, Claude Perrault, 44.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> also Sanguification, the generation of milk, conception, and the nourishing of the Foetus, have evident actions, but of which the manner and organs are not things completely consistant and worked out by Anatomists.

Until now, this presentation to the newly assembled body of professional scientists has remained rather sober and restrained. In the paragraph which follows the dry listing of body parts and bodily functions, however, the language turns lyrical almost in spite of itself. Replacing the pedantic tone of the preceding sections, their precise parameters delimiting the scientist's task, the anonymous author suddenly turns around and faces a boundless universe full of wonder and curiosity at the knowledge this new science can bring. There is nothing of the sense of helplessness which had overwhelmed Pascal in the face of the vastness of the cosmos:

> The solution to all these doubts will furnish quite a lot of material to work with, and it is a subject whose vastness is capable of giving way to a very extensive Curiosity and of Hope of being able to make many observations which will be very wonderful and useful and which have not yet been accomplished, by which one will proceed along these two avenues which are normally followed in the research of natural things. . . .

In the final paragraph, Perrault resumes the professional voice and enumerates the needs and requirements of the practising anatomist:

> For all that, it will be necessary to provide suitable subjects and instruments and a convenient location. The subjects shall be human Cadavers as well as living animals; among the human cadavers, above all that of a woman who recently gave birth, or who is a nurse will be necessary in order to discover the canals which carry the milk matter to the mammary glands; the others will serve to find the lymphatic vessels which

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> have not yet been seen very clearly except in animals. The living animals on which experiments will be made shall be dogs, pigs, sheep, calves, donkeys, cows, horses; and the instruments shall be an anatomical table with scalpels, *araigues*, scissors, needles, hammers, syringes, blowlamps, drills, sponges, vessels to receive blood with chemical extracts for the coagulation, fermentation, and effervescence tests mentioned above.

The efforts to find a suitable location for the fledgling academy occupied a surprising amount of time. In the following section I discuss Perrault's project for the Paris Observatory, and the problems of designing a building with specific technological functions for which there were no existing models.

Perrault's Observatoire

At first installed informally in Colbert's own personal library, the academicians soon moved to a specially reserved section of the Bibliothèque du roy.[12] This was still not an ideal situation, and Auzout, in the dedication to the king for his Ephéméride du comète (1665), underlined the importance of building a structure specifically designed as an observatory. In March 1667, Louis XIV acquired lands for such an edifice, and in June of that same year the first stone was laid.

The Observatory was the second major edifice constructed for the purpose of providing spectators with a

[12] According to Cassini IV (1748-1845), the location at the Bibliothèque du roi was always considered temporary. However, it was a concrete sign of the King's approval and sanction of this new scientific body. On the various sites of the newly founded Academy, see Maindron, L'Académie, 7.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

position from which to view subjects outside. But unlike Le Vau's Ménagerie at Versailles, the Observatory of Paris was built for the purposes of looking up at the heavens, not down at the terrestrial creatures. On the other hand, like the royal zoo, the Observatory at once belonged to a long tradition of building devoted to observation while monumentalizing this form in a novel manner (Fig. 24). In the history of architecture devoted to the study of the celestial universe, the Paris Observatory's unprecedented size and grandeur celebrated the continuation of this august science as well as the preeminince of Louis XIV's astronomers. The Observatoire's austere plan and lack of external ornamentation[13] (Fig. 25 a, b) emphasized the seriousness of its function. Nevertheless, despite the spare geometry of the building -- a cubic space with attached octagonal pavilions at the two corners of the south façade and a square pavilion at the center of the north face -- as well as the disregard for the canons of architecture in placing a much higher story above the ground floor and

[13] The only ornamentation planned for the Observatory was for two pairs of ionic pilasters framing the first story central bay of the south façade. These were replaced by two bas-reliefs by F. Temporiti representing trophies celebrating the art of astronomy. This change occured by 1680: the trophies are evident in Sebastien Leclerc's vignette for J. Picard, Voyage d'Uranibourg (1680), representing the Observatory in a central oval flanked by two medallions containing Uraniborg ("the palace of Uranie", the muse of astronomy) and the round tower of Copenhagen respectively. These two Danish buildings were the two major prototypes which Perrault had at his disposal. Picon, Claude Perrault, 199.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

first story levels, the resulting building with its dramatically stepped façade, use of clean white stone, multiplicity of arched windows, and the graceful vaulting of ceilings and the main staircase in the west central bay is not without grace and charm. Indeed, it is quite possible that Perrault's commitments to architecture may have been in some conflict with his role as a professional scientist. When the world renowned astronomer Jean-Dominique Cassini, founder of the great Cassini dynasty in astronomy, arrived in Paris on April 4, 1669 at the invitation of Pierre de Carcavy, he was immediately approached by a representative of the Académie, the fellow astronomer Auzout, who presented him with the plans of the Observatoire. The Italian astronomer did not find the plans to his liking. His corrections of Perrault would have resulted in a much less massive structure, with four pavilions jutting out from narrow galleries in order to make possible a complete mapping of the sun's course over a year. Cassini's assertion that Perrault had sacrificed utility in the name of magnificence could only result in creating a hostile adversary of the Frenchman. Cassini IV, the great-grandson of Jean-Dominique, recounts an anecdote from this rivalry in a letter to the Comte d'Angiviller in 1785:[14]

> Jean-Dominique Cassini arrived in Paris the fourth of April 1669; he had barely been presented to Louis XIV when His Majesty ordered that the plans and projects of the Observatoire which was only built up to the first

[14] A.N., $O^1$1691. This is cited in full in Picon, Claude Perrault, 206.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> story be shown to him, so that he could give his opinion. Cassini rightly found that the plan did not follow common sense; a day was set with M. Perrault in order to argue the issue before the King and M. Colbert, and the eloquent Perrault defended his plan and architecture with very pretty sentences; my great-grandfather, who did not speak French very well, tortured the ears of the King, M. Colbert and Perrault in his attempt to plead the cause of astronomy, and it was at that moment when Perrault in the heat of the debate said to the King: "Sire, this babbler does not know what he is talking about."

However, some of Cassini's modifications were adopted by Perrault in the final building, including the transformation from an octagonal to a square plan of the northern pavilion, which thus established a better viewing point from the north. The significant change occurred at the level of the main story. Perrault had organized the interior space around a "T" formed by galleries connecting the three pavilions. Cassini immediately objected to the absence of a large observatory room on the top story: "a large room seems to me still necessary in order to have the convenience of allowing the sun to enter by a hole and to be able to inscribe on the ceiling the description of the daily path of the image of the sun."[15] By reorienting the three rooms and staircase, which had occupied the four bays flanking the original bar of the "T" (thus in essence, turning them ninety degrees), Perrault was able to open up a large square room (Fig. 26). In order to vault this space, however, the architect had to raise the level of the

[15] From J.-D. Cassini (Cassini I), "Vie de Cassini" in J.-D. Cassini (Cassini IV), Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire des sciences et à celle de l'Observatoire royal de Paris, Paris, 1810. Cited in Picon, Claude Perrault, 206.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

building which he did by creating an attic story below the cornice. Because the north pavilion did not require a similarly large vault, Perrault was able to construct in the space above the second story of the north pavilion and below the actual level of the building a little room for astronomers working on the terrace.

Once the Observatory was built, Perrault with Colbert's support, proposed that the Académie be permanently housed in the new building. However, there were numerous problems with this arrangement. It was too far from the center of the city, there was the confusion of too many apparatuses serving different scientific needs, and finally, the great disadvantage of having all the astronomers making observations "in the same place, with the same instruments, was perhaps more harmful than useful to the progress of astronomy."[16]

Once again, as in the case of the Ménagerie, it would appear that the ideas embodied in the form of the building were perhaps more important than the actual use of it by the people for whom it was designed. However, even though the Observatoire did not ultimately become the headquarters of the Académie, the building was able to be used for at least one major scientific venture. For it was instrumental in the remapping of France's boundaries, of major importance to military strategy. Antoine Picon, in his comprehensive

---

[16] Cassini IV, in Maindron, L'Académie, 8.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

analysis of Perrault's life and work,[17] sees in the structure both the massiveness and austerity of military architecture as well as "the compactness which the academician would attribute to living organisms:"[18] that is, the Observatoire becomes a veritable "édifice-machine."[19] This perhaps overstates the case, but there is no doubt that the importance of the Observatory lay in its function as the symbol of the new science, even if it could not be considered as vital to the progress of science in itself. In a print by Sébastian Leclerc which will be discussed in more detail below, the Observatory was included as a member of the group portrait of the Académie (Fig. 27), even though its inclusion in this official print meant creating a fictional situation: the Observatoire could not possibly have been seen from the vantage point given.

Despite the problems of the Observatory, some important meetings were held there, most notably the one on August 20,

[17] Claude Perrault. This volume accompanied the first major exhibit devoted to the architect-scientist. The book is not without some organizational problems (see Robert Berger's review in the Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians, XLVIII [1989], 394-95). However, Picon discusses aspects of Perrault's life and work which are not normally included in analyses of his architectural oeuvre (most relevantly, his participation in the debate between the Ancients and the Moderns, his position vis à vis the cartesian animal-machine, and his institutionalization of anatomy), copious illustrations encompassing his work as scientist, architect, and architectural theorist, a comprehensive bibliography as well as the list of exhibited items, making it a valuable source for Perrault scholarship.

[18] Picon, Claude Perrault, 202.

[19] Ibid., 220.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

1690 in the presence of James II, in contrast to the king of France, a noted amateur of science.[20] The meetings of the Académie, however, with few exceptions continued in the Bibliothèque du roi until the reorganization of the Academy in 1699, when it received its first offical Règlement and changed locations to the Louvre, where it would remain until the suppression of the Académie in 1793.

The Règlement of 1699

On April 15, 1699 the Académie met for the first time in its new quarters in the Louvre. The following month the Mercure galant reported that "His Majesty wanted the public to be able to judge for itself the form and utility of these assemblies, persuaded that the mysteries studied there would attain greater respect if they were exposed to the light of day."[21] This meeting, one of two per year open to the public stipulated by the Ordinance, was crammed with spectators, including a number of women. The role of the public for the reception of the new science is quite clear. This idea of enlightenment by public demonstration will be

---

[20] Académie des Sciences, Procès-verbaux (August 20, 1690). Also see Jean-Dominique Cassini's report to members of the Académie on August 27, concerning the five satellites of Saturn. The astronomer was most impressed by the English king's knowledge and active participation in discussion, reporting the findings of astronomers from his country including Newton.

[21] Cited in Maindron, Académie, 28.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

taken to further extremes at the Jardin des Plantes to be discussed below.

The Académie's Louvre quarters consisted of six rooms occupying the south-west corner of the cour carrée. This suite of rooms provided workspace, a library, meeting room, as well as an extensive cabinet of curiosities. The three rooms running along the south wall included two for collections (including marine models) and one, equipped with a tribune for spectators in the public meetings, reserved for the Académie's meetings. Here, ancient sculptures filled the niches and tapestries covered the walls. This sober room contained one painting, Antoine Coypel's Minerva holding the portrait of Louis XV.[22] The remaining three rooms, which ran along the southern wall, included the library or Salle des globes, containing skeletons of large quadrupeds, celestial and terrestrial globes, and library. The Chambre du roi, supplementing the adjacent library, would later hold the natural history collection, clockworks, and models of machines and tools willed to the Académie in 1753. The last room was lined with cabinets containing anatomical specimens and various mechanical works.

The twice-yearly meetings of the Académie which were open to the public enabled the new scientific knowledge to be transmitted to a curious public directly from savant to

---

[22] The Academicians evidently took great care of this room and the items in it, as this was noted in perfect condition in 1783. Maindron, Académie, 33.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

spectator. More frequent, and perhaps more spectacular meetings were held at the Académie's adjunct site, the Jardin des Plantes. This next section discusses the importance of the Jardin for specialists and specatators alike. On the one hand a working laboratory for anatomists, it also provided an open forum for the dissemination of science to a non-paying public. I want to turn now to a discussion of how the new science was presented to an audience of non-specialists.

The Jardin des Plantes

In the Preamble of the Déclaration of 20 January 1673 to Louis XIV, Colbert sums up the inception of the Jardin des Plantes in Paris to the current use of the royal garden.[23] Louis XIII had founded the Jardin royale des plantes médicinales in 1635 with *premier médecin du roi* Guy de Brosse as head, "for the cultivation of medicinal plants." The new royal edict decreed "that not only was the demonstration of the exterior qualties of medicinal plants to be made at said Jardin royal, but also that of their virtues, use, power and properties together with all sorts of medical matters and pharmaceutical operations." Botany would remain a major area of scientific investigation throughout the early modern period, and scientists would

---

[23] Cited in full in George Gannal, "Cours d'anatomie au jardin du roi" (Bulletin de la Société de l'histoire de Paris, 1893, 21-24.)

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

consistently emphasize the benefits of this discipline to the body politic as a way of justifying their money- and time-consuming researches in this area. Like the Académie itself, the founding of the Jardin posed a direct challenge to the Faculté's monopoly in the area of medical education. And like the Académie, what was emphasized was the newness of the science taught: the use of chemical analysis of plants explicitly opposed the Facultés rejection of chemistry.[24]

As noted in the first chapter, the phrase "utility to the public" was not used in connection with animals in zoos until the post-Revolutionary period. In matters of scientific demonstrations, however, public utility became a virtual catch-phrase for justifying the promotion of the new science. Educating the public in the area of medicine in particular is of major importance. A public with a good grasp of the latest developments in medical matters yields healthier citizens, therefore a healthier kingdom, and so ultimately reflects on the benificence of the monarch. Medicine as public knowledge thus helps validate all scientific research including that of a more esoteric nature.

The garden's plan included a complex of buildings located along the western edge of the park designed to

---

[24] Rio Howard, "Medical Politics and the founding of the Jardin des Plantes in Paris", Journal of the Society for the Bibliography of Natural History, IX (1980), 395-402.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

contain galeries of natural history collections, as well as an adjacent ampitheater.[25] These were to make it possible to provide lecture-demonstrations "for the greatest perfection and utility of said establishment and easiest instruction of medical students": one of the three doctors appointed to the garden was to be skilled in "conducting ocular and manual demonstrations of all and each of the surgical operations whatever their nature." As Colbert reminds Louis XIV, however, these demonstrations were not just for students:

> By our declaration of December 1671, [we] organized the form of the administration of said Jardin and endowed it with people of capacity and quite well-known, in medicine and surgery as well as in pharmacy, to conduct public exercises and lessons on all areas of medicine and its operations. And, because this establishment is of a great public utility, all the more so that the exercises are conducted there for free, also our intention is to perfect it in adding to it all the necessary advantages, conveniences and privileges; and even, so that those whom we have proposed for the direction of the said schools may in all freedom conduct surgical operations, dissections and anatomical demonstrations, and that the proper subjects to this effect be administered to them without troubling or disturbing them, we very much wanted to see this come to pass by our letters concerning these necessities.[26]

---

[25] In 1853 the old ampitheater was torn down in order to extend the building containing the natural history collections. A new, larger ampitheater and anatomical gallery was erected on the northern side of the Jardin des Plantes. For a full account of the history of the Parisian natural history garden from its beginnings until the mid-nineteenth century, see Paul-Antoine Cap, Le Muséum d'Histoire Naturelle (Paris, 1855). The best bibliographic source for the Jardin is Louis Denise, Bibliographie historique et iconographique du Jardin des Plantes: Jardin Royale des Plantes Médicinales et Muséum d'Histoire Naturelle (Paris, 1903).

[26] Cited in Gannal, "Cours," 21-22.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Thus the free public lectures covered various areas of scientific research, most notably botany and anatomy. Whereas the study of botany relied heavily on pharmaceutical knowledge, zoology drew from the newly developing field of comparative anatomy. This new science was to have great repurcussions on the ways animals were perceived by humans.

Anatomical demonstrations at the Jardin des Plantes were conducted by members of the distinguished faculty at the Jardin, themselves members of the Académie des Sciences. The designated chair of anatomy delivered the actual discourse, while the dissections of cadavers remained the privilege of the démonstrateurs royaux. Both the lecturers and the demonstrators played seminal roles in the diffusion of anatomical knowledge, not only by their actual presentations, but in the works they published. In the following sections I discuss the most notable of these, and how they were instrumental in transforming anatomy into a public spectacle.

Pierre Dionis: Popularizer of Anatomy

Pierre Dionis was the first anatomist to be accorded the function of *démonstrateur d'anatomie* at the Jardin des Plantes by Louis XIV in 1673.[27] Although a skilled anatomist, it is as author of the Cours d'opérations de

[27] See Yves Barritault, L'Anatomie en France (Angers, 1940), 13. Marin Cureau de la Chambre was the first chair of Anatomy, succeeded by his son and subsequently Jean-Guichard Duverney.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

chirurgie for which he is most famous.[28] This popular treatise presented in written form ten of the anatomical demonstrations he had performed at the Jardin. In his preface, Dionis gives the background for these public lessons:

> This establishment, although among the most useful for the public, was not spared the opposition of those who claimed that they alone should be able to teach and demonstrate anatomy [ie, members of the Faculté de medecine]. However the King, by a special Declaration which he had verified and registered in Parliament in the month of March, 1673, ordered that Demonstrations of Anatomy and Sugical Operations should take place at the Jardin Royal open to the public and free, in an Amphitheater which he had made for this purpose; and that the subjects necessary for these demonstrations would be delivered to these Professors in preference to all others. . . .[29]

Because these lectures were given free of charge, that is to say, without the necessity of buying tickets, there is no documented information concerning the size of the public attending these demonstrations. However, Dionis provides some idea of just how popular these talks were, and how they were the impetus for his book:

---

[28] Cours d'opérations de chirurgie, demontrées au Jardin Royal par M. Dionis, premier chirurgien de feuë Madame la Dauphine, à present de Madame la Duchesse de Bourgogne, et juré à Paris (Paris, 1690). The illustrations for this text are of a very rudimentary nature: the emphasis is on the legibilty of the image. Thus, each section contains a plate with the necessary tools laid out, as well as some additional illustrations of novelties, such as kidney stones. For a discussion of the popularity of Dionis's treatise, see Henri-Jean Martin, Livre, pouvoirs et société à Paris au XVIIe siècle (1598-1701), 2 vols. (Geneva, 1969), II, 862.

[29] Dionis, Cours d'opérations, non-paginated.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> The number of spectators, which always rose to four or five hundred, was proof that [the demonstrations] did not displease and that they had a public utility. What caused me more of a bother. . . was that the majority [of auditors] asked me which authors they should follow to learn the latest discoveries, and in which [books] they could see the parts which I demonstrated: but as they were not described with order in any of our books. . . . I had to admit I hardly knew which to suggest. . . so I decided to publish my Demonstrations. Although the position of Author seemed to me so dangerous I only took it up with distaste: but in the end the public interest and the need for a book, where everything which was shown in the public Demonstrations could be found at once, made me decide to present this work despite any detractors.

In this French treatise, Dionis was not so much interested in presenting the history of anatomy, or in bestowing erudition, as in uncovering various parts of the human body in a topographical manner, that is to say, in the order in which they are presented to the anatomist.[30] He was also concerned with demonstrating the use of each part, thus revealing his sympathies with the "new" science which was all about understanding how things function based on observation, not by blindly following the precepts of the Ancients.

Dionis's statement about the crowds who attended his anatomical lectures, the need to publish his demonstrations, as well as the popularity of the book itself makes it clear that there was an interested public for this type of scientific spectacle. The latest discoveries in science were not just to be kept within the Académie's walls, but were to be broadcast outside in an effort to win over a

---

[30] Barritault, Anatomie, 19.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

large public. This curiosity on the part of the audience attending these lectures is certaily reminiscent of those gawking multitudes at the ubiquitous fair or travelling circus. What is different here is the emphasis placed on trained observation and scientific fact. The aim is not to cloak the object in mystery, but to uncover and understand its inner workings.

Visitors at the Jardin des Plantes

Who were the people who attended these "public excercises?" The botanical and anatomical demonstrations at the Jardin certainly drew the attention of many people, both natives and those foreign to the capital. One of the flourishing literary genres towards the end of the seventeenth century was the travel account.[31] Although many of these works introduced the reader to exotic spectacles of foreign territories, there was a sizeable market for books for the European tourist on the home continent as well. Germain Brice's Description nouvelle de ce qu'il y a de plus

---

[31] See for example, Geoffroy Atkinson, Les Relations de voyages du XVIIe siècle et l'évolution des idées (Paris, n.d.); for an early history of the imaginary voyage and its relation to actual travel accounts, see The Extraordinary Voyage in French Literature before 1700 (New York, 1920) by the same author; Erica Harth, Ideology and Culture in 17th Century France (Ithaca, 1983). For how the travelogue would develop in the eighteenth century, with special emphasis on the relationship between art and science, see Barbara Stafford, Voyage into Substance: Art, Science, Nature, and the Illustrated Travel Account: 1760-1840 (Cambridge, 1984).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

remarquable dans la ville de Paris[32] followed the general model for travel literature: after a brief discussion on the origin of the city and the collections of art, tapestries, and other such items in the most important royal residences, the author lists major areas and streets of the city separately, pausing to note the major attractions. He is much taken by the Jardin des Plantes (Jardin du Roi) and gives a lengthy description of what the visitor might find there:

> But what is the most interesting [*curieux*] is the Cabinet of M. du Vernay, of the Académie Royale des Sciences, one of the leading men of the Kingdom, for Dissections and Anatomy. Few men were more advanced than he in this type of operation, in which he made a great many Discoveries, giving him a great reputation. In the Winter he works in public in the Grande Salle, arranged as an Amphitheater, which can hold a large number of people.[33]

Foreign visitors came to the Jardin as well. In Martin Lister's A Journey to Paris in the Year 1698,[34] the British traveller made clear from the beginning of his account that his aim had been to study the habits and occupations of the average man, not king and court:

> I took more pleasure to see M. **Breman** in his white Waistcoat digging in the Royal Physick Garden, & sowing his Couches, than M. **de Saintot** making room for an Ambassador; & I found myself better disposed, & more apt to learn the Names & Physiognomy of a Hundred Plants, than of 5 or 6 Princes. After all, I had much rather have walked a 100 paces under the meanest hedge in *Languedoc*, than any the finest Alley at *Versailles*

---

[32] Description nouvelle (Paris, 1684).

[33] Ibid., 248.

[34] Second edition (London, 1699).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> or *St. Clou*, so much I prefer fair Nature & a warm Sun, before the most exquisite performances of Art in a cold & barren Climate.[35]

He visited and described noted collections of statues, natural history, and coins among other objects contained in Parisian palaces and hôtels. The apartments of the anatomist Du Verney at the Jardin des Plantes particularly caught his attention. From his description we get a vivid idea of the sort of conditions in which the working anatomist carried out his experiments and researches:

> I was to see Monsieur **Verney** [Duverney] at his Apartment at the upper-end of the Royal Physick Garden; but missing my Visit, went up with a young Gentleman of my Lord Ambassador's Retinue, to see Mr. *Bennis*, who was in the Dissecting Room, working by himself upon a Dead Body, with its Breast open & Belly gutted: There were very odd things to be seen in the Room. My Companion, it being morning, & his Senses very quick & vigorous, was strangely surprised & offended & retired down the Stairs much faster than he came up. And indeed, a private Anatomy Room is to one not accustomed to this kind of Manufacture, very irksome, if not frightful: Here a basket of Dissecting Instruments, as Knives, Saws, &c. And there a Form with a Thigh & Leg flayed, & the Muscles parted asunder: On another Form an Arm served after the same manner. Here a Tray full of Bits of Flesh, for the more minute Discovery of the Veins & Nerves, & everywhere such discouraging Objects. So, as if Reason & the good of Mankind did not put Men upon this Study, it could not be endured: for Instinct & Nature most certainly abhors the Employment.[36]

---

[35] Lister, Journey, 2.

[36] Ibid., 63-64. Lister characterizes M. Merrie as "a most painful & accurate Anatomist" and describes the skeletons in his cabinet. Two Englishmen, Bennis and Probie, were lodged near the Jardin Royal to study with Du Verney. In just three months, the students observe all the body parts: "He had for this purpose at least 20 Human Bodies, from the Gallows, the Chatelet (where those are exposed who are found Murdered, in the the Streets, which is a very common business at Paris) and from the Hospitals." Lister was not impressed by a meeting of the Académie Royale des Sciences. His trip to the Jardin is included in an itinerary which

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

The anatomist's chambers are a sort of monstrous cabinet of curiosities where the objets on display are dismembered body parts. But these grotesque objects are not meant to arouse horror: in the hands of a professional anatomist armed with reason, these miscellaneous limbs and internal organs participate in the advancement of scientific knowledge. But there is no escaping the fact that the anatomist's raw materials are upsetting to the untrained observer. Given that Dionis's public demonstrations were upon cadavers, we can see to what extent this public spectacle provided a visceral sort of entertainment not unlike that of animal combat, but civilized and contained within the parameters of the pursuit of knowledge.

Lister was not the only English visitor in Paris interested in the Jardin des Plantes. John Northleigh who published his Topographical descriptions in 1702, made special mention of his visit to the botanical garden:

> **M. Du Verney**, a good Physician, excellent Anatomist, and as civil a Person inhabited here, and gave me access; and here they have a good anatomy school also, fill'd with the Skeletons of several Animals, especially one of a very large Elephant, with other Curiositys of Nature and Art. . . . The King has also his Laboratory here supply'd with good Operators, where there is publick Admittance to their Operations, and

---

gives us an idea of the sheer variety of things which interested the *curieux*: fairs in Paris including a viewing of an elephant at the Foire St.-Germain, operations by the notorious père Jacques, the Bibliothèque du roy, and a courtesy call on the aging Mme. de Scudéry.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> the Poor have the benefit of the Medicines and Compositions.[37]

Northleigh does not mention human cadavers, but we can assume these fall under the heading "Curiositys of Nature." Again, the fact that these demonstrations are open to the public is deemed worthy of comment. Both Lister and Northleigh make mention of the anatomist Duverney. A brief look into this scientist's life will give us some idea of the professional anatomist of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.

Duverney: A Gentleman-Anatomist

Jean-Guichard Duverney succeeded to the chair of anatomy at the Jardin des plantes in 1680, the same year in which he was accepted into the Académie des Sciences. In the beginning of his tenure as anatomist at the Jardin des Plantes, Duverney was exceptional in his dual role of *orateur* and *démonstrateur*. The functions of lecturer and demonstrator were traditionally separated. The speaker

---

[37] Cited in John Lough, France Observed in the Seventeenth Century by British Travellers (Boston, 1985), 299-300. Northleigh also remarks: "So that, with the help of these Hospitals, some of which I visited for to see their cutting of the Stone, where they have certainly the best Lythotomists or Chyrurgions in that Art, and where were whole Iron Chests full of Stones cut out, and what with the help of their many liberal good Professors in Anatomy, their Chymick lectures, Botanic garden, &c, I look upon Paris if it would allow Liberty of Religion to all Students, to be preferable for the Study on Physick to Leyden, Padua, Montpellier, Oxford, Cambridge, or any of the Universities I have seen or heard of, notwithstanding the renowned preference some of them have got for the benefitting those that profess themselves Students in the Faculté."

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

would read from a prepared text, while the lesser, manual processes of dissection would be left to a surgeon. But Duverney was so skilled in both speaking and dissecting, that he was able to perform the two roles simultaneously. However, due to increasingly bad health, he proposed to give the discourse only, suggesting Pierre Dionis as the anatomist.

Duverney was patronized by the powerful, eventually becoming the anatomy professor to Bossuet and the Dauphin. His eloquence made him a successful lecturer, and great numbers of foreigners and French people came to listen to him speak. He was also noted for considerable physical charms. Bernard Le Bovyer de Fontenelle's Eloge became the source for the stories concerning the anatomist's great attraction to women:

> We may add that he was young and quite attractive. These small particulars were really only important in the opinion of some Women who were also interested in hearing him.[38]

Whether or not women were drawn to his talks for his physical attributes alone, Duverney was certainly popular enough to raise the satirical eyebrows of Boileau concerning the fashionable woman:

> Gardons de la troubler. Sa science, je croi,
> Aura pour s'occuper ce jour plus d'un emploi:
> D'un nouveau microscope on doit, en sa présence,

---

[38] Eloges des Académiciens de l'Académie Royale des Sciences, morts depuis l'an 1717 (The Hague, 1740), 437.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> Tantôt chez Dalancé faire l'expérience;
> Puis d'une femme morte avec son embryon
> Il faut chez du Verney voir la dissection.[39]

Duverney's popularity points to one important fact: that anatomy, performed publicly for anyone interested, had achieved social acceptance as a spectacle. Fontenelle's elegy makes this clear:

> He entered the fashionable world, bringing with him Anatomy which, until then shut up in the Schools of Medicine or at St-Côme [Académie de Chirurgie] dared to appear in the *beau monde*, presented by his hand.
>
> I can recall having seen the *gens du monde* carrying dried specimens prepared by him, in order to have the pleasure of showing them in Company, above all those which came from the most interesting subjects.[40]

This rather morbid image of courtiers carrying around dried body parts only emphasizes the degree to which the study of anatomy had penetrated aristocratic life. The presentations at the Jardin des Plantes also made anatomy accessible to those who were not members of the *beau monde*. Fontenelle noted the crowds of students and foreign visitors who flocked to the anatomist's demonstrations. Thus Duverney's importance in the history of science remains not only his cultivation of a public for anatomy, but turning this hallmark of the new science into a fashionable spectacle as well.

As was made clear in Perrault's Projet, animals were also to be studied. And, as with the emphasis on careful,

---

[39] N. Boileau Despréaux, "Satire X: Les femmes" (1693) in Oeuvres complètes de Boileau Despréaux (Paris, 1906), 4 vols., IV, lines 436-51.

[40] Fontenelle, Eloges, 438.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

disinterested viewing of the human body, animals too came under the scrutiny of an objective gaze. No longer merely interesting for its outward appearance, the anatomist opened up the animal to penetrate beneath the surface. As we have seen, the mind of the animal had been the object of investigation by philosophers and writers, and Perrault himself had addressed the issue:

> In order to avoid the bad effect that the equivocation and ambiguity of the title of this work ["On the mechanics of animals"] could produce in the minds of those who have heard that most animals are pure machines, and who would have reason to believe that this problem is treated here; I warn you that I mean by animal a being which has feeling, and which is capable of exercising the functions of life by a principle which is called the Soul. . . .[41]

Now scientists turned to the animal's body, setting aside ancient lore and popular superstition.

The Académie's Reading Public

The Académie also produced a steady flow of printed works in its effort to cultivate a larger public. This was in part motivated by pressure from above -- works disseminating knowledge produced in the name of the king had a positive propagandistic role, as any minister was aware -- but also because individual Academicians had some interest in promoting their own personal glory. However, the corporate character of the institution meant that many

[41] Perrault, Essais de physique, ou Recueil de plusieurs traités touchant les choses naturelles, 4 vols. (Paris, 1680-88). Vol. 3 is entitled "De la mechanique des animaux."

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

treatises were published collectively by the Académie.[42] It should be stated at the outset that the number of books published by the Académie does not, however, necessarily point to a dramatically growing readership for scientific works.[43] As Alice Stroup points out, the high rate of illiteracy in the capital in the seventeenth century meant that even though most science writers were using French, not Latin, only the educated elite would have access to the treatises in the first place. Furthermore, studies of the contents of private libraries seem to suggest that the audience for scientific works was comprised mainly of the producers of science themselves.[44]

This is not to suggest, however, that the Académie was not making a concerted effort to extend the borders of its reading public. As we have seen, texts like Dionis's Cours d'opérations were immensely popular. But the Académie also tried to entice readers with printed works of a richer

---

[42] Publications under the aegis of the Académie could be either by a group or an individual. If a work by a single author, the book had to pass a review board of cooleagues to make sure no data collected by the community of scientists was involved. In this manner, the individual gets his right to publish personal research, and the Academy itself is protected from plagiarism. Hahn, Anatomy, 27ff.

[43] This assumption has been made by various authors, for example Charles B. Paul, Science and Immortality. The Eloges of the Paris Academy of Sciences (1699-1791) (Berkeley, 1980).

[44] See Martin, Livre. Stroup (Company, 184f) relies heavily on Martin's analyses of Parisian libraries for her succinct summation of the consumers of scientific literature.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

nature. In its privileged position as organ of the Crown, the Académie des Sciences was able to make use of the Imprimerie Royale for its lavish folio editions. Although the full-scale versions of the institution's publications in this expensive format more than likely served a propagandistic purpose (that is, they provided further evidence of the personal glory of the monarch), smaller, cheaper formats of the same works were also produced. Two of the Académie's first monumental publications did not focus attention on the study of the human body, but instead concerned the natural histories of plants and animals, respectively, and although they were published anonymously as a corporate endeavor of the Académie, the authors are known. Denis Dodart was responsible for the botanical treatise. Of particular importance to this study is the second work whose author was Claude Perrault, architect of the Observatoire.

Perrault's Natural History of Animals

The frontispiece for Perrault's Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire naturelle des animaux[45] exemplifies to what extent the newly founded Académie Royale des Sciences wished to present itself at once as an extension of the Crown, with all the attendant privileges that status accorded it, as

---

[45] Paris, 1671.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

well as the propagators of the new science.[46] Engraved by Sébastien Leclerc,[47] the frontispiece depicts the supposed moment when Louis XIV visits the Academy accompanied by Colbert (Fig. 27). In fact, the king did not visit the Académie until 1681. The two major figures of the French government are flanked by members of the Academy. The minister gestures to one of Villette's burning mirrors which is placed obliquely at an angle, as if to catch the rays of the Sun King. Skeletons and scientific equipment are scattered throughout the room. Above their heads, occupying the top half of the engraving, are two large arched windows which hover over the assembly like two eyes, indispensible tools to the practitioner of the new science with his reliance on observation. The windows overlook the grounds of the Jardin du Roi where in the distance, the Observatoire is being built. Clearly, this is an imaginary scenario for as is often pointed out, the Observatory at the southern end of the Luxembourg gardens could not have been visible from this vantage point. However, what is important is clearly its significance as the symbol of the fledgling academy's

[46] Stroup, Company, 5ff.

[47] Sébastien Leclerc (1635-1714) was named engraver to the king in 1670. He entered the Royal Academy of Painting as Professor of geometry and perspective in 1672. His first scientific illustrations were for the Académie des Sciences: Mémoires (animals and plants) and the Mesure de la terre. See C.-A. Jombert, Catalogue raisonné; E. C. Watson, "The Early Days of the Académie des Sciences as portrayed in the Engravings of Sébastien Leclerc" (Osiris, VII, 1939), 556-587 for an identification of the people represented in Leclerc's group portraits of the academicians of science.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

desire to position itself as promoter of the new science. This science, based on observation and the collection of data by a group of trained professionals, is also represented in the multitude of scientific apparati scattered throughout the room.

As Stroup points out, this image is only deceptively a true portrait of the Académie: not only is the visit of the king and the placement of the Observatory fictional, but personal rivalries actually undermined much of the communal spirit of this institution. However, this picture stands as the emblem of the newly formed Academy at a time when it was hoped this body of scientists could present a united front in the presentation of the new science. This portrait was the one which was received by the public[48] and therefore the one which was to convey all that the new scientific academy stood for. It captures in figural signs what Perrault had in part elaborated upon in words in his Projet of 1667. This is a community of scientists, for it is a group portrait. It is a royal institution, represented by the king's presence. And finally, it is an institution promoting the new science, as shown by the display of equipment, the Observatoire, and the multitude of skeletons. Thus Leclerc's engraving is truly an official image of the Académie Royale des Sciences.

[48] Stroup, Company, 5. The audience would have been non-scientific: the king-patron, those receiving copies as gifts, collectors, and the knowledgable public of the Académie.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

This frontispiece is the first group portrait of the members of the Académie Royale des Sciences. The major figures in this portrait have been identified.[49] To the left of the Louis XIV and Colbert are the Prince de Condé (Louis de Bourbon) and Philippe d'Orléans, the king's brother. Only two of the Academicians may be clearly identified: Claude Perrault stands between the king and his minister, and the astronomer Cassini between the other two royals. The prominent positioning of Perrault underlines his importance in the shaping of the Academy. Cassini's visible presence lends importance to this portrait: he and the other famous foreign scientist, Huyghens, were the most highly paid of the academicians, and special guests of the king.[50]

But it is clear that Leclerc paid equal attention to the rendering of the scientific equipment in the picture.[51] Besides the burning lamp mentioned above, the engraver has included detailed representations of a telescope, Huyghens' vacuum pump and compound microscope, astrological and terrestrial globes, map, and fortification chart. Most

[49] Watson, "Early Days."

[50] Huyghens was in the Hague recovering from an illness at the time of the portrait. See Stroup, Company, Appendix: The Record of Expenditure, 1666-1699, for details on the pensions drawn by each academician.

[51] In 1699, when the Academy moved to new headquarters in the Louvre, Leclerc executed an engraving depicting over one hundred pieces of equipment. These are identified in George Gabb, "`Scientific Apparatus' with Cannon! An 18th Century Laboratory," Illustrated London News (21 May 1938), 897.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

significantly, the upper half of the image, which includes the two large windows with overlooking view of the gardens and Observatory, is entirely given over to the science of anatomy. A mounted skeleton of a quadruped occupies the upper right corner, looking across to the left side to the head of an antlered creature. A large skeleton of a stag with horns looms above the Academicians below the left window. Hanging between the two windows is the complete skeleton of a human being. Whereas images of similar subject matter (group portraits of anatomists, for example Rembrandt's Dr. Tulp) were produced in seventeenth century Holland, these were heavily overlaid with moral tones, the skeleton in this French portrait appears almost benign. Dwarfed by the two windows, overwhelmed by the richly dressed and bewigged royals just below it, the skeleton is just another anatomical specimen on display. This is not a *memento mori*. Rather than a reminder of mortality, it becomes an emblem of the enlightened science of the present. What underlies the finery of the king, the cloaks of the academicians, the ruffles of the Italian astronomer, is after all just a skeleton. Dissection concerns underlying structures, not the social markers of the external being. Even the renowned *premier peintre du roi* Charles Le Brun was dissected by academicians after his death in 1690:

> On the occasion of the death of M. Le Brun, famous painter, who was opened up by M. Du Verney, and in whom the cystic canal was found to be full of stones, the duodenum intestines and colon infected, and the vessels very dilated; M. Dodart said that most of those who die

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> from jaundice die from loss of blood, made too fluid by the bile which pours out.[52]

The description of the findings have reduced this famous and respected man to a mere catalogue of decayed organs and kidney stones.

The human skeleton also figures in the vignette executed by Leclerc for Perrault's Mémoires (1671: Fig. 28). This is another group portrait, but this time of those academicians particularly involved in the science of dissection. The group is arranged around a long table on which is the body of a fox with its entrails exposed. The ecclesiastic Duhamel, the secretary of the Academy, is easily identifiable as the figure at the left end of the table who looks up from his note-taking. At the other end sits an academician gesturing to an open book and looking out at the reader, identified by Picon as Perrault.[53] Behind the academicians along the wall are various skeletons, including a human one. The placement of this skeleton along with those of other animals seems to suggest that the human body was not especially privileged. Certainly, the Mémoires concerned the natural history of animals, exclusive of humans, and the Procés-verbaux of the

[52] Académie des Sciences, Histoire de l'Académie Royale des Sciences. 1666 à 1698 (I, Paris, 1777), 25.

[53] Watson identifies the central figure in the group of three clustered next to the anatomist as Perrault, and says the seated figure is most likely Marchant. However, given the prominent position of the seated figure, and his resemblance to the figure identified as Perrault in the engraving described above, Picon's identification appears the most likely.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Academy reveal an equal interest in the workings of animal and human bodies.

There were two deluxe folio editions of Perrault's Mémoires: the first appeared in 1671, the second in 1676. The earlier of the two contained discussions of fourteen different animals, the later one added on descriptions of eighteen more, for the most part exotic animals from outside of Europe. Each description was accompanied by an engraving by Leclerc and a key page identifying the various parts in the engraving which are lettered. The format is the same for all. The animal in its living state is presented in a landscape, in some cases recalling its natural habitat. Above, as if tacked on to the sky, is a trompe-l'oeil sheet containing the dissected parts of the animal. These illustrations were the result of much time-consuming, painstaking study. Perrault himself made many detailed sketches during anatomical sessions and personally oversaw the work of Leclerc.[54]

The illustrations, with their division between representations of the animal in its living and dissected states, parallels a division in styles as well. In its living state, the animal, depicted after nature, is presented in a landscape. This is the familiar Albertian view of the world, a window looking on to a scene, in this

---

[54] Picon, Claude Perrault, 54ff. Many of the sketches are contained in the archives of the Académie des Sciences, Dossier Perrault.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

case one containing an animal. But above, denying the illusion of three-dimensional space, is a sheet of paper which, with its curling edges, emphatically proclaims its two-dimensional quality, identifying itself as textual illustration. For the trompe-l'oeil drawing within a drawing consists of dissected parts of the animal in question, which are all neatly labled with letters. Thus this drawing would be senseless without the textual key-page which accompanies it. This dependence on an external text separates the scientific illustration from other sorts of images. Its juxtaposition with the three-dimensional living creature just beneath it creates a tension of representational spaces, and of types of representation themselves. Living, the animal occupies a three-dimensional world. Dead and dissected it becomes reduced to the flat page of a scientific manuscript, an equivalent to the descriptive text which accompanies it.

We saw how the fledgling Académie Royale des Sciences, like any propagandistic institution, aimed at a large public. The Academy of Sciences in particular was concerned with creating a favorable atmosphere in which to present its findings. Today, science remains the most prestigious of the intellectual disciplines, receiving the lion's share of public and private sponsorship. But in the late seventeenth century, scientists increasingly felt the need to separate themselves from the amateur researcher and gain social prestige in the form of royal patronage. Once the Académie

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

was formed, the new corporation of professional scientists needed to advertise its new status. Besides actual demonstrations, as discussed above, the two deluxe folio editions treating botany and anatomy respectively were developed with an eye towards creating a favorable impression, and one which would appeal to specialists in the field, collectors, and potential patrons. The amount of care spent on the illustrations makes it clear that these were assumed to be as important as the accompanying text. And because the text as written by Perrault is full of the language of the new science, these images must be seen to be touting something new as well.

The first discussion in the Mémoires fittingly concerns the lion, king of the beasts, as this is a royally subsidized project (Fig. 29). The representation of the living lion places the animal in profile, with the head turned to face us. The head bears a striking resemblance to Le Brun's physiognomic studies. The eyes and eyebrows slant downwards to the center, giving the creature a look of ponderous seriousness. In the tacked-on sheet of dissected body parts, the lion loses all sense of weighty majesty. Here, unlike some of the other plates in the Mémoires, there is no complete skeleton; there is just a tidy collection of organs and other body parts, as well as disjointed skull and paw bones. Particular attention is paid to the tongue: one greatly enlarged section shows the pointed protrusions which cover it. The mighty lion is reduced to a catalogue of

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

fragments. Thus even the king of the beasts loses his dignity on the anatomist's table.

The division of the illustrated page into living animal and dissected body parts may be seen as the complete picture of the animal. It is at once a creature to be studied alive in its natural environment, and it is to be opened up and pored over with a microscope. Later, in the nineteenth century, these two modes of animal viewing, the depiction of the living animal in a setting specific to it, and as parts laid out on a table, would finally be split into the two specialized fields of animal illustration and anatomical study.[55]

In the previous chapter, we noted Perrault's and Scudéry's interest in the chameleon. Let us now examine Perrault's study in more detail. The anatomist's sixteen page discussion of this creature begins with a rather surprising opening:

> Il n'y a guerres d'Animal plus fameux que le Caméleon. Ses admirables propriétez ont esté de tout temps le sujet de la Philosophie Naturelle, aussi bien que de la Morale.[56]

That a reference should be made to the chameleon's emblematic role (it represented duplicity for its ability to change colors) reveals a vestigial presence of the older science, but the following pages are true to the outlines of

---

[55] Ann Shelby Blum, Picturing Nature: American Nineteenth-Century Zoological Illustration (Princeton, 1993).

[56] Perrault, Mémoires, 13.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Perrault's project for the new approach. Painstakingly, the anatomists of the Académie demonstrated that the Ancients had exaggerated quite a bit in describing the chameleon's properties.

The accompanying illustration shows the care with which the findings were published (Fig. 30). In the trompe-l'oeil sheet the various dissected layers of the chameleon are laid bare. In the upper right, the opened body of the creature reveals the internal organs. Below at an angle is the bulbous tongue attached to the hyoid bone. The tongue is shown in its retracted and fully extended positions. This was a feature of much observation. In the middle of the page, towards the left, is an inflated lung. Even the cord which is tied around the trachea in order to keep the air in the lung is shown. In the upper left corner are the eyes connected to the optical nerves and brain, in the lower left the intestines, kidneys, and uterous. Finally, framed by all the other elements, is the complete skeleton of the chameleon. This skeleton mirrors in pose the living creature below, or rather, beneath it. In a clever visual play, the skeleton is posed exactly (except for the tail) in the same manner as the intact, living chameleon of the represention beneath. Thus the two images are linked in various ways, giving rise to a number of dualisms: dead and living, parts on a page and intact in a landscape, trapped by the eye and scalpel of the scientist and free in its natural habitat. The pose of the skeleton allows us to

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

assume that this dead and dissected chameleon is the very same creature which is depicted underneath. We follow the gradual peeling away of layers from living animal, to dissected specimen, and finally, to words on a page.

Illustrations of the chameleon which appeared in the early to mid-seventeenth century had strong ties to the emblematic tradition of Andrea Alciati, although it was Pierre Belon's woodcut from his Observations de plusieurs singularités of 1554 which remained the prototype for most of these images (Fig. 31).[57] Perrault's version is significantly different. Images of the chameleon which had followed Belon's version placed the animal on a branch protruding horizontally from the tree trunk, all four feet in line with one another, its tail coiled under.[58] Perrault's chameleon also stands on a tree branch, but its front left claw is raised to grasp part of the branch which separates from the major artery. Also, its tail coils around a broken, vertical portion of the trunk. The juxtaposition of the trompe-l'oeil sheet above underscores

---

[57] William B. Ashworth, Jr, "Marcus Gheeraerts and the Aesopic Connection in Seventeenth-Century Scientific Illustration," Art Journal, LXIV (1984), 132-138.

[58] For example, Sadeler included an illustration for Vom Camelleon in his Theatrum Morum (1608, see previous chapter). This chameleon clearly reproduces Belon's image, as transmitted through Marcus Gheeraerts' Aesop (1567). As Ashworth (ibid., 135) points out, there is no fable by Aesop concerning a chameleon, but Gheeraerts' editor, de Deene, came up with a story and moral to fit the image.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

the idea that this chameleon was represented after nature. For the sheet with its anatomical images, being linked to the accompanying scientific text, accords a sense of "this is the real thing" to the creature in illusionistic space depicted below. At the same time, the use of artistic codes of representation in the living animal makes the creature on view a veritable *objet-d'art*, something appealing to collectors and other members of the book's audience whose interest is not necessarily entirely scientific.

Certainly, there is a long history of illustrated books of animals and other curiosities of nature.[59] What is interesting is how Perrault's Mémoires and Leclerc's engravings after the anatomist's drawings differ from the traditional methods of scientific representation, ushering in a new type of scientific illustration. Belon's Observations de plusieurs singularités was the most famous illustrated book about animals in France until the appearance of Perrault's Mémoires, and it is similar in

---

[59] For a good account of this history, see Robert Herrlinger, History of Medical Illustration, from Antiquity to AD 1600 (New York, 1970). See also Peter Dance, The Art of Natural History: Animal Illustrators and their Work (New York, 1978) for a brief account of the history of animal illustrations. Dance is chiefly concerned with noting the degree of scientific correctness of these illustrations, assuming a linear progression of "enlightenment" in the artists. Hence, the closer we come to the present, the more accurate, and thus the better they become. Despite the simplistic arguments of the text, however, the accompanying illustrations are of high quality and plentiful.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

format to other works produced in the same period.[60] In Belon's work, it is the exterior of the animal which is given the most prominence, not the internal parts. Thus Perrault's illustrated work marks a distinct break with the tradition of animal representation in texts which puported to be of a scientific nature. The conjunction of the living animal with its dissected body parts is unusual, as is the picturing of these two animal states together, using artistic devices to differentiate the two. It is not until the comte de Buffon's classic Histoire naturelle that we find a similar depiction of both the outer and the inner workings of the animal.[61] And in this late eighteenth century text, what emerges is the awareness that the external and internal characteristics of humans are not so far removed from animals such as monkeys and apes. Perrault was concerned to rid the new anatomy from the lore handed down from the Ancients, opening the eyes of the modern viewer to the animal immediately at hand. Buffon carried this to its logical conclusion: what the viewer saw was the

---

[60] Les observations de plusieurs singularitez et choses memorables, trouvées en Grece, Asie, Iudée, Egypte, Arabie, et autres pays estranges (Paris, 1554). This work contains accounts of all sorts of animals and birds, although Belon was most noted for his work on fish, as were two contemporaries Guillaume Rondelet (De piscibus marinis, 1554-55) and Hippolyte Salviani (Aquatilium animalium 1554-57).

[61] Georges Louis Leclerc, comte de Buffon, Histoire naturelle, générale et particulière (Paris, 1749 and following years).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

breakdown of the barrier between the animal and human kingdoms.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

CHAPTER 5

THE *ANIMALIERS*: LE BRUN, DESPORTES, AND OUDRY

Philosophical and scientific preoccupations with the animal kingdom enabled the possibility of animal sentiment to become fully theorized in the eighteenth century, notably by the naturalist-philosopher Buffon. In the realm of pictorial representation, the ability of animals to display feelings had already begun to be investigated by artists a century earlier. My discussion of animal representation will focus on three major artists working for the crown: Charles Le Brun, François Desportes, and above all, Jean-Baptiste Oudry.

Artists and the representation of animals

We have seen how changing attitudes towards animals emerged in the areas of philosophy, literature, and science. The history of animals in art is a long one.[1] However, it was not until the later seventeenth century that French artists began to treat animals as more than mere two-dimensional symbols or emblems, or as accompaniments to the more important human protagonist. By the end of the

[1] There have been many general discussions of animals in art. The best of these is Jessica Rawson, Animals in Art (London, 1977).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

century, creatures became objects of investigation in many intellectual circles. The philosophical question of animal sentiment, the scientific importance of studying animals, the possibility as demonstrated by Oudry for these beasts to convey meaning through expression, all these factors contributed to creating a situation whereby it became possible for animals to occupy a new position in monumental painting produced during this period.

The purpose of this chapter is not to contribute new archival materials to our understanding of the three artists under discussion. Indeed, much excellent work has already been accomplished in compiling biographical material, establishing their respective bodies of works, and discussing those paintings in stylistic terms. Here, it is my aim to place the works of Le Brun, Desportes, and Oudry into the firmer context of conceptions of animals in early modern France. For it seems to me that the important issue is that these three artists acknowledged animals as important subject matter, and consequently, that these artists should therefore be considered as belonging to that body of intellectuals considering the position of animals in scientific, philosophic, or literary terms.

Oudry, in particular, has been the subject of some exhaustive studies,[2] but these have not considered the

[2] The first major study on this artist is Jean Loquin, "Catalogue raisonné de l'oeuvre de Jean-Baptiste Oudry peintre du roi (1686-1755)," Archives de l'Art français, VI (1912), i-viii, 1-209. Most recently, and by far the most

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

fundamental question which arises where the artist is concerned: why the sudden astonishing popularity for animal pictures at this particular moment in French history? Animal painters, to be sure, had always produced a substantial number of works for private patrons, but the lowliness of the genre meant that there was no real prestige attached to the paintings of animals. Furthermore, these earlier artists had for the most part continued an old tradition of representing animals as emblems or symbols of a moralizing nature, or as accompanying figures to the more important human protagonist.

The three artists I will be discussing played important roles in changing the way animals could be represented in art. In order to do this, the very conception of animals had also to be altered. Le Brun, most famous for his monumental history paintings for Louis XIV, was one of the first in the later seventeenth century to investigate to what extent animals were capable of registering facial expression. Although his interest ultimately lay in codifying human expression, his study of animals and physiognomics marked a new point of departure for the representations of animals. François Desportes, as *Peintre*

---

thorough, are the catalogue raisonné and monograph by Hal Opperman: Jean-Baptiste Oudry, 2 volumes (New York, 1977: revision of doctoral dissertation, University of Chicago, 1972); Jean-Baptiste Oudry, 1686-1755, ex. cat. (Seattle, 1983). Although he makes some pertinent and sensitive observations vis à vis Oudry's relationship to philosophical attitudes towards animals, Opperman has a tendency to over-generalize.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

royale de la chasse, developed the type of hunting picture which Oudry would continue. These paintings were notable for the violent drama played out by the animals, with or without human components. Desportes also developed the portrait of the exotic animal, uniting a detached observational quality of representation with the visual excitement of the unknown. Finally, Oudry would carry the genre of animal painting to the fullest extent it would achieve until the advent of works by artists such as Théodore Géricault and Eugène Delacroix. With Oudry, animal painting could attain critical success in terms hiterto reserved for works with human subjects only.

Charles Le Brun: the physiognomy of animals

Perhaps the strangest images produced by this court artist are his physiognomic studies of living creatures. These bizarre pictures of animals, humans, and the hybrid concoctions of animal-people, however, are actually logical extensions of his over-riding interest in what Norman Bryson calls the legible body.[3] Legibility was indeed the governing aesthetic of the court of Louis XIV, where daily life was encoded in gestures, dress, and other external manifestations.[4] In Le Brun's great battle paintings at

[3] Norman Bryson, Word and Image: French Painting of the Ancien Régime (Cambridge, 1981).

[4] For a particularly sensitive account of this aesthetic, see Norbert Elias, The Civilizing Process, trans. Edmund Jephcott (New York, 1978).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Versailles and the Alexander series now in the Louvre, bodies and heads are turned in such a way that the viewer can appreciate the resulting "readable surface".[5] The artist thus attempted to codify facial expression in his quest for complete legibility.

Le Brun's physiognomic studies were the first serious works of this nature after Giovanni Battista della Porta's Fisionomia dell'uomo which had been translated into the French in 1665. Della Porta's text was derived from the pseudo-Aristotelian theory which proposed to know the character of a person from his or her resemblance to an animal, with the character of the animal being a given quantity.[6] Le Brun likewise explored how characteristics of certain animals could be mapped on to human faces. These resulted in curious blurrings of the boundaries between the human and animal realms (Fig. 32). But as Bryson has pointed out, Le Brun went further than the earlier Italian artist in his visual experiments, for he even depicted different representatives of the same species in order to show variations within the same family of animal. Thus, his page of studies of cows include four profiles of the beast

---

[5] Bryson, Word, 37.

[6] Jennifer Montagu, "Charles Le Brun's "Conférence sur l'expression générale et particulière" (doctoral dissertation, University of London [1959]), 63-64.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

which are identified in the original manuscript as "hardi," "opiniâtre," "stupide," and "farouche" (Fig. 33).[7]

Le Brun's explorations into the realm of physiognomy eventually led him away from the study of animals and animal-humans to the more direct, less caricature-like delineations of the human face without any animal traits.[8] But although Le Brun would abandon animals as objects of study, it is significant that this artist of the legible body should have even thought to extend readability onto the bodies of animals. The artist was not apparently hindered by the philosophical preoccupations of whether or not animals had minds and souls. With or without *esprit*, his creatures possessed individuality, personality even, and were thus seen to be capable of expressing feeling.

Le Brun's illustrations of animal-people never made it onto the painterly surface. Ultimately, the artist remained a history painter in the full sense of the word, and his works for the crown, which chiefly consisted of battle painting and political allegory, were of human subject matter. The next two artists to be discussed, François Desportes and Jean-Baptiste Oudry were, on the other hand,

---

[7] Bryson, Word, 46.

[8] Jennifer Montagu ("Charles Le Brun's `Conférence sur l'expression générale et particulière,'" [doctoral dissertation, University of London, 1959]) was the first to suggest that Le Brun's treatise is in essence an illustration of Descartes' Discours. This is the most frequently cited interpretation of Le Brun's physiognomic studies.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

full-fledged animal painters: the former by title, the latter for his preferred subject.

François Desportes

Desportes was the foremost *animalier* in France before the appearance of Oudry on the scene.[9] Like Oudry, his works were mostly for the king or other aristocrats. Desportes' first royal commission, in 1700, was for a suite of five hunting pictures for the Ménagerie of Versailles, where he worked with Claude Audran on the renovation. As painter of the hunt, many of his paintings have for subject matter hunting dogs, birds of prey, and game. However, the zoo at Versailles provided him with animals of a more exotic

---

[9] François Desportes was born on February 24, 1661 in Champigneulles (Champagne). In 1673 he was sent to live with his brother in Paris where he studied painting with Nicasius Bernaerts, one of the artists who had been involved in the early decorations at the Versailles Ménagerie. Desportes collaborated frequently with Claude III Audran (1658-1734) in the production of decorative pieces for interiors, notably the château of Anet for the duc de Vendôme, Clichy, and at the hôtel de Bouillon. In 1696, after work at the Gobelins and commissions from the royal family in Poland, Desportes became *peintre attiré des chasses et de la meute du roi*. On August 1, 1699 he entered the Academy of Painting as a *peintre d'animaux*. From 1700 until his death in 1743, Desportes was commissioned for works at the royal and aristocratic residences under Louis XIV and Louis XV (these included Marly, Compiègne, Chantilly, and Choisy). The artist's son Claude-François wrote a biography of his father which he delivered to the Académie royale de peinture on August 3, 1748. G. Lastic, "Catalogue raisonné de l'oeuvre peint et dessiné de François Desportes," (doctoral dissertation, Ecole du Louvre, 1969). The most helpful recent source on Desportes is L. Duclaux et al., ex. cat., L'atelier de Desportes: dessins et esquisses conservés par la Manufacture nationale de Sèvres (Paris, 1982).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

nature for study. He frequently accompanied royal hunting parties in order to observe the hunt first-hand. The less than ideal conditions of a *peintre de la chasse* is provided in his son's biography:

> Few people know all the difficulties involved in the animal genre; how many varieties of studies were necessary, and what efforts were required to do them. How much did M. Desportes work after nature, at the kennels of the king and the princes, among the valets of the hunt, men hardly interested in painting and whose cooperation was bought with difficulty? How much did he work at the Ménagerie of Versailles and at the fairs in Paris, in order to paint lions, tigers, or other ferocious beasts, in uncomfortable and pooly lit compounds? Certainly only a very great passion for art that one professes could rise above such obstacles.[10]

Besides his attentiveness to the animal subjects of his paintings, Desportes also attached a great importance to the direct study of landscape, producing numerous sketches of the site of the hunt. These landscape studies may be seen as autonomus works in their own right. Thus, the artist opts for a more accurate or scientific mode of representation, whether the subject at hand is landscape or animal. We shall see how this is quite different from Oudry's approach to the same subjects.

Desportes' hunting pictures are notable for their ferocity and vividness. Unlike Oudry, the earlier artist was not so much interested in either the personalities or the decorative qualities of the animal-actors. Rather, he

---

[10] C.-F. Desportes, "La vie de M. Desportes, peintre d'animaux," in L. Dussieux et al, Mémoires inédits sur la vie et les ouvrages des membres de l'Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture (Paris, 1968), 108-109.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

focused on the accurate depiction of the animal and the dramatic moment when the pack swarms the prey. These hunting pictures are interesting for they appear to render in two-dimensional fashion all the visceral drama of the violent activity itself. Contemplating these paintings in some way civilizes the sort of raw pleasure which had been evoked by animal combat.

The exotic animal: Les tentures des Indes

A brief discussion of one of Desportes' major commissions will introduce the place of animal representation in a major aesthetic trend of early modern France: exoticism in art and literature. Foreign animals -- as well as people, plants, and other markers of difference from far-off lands -- always fascinated observers by their exotic nature. We saw, in the first chapter, how rulers could emphasize their dominion over distant territories by parading creatures from those regions. Likewise, we discussed how Louis XIV could offer, at least early on at Versailles, the spectacle of domestic wild-fowl in order to emphasize a new type of rulership. Of course, traditions as established as the sending of diplomatic gifts of exotic animals from foreign lands are hard to break, and non-domestic creatures soon populated the Ménagerie.

Beginning in the early eighteenth century, the French East Indies Company embarked on many expeditions, especially to India, and the collection of foreign flora and fauna was

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

always on the agenda.[11] These and other voyages of discovery to new worlds were highly publicized events. As Geoffrey Atkinson and Erica Harth have established, written accounts of these travels to far-off territories met with a great success in Europe.[12] In the literature of the "extraordinary voyage" produced just before 1700, one over-riding characteristic was the geographic realism of the setting. This was due in part to the increasing number of accounts written by travellers who had actually undertaken the trips, as well as descriptions of foreign fauna and flora sent in by scientists or correspondents of the Académie des Sciences which were subsequently published within the pages of the mémoires of the Academy.[13]

In 1678, prince John-Maurice of Nassau, after consulting with the Secretary of State, the Marquis de Pomponne, sent a group of works to Louis XIV which represented various scenes from a colonizing expedition to South America (especially Brazil and Africa) undertaken by the Dutch West Indes Company earlier in the century. This

[11] Jean-Baptiste Lacroix, "L'approvisionnement des ménageries et les transports d'animaux sauvages par la Compagnie des Indes au XVIIIe siècle," Revue Français d'Histoire d'Outre Mer, LXV (1978), 153-79.

[12] Atkinson, Les Relations de Voyages du XVIIe siècle et l'évolution des idées. Contribution à l'étude de la formation de l'esprit du XVIIIe siècle (Paris, n.d.); The Extraordinary Voyage in French Literature before 1700 (New York, 1920); Harth, Ideology and Culture in Seventeenth Century France (Ithaca, 1983).

[13] See Harth, Ideology, 222ff.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

mission included scientists as well as two artists, Albert Eckhout and Franz Post, who were to make visual studies of the territories. The gift to Louis XIV included numerous studies among them twelve images of animals and native peoples by Eckhout and nine landscapes by Post.[14] Also included in the gift sent to the French king were animal skins, stuffed birds, artifacts and other miscellaneous objects which were to be used as supplementary materials for the cartoons. It was not until 1686 that the steps to a first edition of the tapestries was undertaken by the Manufacture des Gobelins under the directorship of Le Brun.[15] Various factors contributed to the delay in the production of the tapestries, most importantly the downfall of Pomponne and the deaths of Maurice in 1679 and Colbert in 1683.

Finally, on October 4, 1687, the first tapestry was begun. In total, eight sets of eight works each (with some additional pieces) were produced between 1687 and 1730.

---

[14] In total, forty-two assorted documents were sent to Louis XIV. See the Inventaire générale des Meubles de la Couronne sous Louis XIV for January 30, 1681.

[15] For a discussion of this series see P. J. P. Whitehead and M. Boeseman, A Portrait of Dutch Seventeenth Century Brazil. Animals, plants and people by the artists of Johan Maurits of Nassau (Amsterdam, 1989), 107ff; Duclaux, et al., L'atelier, Chapter 3; M. Jarry, "L'exotisme dans l'art décoratif français au temps de Louis XIV," Bulletin de la Société d'étude du XVIIe Siècle, XXXVI-XXXVII (1957), 300-328; Michael Benisovich, "The History of the *Tenture des Indes*," Burlington Magazine, CXXXIII (1943), 216-25 and the response to Benisovich by Thomas Bodkin, "`Les Nouvelles Tentures des Indes,'" Burlington Magazine, LXXXIV (1944), 65-66.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

These tapestries were created with the purpose of presenting to their viewers a newly discovered world, and thus they were concerned for the most part with exotic plants and animals. There are human subjects as well: an Indian hunter, the king carried by two moors, an Indian on horseback, and a scene of fishermen. Because these also emphasize the exotic qualities of the subject, however, the humans are treated at the same level as the animals and plants which belong to the series.

The so-called Tentures des Indes were a grand-scale representation of exotic people, animals, and plants from far away territories. They were executed in a style that insisted on the truthfulness of the reportage. This particular mode of representation is quite similar to that which we observed in the natural history texts of the period such as the Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire naturelle des animaux of Claude Perrault. This emphasis on the details of each creature, presenting it in a manner so that all its identifying characteristics are clear and easily legible are the hallmarks of what may be called the scientific aesthetic. Thus we see how the worlds of art and science again coincided. In his desire to provide the particularities of hitherto unfamiliar species of animal and newly revealed ethnicities of humans, Desportes resorted to the same type of representation as had Perrault, whose concern was not so much to expose the unfamiliar and exotic,

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

but to render visible that which lay beneath the surface of familiar animals.

The continuous re-use of the cartoons caused these to rapidly disintegrate and in 1735 M. Orry, *directeur des bâtiments du roi*, ordered new cartoons from Desportes. The artist restored and altered this series between 1737 and 1741, retaining the style of the originals for the most part, with the result that each tapestry appears as an amalgam of separate studies. Indeed, Desportes produced over six hundred oil or pencil sketches based on the works of Post and Eckhout and he also augmented these with first-hand studies of his own.

Because of Desportes' restorations and alterations of these works, the first set of tapestries was dubbed the Anciennes Indes or Grandes Indes, as the later edition, the Nouvelles or Petites Indes was in a smaller format. These tapestries were woven right up until 1794. Desportes' works, the second retouched version of this series, is slightly different from the first in composition. The Indian on horseback is replaced by a monkey sitting on a camel, and a black woman carried on a hammock replaces the king in a similar composition. Significantly, most changes occur in the animal combat scene: now there is more violence and dramatic action, and the artist even throws in animals not to be found in Brazil. In the original cartoon for the Combat d'animaux, in a lush tropical setting a jaguar attacks a tapir, a leopard chases a boar, a crocodile preys

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

on a sheep, and in the foreground a large, aggressive feline attacks a rodent-like creature (Fig. 34). In the second version a lion replaces the jaguar, and Desportes changes the foreground composition completely (Fig. 35). In place of the smaller animals of the earlier cartoon he added a giant wolf-like creature who seizes the neck of a prone stag between his jaws, and two dogs straight out of the artist's hunting pictures. The dog on the right flings his head back in a howl while the second, occupying the center, places his front paws on the dead stag and opens his mouth in an angry bark. This cartoon is an amalgam of a royal hunt in the grounds of a French château and the exotic beasts in the jungles of Brazil. What ties these two disparate worlds together is the artist's fascination with the dramatic potentials of animals.[16]

The artist executed some very interesting studies for this particular scene, the Combat d'animaux, which were not actually used in the final version. Perhaps the most intriguing of these is the fight between an elephant and a lion (Fig. 36). Hitherto, images of the elephant tended to focus on the profile of this enormous beast. The most

---

[16] Indeed, for all the studies and sketches he made from the cartoons and artifacts sent to Louis XIV by the prince of Nassau, Desportes was perhaps more comfortable with the more familiar animals. Bodkin ("`Les Nouvelles Tentures,'" 66) comments on one of the creatures in the animal combat tapestry: "The queer beast under the lion's paw has not yet been described by any explorer, however imaginative. It would seem to be the product of some amorous dalliance between a tapir and a rhinoceros."

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

famous elephants in French art before Desportes were undoubtedly those by Rosso Fiorentino for the Galerie François I at Fontainebleau (c. 1533-40) and Nicolas Poussin's early work entitled Hannibal Crossing the Alps. In Desportes' rendering of this animal, the elephant steps into the picture frame and swings his head around to us. His enormous ears flap out and his trunk swings heavily towards the lion who tries to clamor on to his back, teeth bared and eye aflame. A tiger and a second lion lie dead on the ground, victims of the ferocious elephant. One of the tapestries did feature the animal (L'Elephant or Le cheval isabelle), but for this finished version Desportes returned to the traditional manner of representing it; the elephant is in profile. Thus it appears that for the sketch, Desportes exercised much more freedom in depicting the animals which resulted in a startling and unforgettable image.

Desportes created the first monumental paintings of animals in France, winning critical acclaim at the Salons. Above all, critics praised his "singular taste,"[17] his "genius, fecundity and powerful color,"[18] "the same power of

---

[17] Abbé des Fontaines, Exposition des peintures, sculptures et gravures tirée des modernes (Paris, 1739), Deloynes, XLVII, pièce 1210, 164.

[18] Anon., "Exposition des tableaux, sculptures, gravures, dessins et autres ouvrages de l'Academie Royale de Peinture et Sculpture établie a Paris sous la protection du roi," Mercure de France (July 6, 1739). Deloynes, XLVII, pièce 1209, 150.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

genius, the same fecundity, and the same fire" despite his advancing years,[19] or again, "[he] is the Nestor of Painting: what fire at age eightyfour."[20] But besides the acclaim for his artistry in general, Desportes was noted for his verisimilitude:

> We saw a number of people touch [the painting] many times, in order to convince themselves that there no other artifice was employed, except that which the great masters knew how to use in order to fool the eyes in the simple imitation of nature.[21]

This is a characteristic which will also be praised in the paintings by Oudry. Verisimilitude becomes a necessary ingredient in animal pictures in order for the viewer to participate in the drama.

Desportes introduced to the history of French painting monumental hunting pieces and works which combined the exotic with the excitement of the local hunt. He brought images of animals from the walls of zoos to the walls of the Salon. Oudry also contributed many animal paintings to the exhibits at the Louvre. And, as we shall see, added yet another element to the portrayal of animals which would find such popularity in Enlightenment France: *sentiment*.

---

[19] Anon., "Exposition de tableaux, sculptures et gravures," Mercure de France (July 1, 1741). Deloynes, XLVII, pièce 1214, 196-97.

[20] Abbé Desfontaines, Exposition des peintures, sculptures et gravures tirée des observations sur les ecrits modernes (Paris, 1742). Deloynes, XLVII, pièce 1217, 252.

[21] Anon., Exposition des tableaux des peintres de l'Académie au grand salon du Louvre (Paris, 1725). Deloynes, V, pièce 1190, 648.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Jean-Baptiste Oudry

On 26 June 1717, Jean-Baptiste Oudry became *agréé* to the Academy of painting with the title of *peintre d'histoire*. The fact that Oudry was received into the Academy as a history painter, and not as a painter of animals like Desportes, meant that because the salon *livrets* presented painters by hierarchy, Oudry was always among the first to be discussed. Thus due to the regulations of the Academy's exhibitions, animal pictures achieved a level of prominence in the *livrets* unprecedented by any other animalier including Desportes.

Oudry was nominated *titulaire* on the first of July, 1717.[22] On 25 February 1719 he was received into the Academy for his Abondance avec ses attribues (Fig. 37). In this painting, the draped figure of Abundance sits against a backdrop of foliage and grape vines. She is framed by a wreath formed by two putti at the left of the painting who inspect a cornucopia whose overflowing contents curve around the bottom of the canvas. The arc is terminated at the right by a group of farm animals. Although the human

[22] Jean-Baptiste Oudry was born on March 17, 1686. His father and first teacher was Jacques Oudry, *maître peintre, directeur de la Communauté de Saint-Luc*, and art dealer. In January 1706, the maîtrise of Saint-Luc reopened, and Jean-Baptiste was the first student to be enrolled. He entered the atelier of Largillière. On 21 May 1708 he was received as a *maître peintre* for his Saint-Jerôme and in 1714 was nominated *adjoint à professeur*. The earliest biography of Oudry is L. Gougenot, "Jean-Baptiste Oudry" Dussieux et al., Mémoires, 365-384. For more current studies see note 1.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

figures are masterfully executed, it will be the subsidiary elements -- animals, fruit, foliage -- which the artist will develop during the course of his career.

We have discussed the two dominant attitudes towards animals in the seventeenth century. The first, championed by Descartes and his followers, denied any intelligence to animals. The second, represented by Jean de la Fontaine, approached animals as rational creatures worthy of our attention. It was only towards the end of the eighteenth century that the sentimental and emotional animal appears on the same level as humans. Earlier, the animal in art was enjoyed in part for its living and decorative beauty, to be appreciated as one would a tree or architecture, or even the hunt, "where courtiers of modern times liked to recapture something of the savage *rudesse* of their feudal ancestors."[23] These courtiers turned to Oudry for the pictorial representation of the living hunt, for the artist had a particular aptitude for recognizing the decorative quality of animals. In the words of Germain Bazin, the artist transformed the *arabesque vivante* of the animal's body, especially hunting dogs, into the *arabesque décorative*.[24]

---

[23] Germain Bazin, "Jean-Baptiste Oudry, animalier, décorateur et paysagiste," Art et Artistes, XVII (1928-29), 110.

[24] Ibid., 112.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

During the period from the late 1720s to the late 30's, when Oudry was most occupied with his works at Beauvais, he produced few easel paintings.[25] He did produce an important series of portraits of the royal hunting dogs during 1725-1732, and these brought in private commissions. He also executed several large animal works: Mastiff attacking a swan (1731); Lion (1732); and Wolf caught in a trap (1732). Here, he developed for the first time the representations of animals in their natural habitat, with no reference to the hunt.[26] He also worked for the first time at the Versailles Ménagerie, producing three paintings of deer as well as the Lion listed above. He would continue to work at the royal zoo from this point on.

La Peyronie and the "suite d'histoire naturelle"

One of the most important commissions Oudry received was notably from a major figure in the world of science: François Gigot de la Peyronie, *chirurgien du roi* and a member of the academies of sciences in Paris and Montpellier, his home town. This surgeon, one of the "new"

---

[25] In 1734 Oudry was named associate director at the Beauvais tapestry works. His series of six *Chasses nouvelles* were the first compositions given by the artist to the Beauvais weavers. A second set was woven for the marquis de Grosbois, M. le Garde des Sceaux and were presented to him on 5 January 1730. Five of the six resulting tapestries are now at the Château de Rosny, the sixth is in Paris.

[26] Opperman, "Jean-Baptiste Oudry," 104.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

scientists, like Claude Perrault emphasized the importance of observation and physical experiment.[27]

At the Ménagerie, Oudry produced drawings of the animals for La Peyronie, who then commissioned a series of ten paintings which the artist executed between 1739 and 1745. The scientist died in 1747, and the artist kept the paintings until he sold them to the Duke Christian II Ludwig of Schwerin.[28] The letter which Oudry wrote to the Duke on 25 March 1750 remains our only evidence for the original commission of La Peyronie.[29] The section concerning the suite of paintings is as follows:

---

[27] F. de la Peyronie, ed., Mémoires de l'Académie royale de Chirurgie (Paris, 1743), x.

[28] The court of Mecklembourg from the end of the seventeenth through the eighteenth century was very much influenced by France and especially Louis XIV. The château in Schwerin closely resembles Chambord, but with more stories. The park, designed in 1708, is in the style of Versailles. In 1730, a fire destroyed the painting gallery of the schloss, and Oudry was selected as the artist to help restore the gallery. The Grand Duke was known for his extreme prudishness: "The major difficulty [faced by Oudry] was reconciling the sensibilities of the prince with the exigencies of good taste: . . . Ludwig was shocked by nudities." Oudry was responsible for forty-two paintings in all, including one history painting, one portrait, eleven still-lifes, and two landscapes. Jean Loquin, "L'art français à la cour de Mecklembourg au XVIIIe siècle. J.-B. Oudry et le Grand-duc Christian-Ludwig," Gazette des Beaux-Arts, XXXVI (1906), 301. For Oudry's relationship to the court of Mecklembourg, see Paul Seidel, "Beiträge zur Lebensgeschichte Jean-Baptiste Oudrys," Repertorium für Kunstwissenschaft, XIII (1890), 80-110.

[29] The archives of the Académie de Chirurgie in Paris remain closed to the public. The archivist, Mme. Cloix, has as yet been unable to locate documents relating to the La Peyronie commission, if these do indeed exist.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> You do me the honor to tell me, Monsieur, [your] wish to have some paintings of my making. I currently have a suite fitting to decorate a gallery. This unique collection is made of paintings included in the attached memo. They are the principal animals of the ménagerie of the king all of which I painted after nature by order of His Majesty under the direction of Mr. De la Peyronie, His *premier chirurgien*, who wanted to have them engraved, to form a suite of natural history for the Botanical Garden of His Majesty [at the Trianon]. I made these paintings with great care and they remained with me after the death of M. De la Peyronie; also I asked a half less for them than I would have requested had His Royal Highness commissioned them of me. If a number [of paintings] were to be selected out, that would render the collection imperfect, and would put me in the position of having to raise the price of those which had been selected.[30]

The attached memo referred to in the letter listed a suite of ten paintings which was bought later that year and remains in Schwerin.[31] The memo also included an addendum of three more paintings which were apparently not intended to belong with the series of ten. One of them, a picture of a rhinoceros, was painted around 1750, so obviously could not have belonged to the series.[32] However, Opperman

---

[30] Cited in full in Seidel, "Beiträge," 99.

[31] The ten paintings listed are as follows: Tiger, Hyena attacked by two Mastiffs, Leopard, Leopardess, Barbary Sheep, Gazelle, Bustard and Guinea Fowl, Tufted Crane, Demoiselle, and Toucan, Cassowary, and Crane.

[32] For an interesting history of the rhinocerous in art see T. H. Clarke, "The Iconography of the Rhinoceros from Dürer to Stubbs," two parts, Connoisseur, CLXXXIV (1973), 2-13 and CLXXXV (1974), 113-22. The author states that with the painting of this animal by Oudry, the rhinocerous "had finally acquired a prestige which it had been tending to lose in the watered-down versions of Dürer's *ganda*. . . . And when Buffon used an engraving derived from Oudry's painting in the first edition of his *Natural History* of 1754 at long last the European world had a reliable image of the rhinoceros." Part two, 119.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

believes that the other two, which were shown respectively in the Salons of 1741 and 1742 (and all paintings in the series of ten were shown in Salons from 1739 to 1747, some of them twice) and identified as having been painted by order of the king at the Ménagerie of Versailles, may very well have belonged to the La Peyronie series. Neither painting, Chat-cervier and Guide-lion, is extant: the Chat-cervier disappeared during World War II, and the Guide-lion may have disappeared from Schwerin some time at the end of the eighteenth century.[33]

The reason for the commission in the first place needs to be discussed. The statement that the paintings were executed "under the direction of Mr. De la Peyronie. . . who wanted to have them engraved, to form a suite of natural history for the Botanical Garden of His Majesty" has usually been understood to mean that the engravings were to form the decoration at the Botanical Garden. Opperman offers two obvious reasons why this could not be so. First, the Royal Botanical Garden would most likely not be involved in publishing a series of engravings of animals. Second, life-size, carefully painted pictures of animals would not have been executed had the sole purpose of their existence been to provide models for engravings, when drawings would have been more logical in terms of cost and the fact that accurate engravings are better made after drawings than

---

[33] Opperman, "Jean-Baptiste Oudry," 487-88.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

large paintings. Instead, Oudry's statement that the paintings were done *for* the Botanical Garden should be taken literally: Oudry's series would have decorated the walls of one of the rooms of a building in the garden, comprising a cabinet of curiosities.

Whatever the ultimate purpose of this series of paintings, these remain among Oudry's best productions. With these works, the artist added a new dimension to the genre of animal paintings, expanding on the possibilities of the animalier. Desportes had produced likenesses of the royal hunting dogs which firmly established the animal portrait. Oudry now extended the idea of portrait to include not only the dogs, which were by extension members of an aristocrat's household, but other creatures as well. Furthermore, these animals, all denizens of the royal zoo, were depicted as much for their exotic qualities, as for their potential to convey expression.

A good example of this is the pendant group of Leopard and Leopardess (Figs. 38 and 39).[34] Oudry had made numerous studies of leopards and tigers in various poses at the Ménagerie. For the paintings, he worked up two studies, covering two different attitudes or emotions. The first, Leopard, shows the animal with his front paws firmly planted in a horizontal line at the foot of the canvas. His head is

---

[34] The subjects of these paintings are identified in the Salon livret of 1741 as a Tigre mâle de la Ménagerie du Roy and a Tigre femelle respectively.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

turned to the left, as he snarls at something beyond the frame of the picture. His body, which arches upwards, is tightly coiled. In a brilliant summation of the mood of this animal, the tail appears electrified. Snakelike, it coils in a tight loop towards the body, the tip highlighted in white which serves to throw it in great contrast to the darker body.

The rapid sketch Oudry made for this painting (Fig. 40) is remarkably close to the finished product. The drawing captures the animal in a moment when he gazes off to his left. This is a very summary work, with black chalk tracing in the outlines. However, attention has been paid to head and tail, two areas of major importance in the final painting. The tip of the tail has been worked over with white highlight, and the head has received much more attention than the rest of the body.

The sketch for the second painting, the Leopardess, is also very close to the finished painting (Fig. 41). In the drawing, Oudry has added white highlights to the belly of the animal. The tip of the tail and the head, as in the drawing for the previous painting, have received more attention than the rest of the creature. Here, the tail curves downwards, but closer to the ground and thus is not the menacing, electrified bolt of the Leopard. In the painting, the animal looks up as if caught unawares, and gazes outwards. Because her face is fully frontal, this becomes a direct confrontation between animal and spectator.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

This is a different type of interaction from that of the pendant Leopard who had snarled at some unseen foe.

In the artist's Mémoire accompanying the suite of paintings to Schwerin, the two works discussed above were described as "un tigre masle en colère" and "une tigre femelle dans une attitude tranquille" respectively.[35] Opperman argues that this description "makes it clear that Oudry intended the two picures as a study in contrasting expressions, and not just as representations of two sexes of the animal."[36] This assertion gains credence if we consider these two paintings in the context of the series itself.

In Oudry's list of paintings sent to Schwerin, the quadrupeds are listed first, followed by the four paintings of birds. Of these avian works, two are multi-figural compositions, and two present just one bird each. Even with a cursory glance at the series in its entirety, we see how the paintings of the quadrupeds differ in many respects from the way in which the birds are depicted. For one thing, the birds are all either presented in profile, or in three-quarter view, and none look out directly at the viewer. Except in one instance (the Bustard and Guinea Fowl), none of the birds can be said to interact with each other in the multi-figural compositions, or with the viewer of the works. Indeed, in one painting, the Dead Crane (Fig. 42), the bird

---

[35] Cited in Seidel, "Beiträge," 99.

[36] Opperman, Jean-Baptiste Oudry, 165-166.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

in question is a still-life, and clearly the character of the creature is not what is significant. Instead, what seems to be important in this painting as well as the others of birds is the surface quality.

This is not the case with the six paintings of quadrupeds. Although these are also exotic creatures, and thus visually interesting for the viewer at the purely superficial level, there is more to these animals than outward appearance alone. Quadrupeds arguably are more capable of conveying facial expression than other sorts of creatures, because their heads more closely resemble humans.[37]

With the exception of the Hyena attacked by two Mastiffs (Fig. 43), all the paintings of quadrupeds feature a single creature. What is interesting about the Leopard and Leopardess is that they represent the same species, the only doubling in the entire series. Clearly, then, it is not just a variety of animal which is important here, but a variety of expression as well. For this is what distinguishes the two paintings. Indeed, a whole range of expressions is encompassed by the quadrupeds. We have

[37] Of course certain types of birds, for example those with long legs, can also be said to have certain similarities with people. Indeed, Alex Potts ("Natural Order and the Call of the Wild: the Politics of Animal Picturing," Oxford Art Journal, XIII [1990], 12-33) has demonstrated how the startling similarities between human and ostrich skeletons of George Stubbs' comparative anatomy studies was perhaps responsible for the failure of that series. The possibility that the people might not be so different than birds could not be tolerated.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

discussed the snarling leopard and placid leopardess. The Hyena depicts the visceral encounter between hunting dogs and a feral beast. The Barbary Sheep (Fig. 44) and the Tiger both present animals in a prone position, but the tiger looks over his shoulder at us with the beginnings of a snarl forming, while the sheep sits in front of a rocky mass, gazing off into the distance. And finally, there is the Gazelle (1739, Fig. 45) whose pose and expression startingly resemble the limpid-eyed portraits of young girls by artists such as Jean-Baptiste Greuze.

In the painting just cited, the gazelle[38] stands in a feathery landscape, her head with its twisted horns set against a blue sky while the rest of the body is posed in front of a craggy rock formation. The study for this work is a gouache in Stockholm (Fig. 46). For the painting, Oudry changed the position of the head and altered the proportions of the body in a significant manner. In the final product, the head is turned further in our direction, the nose tilting down at a greater angle. The body has been made more slender, giving the animal a gracefulness not evident in the study. The animal engages the viewer's attention in several ways. First, at the level of pure exoticism, the most revealing characteristics of the creature, the elaborately ridged and twisting horns, are

[38] This animal is usually called a gazelle, following Oudry's own title. In Jean-Baptiste Oudry, 1686-1755 (ex. cat. [Paris, 1982]) the animal was identified as an *antilope cervicapra*.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

emphasized by being isolated against the blue sky. Second, like the Leopardess, we get the impression that the animal has been startled by us, but has not yet had the chance to escape. The creature makes eye-contact with us, establishing that we occupy the same space. This is an element of voyeurism which is new to the paintings of animals, and one which Oudry manipulates to full advantage. Finally, there is the expression of the animal itself. By changing the tilt of the head, the artist accentuated the almond slant of the enormous brown eyes. By engaging the viewer's attention with those arresting liquid eyes, and at the same time presenting the spectator with the little tuft of tail and the right rear leg which is delicately extended away from the body, there is an element of the sensual which appears startling in a painting of a wild animal. This aspect of the painting is unquestionably developed in the artist's Three Dogs and a Gazelle in a Park (1745, fig. 47) in which the Gazelle of 1739 now shares her space with hunting dogs to her left and a parcel of dead game above. The dogs, excited by her scent, strain their leads. The middle dog points straight ahead to the hindquarters of the gazelle. As if this were not enough to fasten our gaze on that section of the animal's anatomy, the clutch of birds positioned above anchor the hindquarters on the vertical axis.

Like the earlier painting, the fetching glance of the gazelle is directed towards us, but now we are voyeurs onto

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

a scene not, as it were, of an animal version of Diana at her bath, but of Susannah and the Elders. We surprise not a solitary animal, but an animal who is herself the titilating object of others in the scene. Thus the surprisingly coy glance of the earlier Gazelle was certainly not unintentional. Indeed, that painting may surely be seen as a precursor to Théodore Gericault's Head of a White Horse (1815, Fig. 48).[39] In both pictures, the animal engages the viewer's attention with its eyes and a sensual display of its charms.

As is frequently pointed out, Oudry's landscapes are by contrast to Desportes' decorative, and often subordinate to the animal figure: the setting is composed to suit the animal. In the case of the Gazelle, the landscape is most probably not of any specific site, but the type of background needed to enhance the gazelle. The feathery leaves demarcate a wedge of sky which frames the head of the animal, while the rugged cliffs serve at once to anchor the animal and provide a contrast to its delicate legs. Oudry, in conclusion, is more interested in the psychological situation, where the setting enhances the individuality of the foregrounded animal. To call Oudry merely a decorative painter is surely to minimize this aspect of his art.

---

[39] Linda Nochlin dubbed this image the "Brigitte Bardot of horses" in her paper delivered at the conference on Gericault (Paris, Musée du Louvre, November 1992).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Oudry's series of paintings for La Peyronie goes beyond mere animal reportage. Far from being merely decorative pieces for a cabinet of curiosities or of interest solely for scientists, these works are veritable portraits of individual animals. Oudry was certainly interested in studying these animals from nature at the royal Ménagerie at Versailles and thus presenting the creatures as realistically as possible. But as we have seen in the case of the Gazelle, the artist was willing to alter his initial studies in favor of a more "becoming" presentation. These animals, all of which are monumental,[40] astound us with there presence and their sense of individuality. These animals have undisputable character, and it is this element of the animal representation that won the artist great puopularity at the Salons.

Maternal imagery: *La lice et ses petits*

The Salon livret for August 25, 1753 lists a work "de forme ovale, dans une bordure quarrée, représentant une Chienne allaitant ses petits. Ce Groupe est éclairé du Soleil."[41] This is La Lice et ses petits (Bitch Nursing Her

[40] The paintings in this series are between four and six feet high and five to eight feet wide.

[41] Anon., Explication des peintures, sculptures et autres ouvrages de Messieurs de l'Académie Royale dont l'exposition a été ordonée, suivant l'intention de Sa Majesté, par M. de Vandières (Paris, 1753). Deloynes, V, pièce 53, 11. Volume five of the Deloynes collection contains the bulk of the criticism for this Salon. Opperman has transcribed these documents in an appendix of his dissertation. He also

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Pups) which met with astonishing success at the Salon (Fig. 49). Astonishing, for it is after all only a picture of animals: a mother dog with six chubby puppies clamoring for milk or curled up in sleep. Instead of the drama of hunting pictures or portraits of aristocratic dogs, the exotic interest in paintings of rare or foreign creatures, Oudry has chosen to present in the last Salon before his death the humble image of maternity.

The critics of this Salon were unanimous in their approval of this painting. Above all, Oudry's realism, his *vérité*, is commended. The most detailed description of the painting is from the Père Laugier:

> A piece with a singular finish and meticulousness is an oval Painting by [Oudry], representing a bitch hound lying on straw who nurses her pups. In the background is a large covered basket, and to the side an opening through which Sunlight penetrates into this tiny space and illuminates the group. This pretty piece is treated with the greatest power and precision. The bitch tenderly gives herself over to the needs of her pups who, still blind, roll heavily on top of one another. She turns her head delicately and appears on the alert. The straw on which she lies is so straw-like one is tempted to pull out the blades. The basket, the little loge, all is natural to a magnificent degree. The conception (*invention*) of this subject is charming (*piquant*), the expression lively, the touch firm and light; the color is of the happiest choice, and the touch of light produces an astonishing effect. On the four walls of the Salon we see Oudrys of all sorts. It would take too much time to go into detail; I would have to repeat to you without stop that nature is so well imitated that one is fooled.[42]

---

includes two reviews which were not included in the Deloynes Collection.

[42] Jugement d'un Amateur sur l'Exposition des Tableaux de l'an 1753. Lettre à M. le Marquis de V[ence] (n.p., 1753). Deloynes, V, 209-210.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

In Opperman's opinion, the painting has an embarrassing quality for us today.[43] It is too sentimental, and all we can appreciate is the technical mastery of the piece.[44] Certainly, this picture of a mother and her offspring at first glance appears surprising in the oeuvre of Oudry, an artist who produced a prodigious number of vicious hunt pieces, portraits of exotic animals or hunting dogs, and still-lives of dead game. With La lice et ses petits, the artist would appear to be working in a different mode.

For the Salon of 1753, Oudry exhibited eighteen paintings, five drawings, and six engravings after his illustrations for La Fontaine's Fables. The only images discussed by the critics apart from the engravings are the first four listed in the livret. Besides the one of the mother and her pups, which is second on the list, are a Wolf Hunt, and two pendant pictures, the White Duck, and Still Life of Dead Game, the latter two crowning achievements in

[43] Bryson (Word, 122ff.) uses the term "embarrassment" when describing "even the most enthusiastic supporters" of Greuze, although in this case the unease has more to do with the artist's own very particular ideology of family life and his attitude towards very young girls and old men in general. The two artists, however, are very similar in respect to our relationship to their works. Images like the "Greuze girl" or Oudry's maternal canine arouse in us a sense of distance, and it is hard for us perhaps to appreciate or understand how it could be that these two artists were immensely popular in their day. What these two have in common is significant: both are manifestations of the aesthetics of *sensibilité*. Greuze's "Manifesto painting of *sensibilité*" was the Accordée de village of 1761, just eight years after Oudry's tremendously successful Lice et ses petits.

[44] Opperman, Jean-Baptiste Oudry, 183-186.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

the techniques of illusionism. The paintings not discussed include another picture of animal maternity, this one described as "a fox in a movement of fear, with her litter."[45] The others are of subjects familiar to Oudry's work: hunts, still-lives, portraits of exotic animals and hunting dogs, and various combats between wild animals and birds.

Thus at the end of his life, Oudry produced not one, but two images of maternity, something completely new to his oeuvre.[46] The two images are related. Both isolate the mother animal in an enclosed space. However, there are important differences. For the spectator catches unawares the wild mother who looks up fearfully, whereas the viewer is ignored in the domesticated scene of maternity. That is to say, the element of drama is not completely absent in the image of the fox. For it is the lack of dramatic action which characterizes the scene with the bitch hound. There is something monumental in the stillness and intensitiy of the mother dog as she tends to her offspring.

---

[45] Opperman (ibid., 186) reproduces the etching of this painting which was lost from Schwerin during the Second World War.

[46] For the Salon of 1748 Oudry exhibited a picture described in the livret as "Un Renard qui tient un Coq, & un Poule qui veut défendre ses Poussins." The theme of maternity is certainly present, although arguably the dramatic focus is on the more visceral encounter of the fox and the male bird. It is less a picture of a mother and her offspring than an image depicting the violent rupture of a family.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

This stillness is emphasized by one of the details singled out most often by the critics: the shaft of light which pierces the little room, illuminating the concentration of the mother dog on her little ones. Opperman has demonstrated Oudry's affinities with Rembrandt in precisely this detail. He cites a passage in the criticism of Abbé Leblanc:

> What makes this group even more charming [piquant] is the ray of light by which it is illuminated. It is *clair-obscur* without harshness. What is in shadow is not black. The Reflections are so well understood and everything is so well rendered in the tones of nature, that one can view this Painting as a masterpiece of *clair-obscur*. . . . M. Oudry deserves not a little glory for having known how to equal Rembrandt in such a difficult field, and one which demands so much intelligence.[47]

It is not by chance that Oudry is compared to the Northern artist, for like his teacher Largillière he was a stauch defender of Flemish painting.[48] Opperman offers for contrast Rembrandt's Holy Family (called "Le Ménage du Menuisier", 1640, Fig. 50). This is a telling comparison.

---

[47] Observations sur les ouvrges de MM de l'Académie de peinture et de sculpture exposés au Salon du Louvre en l'année 1753, et sur quelques écrits qui ont rapport à la peinture (n.p., 1753). Deloynes, V, 432.

[48] Oudry delivered a conférence to the Académie which was entitled "Manière d'étudier la couleur en comparant les objets entre eux." In this lecture he emphasized the importance of color, and the two areas of color which must be mastered: local (what is natural to each object) and *clair-obscur* (the art of successfully distributing lights and darks). His list of artists to emulate includes artists from Venice (Titian, Veronese, Giorgione) and the North (Rubens, Rembrandt, and Van Dyck). Published in Cabinet de l'Amateur et de l'Antiquaire, III (1844), 33-52 and reprinted in H. Jouin, Conférences de l'Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture (Paris, 1883), 378-87.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

In both Oudry's and the Dutch artist's paintings of motherhood, a bright ray of light entering from an opening on the diagonal picks out the mother's head, isolating it along with her child (in the dog's case, the two nestled puppies). These works are contemplative in nature, for the main subject in both is unaware, indeed uncaring, of our presence.

More than one critic was enraptured with the depiction of the little puppies. Even the most critical of them all, one who had deplored the sheer number of Oudrys in the Salon, was lavish in his praise for this painting of canine motherhood:

> [W]e prefered [the painting] which represented a bitch hound near her pups and which is perhaps the most perfect representative of its genre we have ever seen. A ray of light strikes the head of the dog and brings it out. The rest of the body is in shadow, and of a very natural color. The little Dogs do not seem very well cleaned yet, and have that type of fur they have at birth; we read in the eyes of the Bitch a maternal attention, which results in determining the position of one of her paws which she holds up over one of her pups for fear of of harming it.[49]

The Abbé Leblanc praises Oudry's rendering of nature "as it is, and lauds the artist's depth of feeling for "the charms of infancy":

> [these charms] characterize the little dogs who have just been born, whose eyes are too weak to tolerate the

---

[49] [M. Estève], Lettre à un ami sur l'exposition des tableaux, faite dans le grand Sallon du Louvre le 25 aout (n.p., n.d.). Deloynes, V, 92

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> light, and who cannot stand upright because of the weakness of their paws.[50]

And finally, the critic in the Correspondance littéraire pronounced the painting of the mother dog and her pups "the best painting of the salon for it is without fault. . . . The little ones are painted with a lifelikeness which nothing can touch."[51]

The last critic cited was not the only one to commend Oudry's talent for realism. The word *vérité* crops up repeatedly in descriptions of the artist's works, as does praise for his ability to "represent nature as it is."[52] For example Cochin, writing in response to Oudry's most negative critic, Estève (cited above) asserts:

> This great talent appears in all its glory in the Painting of the Bitch hound with her pups. It is one of the most charming [*piquant*] that Oudry has ever made, and one of the handsomest to have appeared in this genre. The illusion there is carried to the

---

[50] [Abbé Leblanc], Observations sur les ouvrages de MM de l'Académie de peinture et de sculpture exposés au Salon du Louvre en l'année 1753, et sur quelques écrits qui ont rapport à la peinture. A M le president de B** (n.p., 1753). Deloynes, V, pièce 63, 431-432.

[51] Tourneux ed., II, 282-83 (15 September 1753). Opperman ("Jean-Baptiste Oudry," 201) suggests that the author of this article is Melchior Grimm, then editor of the jounal.

[52] Jacques La Combe (Le Salon (n.p., n.d.), Deloynes, V, pièce 55), Abbé Garigues de Froment (Sentimens d'un Amateur sur l'Exposition des Tableaux du Louvre, et la Critique qui en a été faite (Paris, 1753), Deloynes, V, pièce 58), Père Laugier (Jugement), Abbé Leblanc (Observations), Cochin (Lettre à un Amateur en réponse aux critiques qui ont paru sur l'exposition des tableaux (n.p., n.d.), Deloynes, V, pièce 61), and the critics in the Mercure de France (October 1753) and Correspondance littéraire (15 September 1753) all refer to these qualities in their essays.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> highest level Painting can achieve, and the effect is astonishing and of a singular force. . . .[53]

The most extravagant praise comes from Baillet de Saint-Julien, whose essay La Peinture did not directly discuss the paintings exhibited in the Salon of 1753, but was included in the Deloynes collection for this year. He cries:

> Wise, sublime, ingenious Oudry! what names shall I give you? Praises are exhausted for your subject. . . . Nevertheless your Art gives birth every day to new marvels. . . . No one knows better than you the origin and the properties of each thing. Descartes would have renounced his system in seeing your Paintings. . . . No one knew more happily than you, nor more correctly, how to take nature at face value, conquer it, tame it: and submit to our eyes the secrets of its divine operations with more force, more choice, more character, and more truth [*vérité*].[54]

This telling reference to Descartes takes us back to the discussion in my second chapter concerning the debates surrounding this philosopher's arguments against animal sensibility. Clearly for Baillet, Descartes "would have renounced his system" because Oudry managed to demonstrate to what extent animals could register emotion. And because the artist was appreciated for his verisimilitude and faithfulness in rendering nature, we can assume that the critics fully accepted the notion that animals have sentiment. That is, the very presence of sentiment in the painting which for us today may strike a false note, was

---

[53] Lettre, Deloynes, 355.

[54] La Peinture. Ode de Milord Telliab Traduite de l'anglois par M. ***, *un des auteurs de l'Encyclopédie* (London, 1753). Deloynes, V, pièce 57, 121-122.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

precisely the quality which won for Oudry so much lavish praise.

Thus a painting of a mother dog with her pups could compete successfully in the category of history painting. Only in the subsidiary elements of the picture do we find markers of a human presence: the basket, the bunch of leeks, the large dish to the right of the dog. Unlike earlier portraits of dogs, this one is unmarked. There is no collar identifying her, no label affixed above her head, and no clear idea of exactly where she is. It is a crude *loge*, providing her shelter while she tends to her newborn. In this, there is a rough parallel to the scenes of the Nativity. That a painting of animals could give rise to a comparison to history painting, and to a specific scene in the life of Christ, would have been unthinkable before the eighteenth century. Oudry's image clearly demonstrates to what extent animals had become accepted as worthy of the same painterly vocabulary hitherto reserved for paintings of human subjects alone.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

EPILOGUE: THE MENAGERIE AND AFTER

This investigation into the representations of animals in early modern France began with the zoo at Versailles. The Ménagerie, although tucked away in a royal park, had been nevertheless the first monumental free-standing structure built expressly for the purpose of viewing animals at rest. It had provided the site for important studies by anatomists like Perrault and artists such as Desportes and Oudry. We have seen how the works produced by these men gave form to changing attitudes towards animals. Revolutionary as the works by Desportes and Oudry were, in the nineteenth century, artists such as Gericault and Delacroix pushed those limits even further. The animal now appeared as dramatic actor in its own habitat. No longer limited to images of the hunt or portraits of exotic creatures, the *animalier* of the nineteenth century explored the full range of emotions possible in pictures of the natural world. We can now appreciate how these works could not have been produced in an earlier period, but also how their very being relied on those changes in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries concerning perceptions of the animal kingdom which we have discussed.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

In many ways this study began with the end: what conditions in France enabled the artistic possibility of an animal history painting? What became clear was that no one single factor made this in fact possible. Rather, what emerged was the picture of a much wider intellectual preoccupation with animals which affected those whose business was religion, philosophy, literature, and science, as well as the artists themselves. By studying these separate, yet related, strands of developments, it was possible to get an idea of just how widespread was this fascination with the animal kingdom. The tremendous popularity of an artist such as Oudry is no longer unexpected when seen against the backdrop of this all-pervasive interest in animals.

By looking ahead, to the period after that which concerned this study, we can gain further insights into the dramatic changes which were wrought under the reigns of Louis XIV and Louis XV concerning the place of animals in the public's awareness, and how these changes were themselves linked to developments in the later period. The immensely positive critical reception of Oudry's La Lice et ses petits gave us a clue as to the general attitude of the mid-eighteenth century salon-going public towards animal pictures. This easy acceptance of animal maternity as a fitting subject of a history painter in the French Academy is hard for us to grasp today, but this awareness is essential for a better understanding of the period.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Oudry's painting was by no means the only one of its kind, just as artists were not the only ones to make use of the animal world for its model. In the nineteenth century, along with major discoveries in the area of comparative anatomy, writers turned to the natural world for models and narratives. Indeed, the ubiquitous nature of animals in art and literature during this period was concurrent with a generally perceived subjugation of the natural world by scientists.[1] That is to say, the apparently benign treatment of creatures by artists and writers at all levels -- from paintings exhibited in salons and novels or reports read by the intelligentsia to the rather saccharine appearances of animals in greeting cards and popular stories -- masked a more ruthless attitude towards animals and other objects of nature in the real world.

Alex Potts and Harriet Ritvo are among the most recent scholars to argue that by studying a culture's attitudes towards animals we can uncover the ideological underpinnings of that society.[2] Thus all sorts of activities concerning the animal kingdom, from cattle-breeding and dog shows to

---

[1] For an excellent account of this gradual taming of nature from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century and beyond, see Keith Thomas, Man and the Natural World: Changing Attitudes in England 1500-1800 (London, 1983). Although the focus of his study is on England, many of his arguments are applicable to France as well.

[2] Potts, "Natural Order and the Call of the Wild: the Politics of Animal Picturing," Oxford Art Journal, XIII (1990), 12-33; Ritvo, The Animal Estate: The English and Other Creatures in the Victorian Age (Cambridge, MA, 1987).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

the passing of laws to protect the health of the body politic from sick or rabid animals, can be seen as motivated, consciously or not, by deep-seated beliefs about the social order itself. The studies of both Potts and Ritvo focused on the nineteenth century in England. During the same period in France as well, it is possible to relate various developments in art, literature, and science to an increasing anxiety vis à vis the relationship between the human and animal worlds. In this concluding chapter, my intent is not to offer a complete account of this period -- that is deserving of a fuller study in itself -- but to offer some examples which will make clear both the differences and the relationships between the attitudes which were the focus of my study and those which emerged in the period following. To do so, I return to the Ménagerie at Versailles.

The Ménagerie revisited

In the first chapter I discussed the royal zoo at Versailles, this architectural compound designed for animal spectatorship, and the way a new attitude to viewing animals was embedded formally in stone. As I concluded, the building itself embodied a new way of looking at animals as an aristocratic, leisurely practise. The later history of the zoo can much more concretely be discussed in terms of reflecting shifts in attitudes towards the way in which animals were to be observed. That is, what happened to the

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

zoo after the Revolution will tell us quite a bit about the manner in which animal spectatorship evolved into a popular, non-aristocratic, and civic activity. In short, a discussion of the last years of the Ménagerie is a discussion about how modern attitudes towards animals have arisen.

The Ménagerie, the single architectural casualty at Versailles, was the subject of much negative propaganda after the Revolution. Stories circulated detailing the vast quantities of fine Burgundy given, depending on the account, to either an elephant or dromedary.[3] In the Encyclopédie was this damning extract:

> [A zoo] is a building where, for the sake of curiosity, one keeps a large number of different animals. For the most part, only rulers can have zoos. Zoos must be destroyed when the people lack bread; for it is shameful to feed animals at great expense when around one people are dying of hunger.[4]

In this censoring of the zoo as the corrupt plaything of the monarch, the didactic role that the animal compound could also play was pointedly ignored.

Gustave Loisel gives a summary of the last days of the Ménagerie:

> A few days after the 10th of August [1792, the date of the invasion of the Tuileries], the Jacobins of Versailles who made up the "Société des Amis de la

---

[3] Loisel, Histoire des ménageries de l'antiquité à nos jours, III (Paris, 1912), 159.

[4] Denis Diderot, Encyclopédie, in Oeuvres complètes, XV (Paris, 1973).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> Convention," crossed the park, drums rolling, flag at the head, and made their way to the Ménagerie where they were received by Laimant, the former inspector of the zoo who was now its director. The leader of the troop declared that he and his followers had come, in the name of the people and in the name of nature, to enjoin him to return to freedom those beings who had left the hands of the Creator as freedom and had been unjustly detained by the pride and luxury of tyrants. The director declared himself ready to defer to a summons which moreover he had no way of repulsing: however he believed he had to hazard a simple observation which was that among his pensioners, there was a certain number so inaccessible to the feeling of gratitude that the first use they would make of their freedom would be in all likelihood to devour their liberators. As a result, he thought he must decline the role in what concerned him personally, and offered to the Society the keys of the cages where the wild beasts were held. This proposition was worth thinking about. An amendment was quickly voted upon, with terms by which the dangerous animals would temporarily stay in their cages. As for the harmless animals -- a dromedary, five types of monkeys, deer, many birds, etc. -- they were taken away, most to be given to the skinner, the others to be placed immediately in freedom. . . .[5]

The animals who were given their liberty escaped to the nearby woods. Those who survived provided exotic game for hunters in the following years.

Thus, after the Jacobin "libération des animaux," only a handful of animals remained at the zoo: a rhinoceros, two species of antelope, a couagga, some birds, and finally, a lion and a dog. These last two have an interesting history of their own, which is summarized in G. Toscan's L'Ami de la nature from an account given him from Pelletan, director of the African company in Senegal.[6] The story of the lion and

---

[5] Loisel, Histoire, III, 160ff.

[6] Paris, an VIII.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

his canine companion is a good example of the type of animal reportage so popular in this period.

The lion was brought to Pelletan at the end of 1787 at the age of three or four months: "Sa physionomie annonçoit de la douceur et de la bonté." He was raised in the keeper's house along with a pointer hound of the same age. The two animals were transferred to the Versailles zoo on September 28, 1788. Toscan observed:

> This friendship between animals of different species and opposed characters is not rare, but it hardly occurs except between those who live near man, and it always begins by the recognition of his beneficial actions.[7]

A "nuance très remarquable" in this friendship concerned the degree of love felt by one animal for the other. According to Toscan, the lion loved the dog entirely, but although the dog returned this love, he had feelings for another being as well: "avant de se donner au Lion, la nature l'avoit donné à l'homme." His canine friend having predeceased him, an attempt was made to give the lion as a companion a second dog who physically resembled the first. Enraged that anyone could think he could so easily replace one friend with another, he brutally killed the second. The lion, it was reported, died of sorrow and a bad diet in Messidor an IV.

This story clearly belongs to the genre of *sentimentalité* literature, and if it is not entirely apocryphal (and it bears the stamp of "realness" since it is

---

[7] Ibid., 31ff.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

an account sent in by a director) it has all the elements of the type of fictional narrative so popular in the period. We saw how Oudry's painting of a mother dog and her pups could be so successful, even at a time when a new science purporting to deal only in facts had replaced an older form of looking at the world which had made room for superstition and popular beliefs. It is clear that an experimental and observational science did not preclude the possibility of sentiment on the part of the person observing the world. And as with the painted representation of canine maternity, written accounts of the thinking, caring animal abounded in the later eighteenth century. Indeed, this trend continues to the present, although now relegated to the level of kitsch. In the twentieth century, sentiment has little place in high culture. It is embarrassing, cloying even, and seen to be the province of children, hence the story of an elephant and his travails or an orphaned deer must take place in cartoon format. But as early as the late seventeenth century, educated French and Dutch people were moved to write detailed accounts, for example, of Hans and Paarke, the Dutch elephants sent to France, these exempla of matrimonial fidelity, who were forced to be separated for a period of time.[8]

Bernardin de Saint Pierre, perhaps best known for that best-seller of 1788, Paul et Virginie (itself the work of

---

[8] Loisel, Histoire, III, 38ff.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

sentimentalité) was the intendant of the Jardin des Plantes when the Ménagerie at Versailles was suppressed. After much pleading, Couturier, the *régisseur général* of Versailles convinced Bernardin to inspect the remaining animals at the zoo in order to decide their fate. Bernardin was much moved by the sight of the lion and his companion:

> As soon as he [the dog] saw us he came up to the bars with the lion, giving us a warm welcome with his head and tail. As for the lion, he walked gravely along the bars against which he rubbed his enormous head. The serious air of this terrible despot and the affectionate attitude of his friend inspired in me the most tender interest in both of them. I had never seen such generosity in a lion and so much friendliness in a dog.[9]

Bernardin's sympathetic attitude to these animals and his interest in their relations is not surprising. On January 31, 1793, he addressed the Convention, urging the members to join what was left of the royal zoo to the Jardin des Plantes in Paris, now called the Jardin National.[10] For although the galleries of the National Garden contained collections representing the three realms of inanimate nature (fossils, dried plants, and animal which had been dissected, stuffed, or preserved in liquids), the garden itself only consisted of two of the realms: "an active earth and plants which grow." What is detrimental to the garden as a whole is that there are no living animals, animals "who

---

[9] Ibid., 162-63.

[10] Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, Mémoire sur la necessité de joindre une ménagerie au Jardin National des Plantes de Paris (Paris, 1792).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

feel, who love, who understand." The easy assumption that these animal activities occur signifies of course the triumph of the anti-cartesians of the previous century. There is no doubt that the feeling animals of Oudry or the thinking animals of La Fontaine have now entered into the scientific discourse of the Enlightenment.

The didactic function of the Jardin National is elaborated upon:

> A zoo is thus necessary for the propriety and dignity of the nation. It is likewise essentially for the general study of nature. . . . It is not less so for the liberal arts. Sketchers and painters come each day to the national garden to draw foreign plants when they have to represent areas in Asia, Africa, America. The animals of the same climates would also be useful to them; they would study their forms, their attitudes, their passions. They already have, it is said, plaster models. But after which plaster did Puget sculpt the lion devouring and tearing the muscles of Milo of Crotona? Artists, poets, writers, if you would copy everything, no one will every copy you. Do you want to be original and fix the admiration of posterity for your works? Then only look for models in nature.

Furthermore, a zoo would be good for Paris. Curious people would be attracted for there is "a curiosity natural to everyone," hence the huge crowds at travelling zoos. Furthermore, there would be a reciprocal benefit, for an audience would exert a good influence on caged wild animals. As proof, Bernardin cites the often told example of the lion at Versailles: "I attribute this disposition of the lion for sociability on the friendship of his dog." And dogs, in the mind of Bernardin, are but surrogate humans:

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> The lion of the Ménagerie is proof of what the influence of society on the character of the most savage can achieve; he is much happier than a solitary lion. . . .
>
> As man has made use of so many different species of dog to subjugate all species of animal by force, perhaps he shall succeed in making use of them again in order to attract those other animals to him by benevolence. The natural love of dogs for man shall perhaps serve him as an intermediary in order to acquire that of the wild animals.[11]

The fascination for the lion and his relationship to the dog thus appears to lie in what humans can gain from a close study of this phenomenon. Control over animals is a good thing, especially when done benevolently.

In his speech to the Convention, Bernardin sums up:

> Everything thus necessitates the establishment of a zoo at the Jardin des Plantes, and everything is favorable to do so; the need to place in a site destined for the study of natural history the most interesting kingdom of nature; the advantages which would therefore result for the progress of the arts, sciences, rural economy, and even philosophy; our political relations with foreign powers; the interest of the capital; the urgent necessity to gather up the debris of the Ménagerie at Versailles; the ease of transporting them to Paris; and to acquire without too much expense a grounds and buildings enclosed in the Jardin des Plantes, and near a fountain.[12]

He ends on a resounding note. A zoo is necessary for the glory of the nation:

> Louis XIV, in circumstances as embarassing as those in which you find us, undertook luxurious monuments; you must undertake those which are useful. He had himself represented [at Versailles] as Apollo, Mars, Jupiter.

---

[11] Ibid., 6.

[12] Ibid., 47-48.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> Make for the country a portion of what he had made for his glory; the people will regard you as the gods who with one had hurl thunderbolts, and with the other scatter fertile dew.[13]

Despite these impassioned words, it was not until April 26, 1794, that the professors at the Jardin were finally able to transport the animals from Versailles to Paris. The rhinoceros had died the previous year from injuries sustained by falling into his water tank. This was no triumphal entry of the liberated animals into Paris, but it did herald the beginnings of a new, public institution where the observation of animals served a didactic function with the additional attraction of great entertainment value. In short, visitors to the Jardin des Plantes could now enjoy the spectacle of animals much in the same manner as we do today: animals are seen as the living components of an open-air museum.

Scientists and their students benefited from this public zoo as well. As at the Ménagerie, animals who died at the Jardin des Plantes were dissected and discussed. The galleries of the Muséum d'Histoire Naturelle at the Jardin still displays the nineteenth century collection of skeletons of various species of animals, birds, and fish. These creatures came under intense observation: everything about them was analyzed. The zoo offered a great deal to anyone of a zoological inclination:

---

[13] Ibid., 51.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> [They could study] the influence that education, slavery, domestication and the change in food exercises on their primitive nature, the phenomena relevant to the rutting period, to mating, to gestation, to the care of the males and the females for their little ones; [the zoo] even made it possible to examine on their grounds the development and propagation of certain qualities which determine the make-up of particular races. . . .[14]

As we have seen, scientists such as Perrault had already investigated the animals at Versailles with just as much attention. But what is different now is that these specimens are not shut away in a royal menagerie. Rather, they now belong to the public domain.

The Jardin des Plantes provided Parisians and visitors to the capital with the spectacle of wild beasts behind bars or presented in a more natural setting on an island with a moat separating onlooker from animal. But this separation between observer and observed was not always as clear as it had been in the older arena combats. A discussion of an incident involving one of the bears at the zoo will raise another important issue where animals are concerned: the awareness on the part of humans that animals could be seen as increasingly similar to people.

The anthropomorphism of animals

On September 8, 1820, an old man threw himself into the bear's den and was immediately killed by the resident animal. The victim, in all reports, remained unnamed,

[14] Joseph-Philippe-François Deleuze, Histoire et description du Muséum Royal d'Histoire Naturelle (Paris, 1823), 685-686.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

unlike the bear whom everyone knew was called Martin. In an anonymous account of this unhappy event, there is more sympathy for the bear than for his human victim:

> We must therefore only attribute such an event to the insanity of that unhappy man who wanted to end his days; because the administration of this magnificent establishment, made up of wise and distinguished scholars does not omit a single precaution in order that the public, which visits daily this garden which without question is the most beautiful in Europe, as much for its rare plants as for its cabinet of natural history, can see without danger the different wild beasts shut up in the zoo; but what can human caution do against the type of craziness or lack of all moral sentiment which sometimes will drive a man to take his life?[15]

For, the author continues, the bear is not savage by nature, but will become angry if incited. Therefore, Martin cannot be held accountable for the death of the man who both startled and tempted the bear by jumping into his den.

That account of the incident is not surprising. By excusing the bear and laying the blame on the old man who was without identification papers -- and therefore by assumption was an indigent -- the august institution at the Jardin des Plantes is exonerated from any possible accusations of negligence. A more unusual narrative of the events which appeared at the same time is entitled A deliberation of the animals.[16] At the head of this curious

---

[15] Anon., Détails exacts du malheureux événement arrivé au Jardin des Plantes, dans la fosse de l'Ours Martin (Paris, 1820), 2.

[16] Anon., Déliberation des animaux. Jugement contre l'ours Martin, rendu par les animaux de la Ménagerie du Jardin des Plantes (Paris, 1820).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

document is the statement: "The lion, indignant as to the infamous behavior of Martin the Bear, asked of his Keeper the favor of bringing the traitor before a justice tribunal." What follows is the transcription of the purported trial of the bear by his fellow animals. Martin is found guilty of not rising above his nature, and sentenced to a life behind bars, a punishment which will serve to chastise the culpable one while at the same time not depriving the public of a spectacle. Previously, animals had actually had to stand trial for perceived wrongs committed against nature or against humans.[17] Now, an animal is actually tried by his peers. This published account, in brief, while certainly meant for pure entertainment, nevertheless establishes the fact that there was an audience for this type of genre. It would be inconceivable today that a leaflet of this sort would be published following a similar tragedy.

For in the nineteenth century, animals acting out human roles, indeed masqerading as humans, was a favorite subject in popular prints. Of course, having animals stand in for people was always a favorite device of caricaturists. Earlier, during the Revolution, crude prints of the aristocrats as animals were circulated. But in the nineteenth century, this reaches a level of sophistication

[17] For an account of this curious tradition, see E. P. Evans, The Criminal Prosecution and Capital Punishment of Animals: The Lost History of Europe's Animal Trials (London, 1906).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

hitherto unheard of. Again, it is to the illustrations of the Fables of La Fontaine that we shall turn.

J. J. Grandville produced his set of illustrations for the fables between 1837 and 1839. It is immediately apparent that there are some fundamental differences in the representation of the animals. Indeed, there is a veritable gulf in conception which separates those earlier works by Chauveau and Oudry and those by the nineteenth century artist. The premise of the fable lies with the speaking animal. As discussed above, during the time of La Fontaine, it was the fact that animals could think and feel that was important. By giving animals a voice, the poet gave those creatures the opportunity to put into words the thoughts and feelings they unquestionably possessed. Oudry, as we saw, produced images of these animals which further emphasized this rational aspect: the artist's animals could carry a narrative by virtue of expression and dramatic capabilities. Grandville went even further. He stood his animals up on hind legs, dressed them as humans, and produced in effect people who happen to look like animals (Figs. 51, 52, 53). These are Le Brun's physiognomic studies taken to their fullest extent. The boundary between human and animal has been erased.

So we see in the nineteenth century the culmination of the shifting attitudes towards animals which had surfaced during the reign of Louis XIV. In the later period, the animals of Gericault, Delacroix, and Barye, to name only the

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

most famous of those animal specialists, acted out dramas in their natural settings, providing all the visceral relish and sensual titillation of paintings devoted to humans alone. John Berger sees in this culmination the signs of the definitive separation between humans and animals which would occur in the twentieth century:

> The treatment of animals in nineteenth century romantic painting was already an acknowledgment of their impending disappearance. The images are of animals receding into a wildness that existed only in the imagination.[18]

It does seem that the period from the late eighteenth to the mid-nineteenth century marked the last time such narratives as the story of the lion and the dog, or the trial of Martin the Bear could arouse any sort of popular interest. This was the period when the fullest range of emotions or dramatic possibilities for animals in paintings could also be explored.

We saw how representations of animals in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries occured at a time when philosophers, writers, and scientists were also investigating the natural world. Out of this interest at all levels arose the possibility of a sort of animal history painting, as established by Oudry. It is the winding and multi-faceted path tracing the emergence of animals as more than symbols or emblems in artistic representations to the

---

[18] John Berger, "Vanishing Animals", New Society, XXXIX (1977), 665. This is the second of three articles in a series on the relationship between humans and animals.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

independent, heroic animal of the nineteenth century that I have attempted to trace here.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Chapter 1. A Brief History of Animal Collections

Primary Sources: Printed

Hamy, Jules Théodore Ernest. Les anciens Ménageries royales et la Ménagerie nationale fondée le 14 brumaire an II. Corbeil: 1793.

Lacépède, Bernard G. E. de la Ville, Conte de. "Lettre relative aux établissements publics destinés à renfermer des animaux vivans, et connus sous le nom de Ménageries." La Décade Philosophique, littéraire et politique, VII (an IV), 449-62.

Vasari, Giorgio. Lives of the Most Eminent Paintres, Sculptors and Architects. Trans., Gaston du C. de Vere. London: 1912-15.

Sauval, Henri. Histoire et recherches des antiquités de la ville de Paris. 4 vols. Paris: 1724.

Secondary Sources

Dardaud, Gabriel. Une Girafe pour le roi. Paris: 1985.

Franklin, Alfred. La vie privée d'autrefois. Arts et métiers: modes, moeurs, usages des parisiens du XIIe au XVIIIe siècle d'après des documents originaux ou inédits. Paris: 1899.

Jennison, George. Animals for Show and Pleasure in Ancient Rome. Manchester: 1937.

Loevenbruck, Pierre. Les animaux captivs. La vie des zoos. Paris: 1954.

Loisel, Gustave. Histoire des ménageries de l'antiquité à nos jours. 3 vols. Paris: 1912.

Martin, Henri. Histoire de France depuis les temps les plus reculés jusqu'en 1789. 19 vols. Paris: 1838-54.

Michelet, Jules. Histoire de France. 19 vols. Lausanne: 1966.

Potts, Alex. "Natural Order and the Call of the Wild: the Politics of Animal Picturing," Oxford Art Journal, XIII (1990), 12-33.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Chapter 2. Vincennes and Versailles: The Shift in Animal Spectatorship

Primary Sources: Manuscripts

Paris, Archives Nationales:

O/1/1889. Pièces 7, 9, 10. Vincennes, plan of the Sérail des bestes sauvages (rez-de-chaussée, 1e étage, 2e étage), 1753.

O/1/1889B. Plans of château of Vincennes (1663-1778); park and woods (1737-1790). Memo dated 1744 concerns the Ménagerie.

N/II/Seine/199 (cartes et plans). Large map of château of Vincennes and grounds. The Sérail and Ménagerie are clearly situated.

Denis, Claude. Explication de toutes les Grottes, Rochers et Fontaines du Chasteau Royal de Versailles, Maison du Soleil, et de la Ménagerie, en vers héroïques. N.p: n.d.

Duverney, Jean-Guichard. Untitled fragment concerning the transportation of animals. Académie des Sciences, archives. *Cartonnier 13* Histoire Naturelle des Animaux. *Section 2:* Cayers d'Anatomie de M. Du Verney, folio 14.

Ferber, Carolo Adeodato. "Voyage en Allemagne, Hollande, Belgique, Angleterre, France, Italie, effectué en 1685-89." BN, Mss. All, 147. Fol. 235 (château de Versailles et Vincennes); fol. 236 (parc et fontaines); fol. 237 (Ménagerie de Versailles.)

Primary Sources: Printed

Bethem-Edwards, ed. Arthur Young's Travels in France during the Years 1787, 1788, 1789. London: 1909.

Brice, Germain. Description nouvelle de ce qu'il y a de plus remarquable dans la ville de Paris. Paris: 1684.

Felibien, André. Description de la grotte de Versailles. Paris: 1672.

----------. Description sommaire du Château de Versailles. Paris: 1674.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

----------. Les Divertissemens de Versailles, donnez par le Roy à toute sa Cour, au retour de la conqueste de la Franche-Comté, en l'année 1674. Paris: 1674.

----------. Relation de la feste de Versailles (18 juillet 1668). Paris: 1668.

Hesdin, Raoul. The Journal of a Spy in Paris During the Reign of Terror. New York: 1896.

Lacépède, Bernard de. "Lettre relative aux établissements publics destinés à renfermer des animaux vivans, et connus sous le nom de Ménageries." La Décade philosophique, littéraire et politique, VII (an IV), 449-62.

La Fontaine, Jean de. Les amours de Psyche et de Cupidon. Paris: 1669.

Louis XIV. Manière de montrer des jardins de Versailles. Paris: 1690.

Piganiol de la Force, Jean-Aymar. Description de Paris, de Versailles, de S. Cloud, de Fontainebleau, et de toutes les autres belles Maisons et Châteaux des Environs de Paris. 8 vols. Paris: 1742.

Poncet de La Grave, Guillaume. Mémoires interessans pour servir à l'histoire de France. 2 vols. Paris: 1788-89.

Sauval, Henri. Histoire. See above.

Scudéry, Madeleine de. La promenade de Versailles. Paris: 1669.

Secondary sources

Anon, "La Ménagerie de Versailles." La Construction Moderne, 2e série (1904-05), 91-94.

Anon, "La Ménagerie de Versailles." Magasin pittoresque, XIII (1845), 404.

Bechéfer, Pierre et al. "Ménagerie." L'intermédiaire des chercheurs et curieux. 10e année, CIX (1960), cols. 373-77.

Bethem-Edwards, ed. Arthur Young's Travels in France during the Years 1787, 1788, 1789. London: 1909.

Campardon, Emile. Les spectacles de la foire. Geneva: 1970.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Ciprut, Edouard-Jacques. Documents inédits sur quelques châteaux d'Ile-de-France (XVIe et XVIIe siècles.) Paris: 1967.

Cordey, Jean. "Colbert, Le Vau et la construction du château de Vincennes au XVIIe siècle." Gazette des Beaux-Arts, CXXV (1933), 273-93.

Dussieux, Louis Etienne. Le château de Versailles: histoire et description. Versailles: 1881.

Erland-Brandenburg, Alain and Bertrand Jesatz. Le Château de Vincennes. Paris: 1989.

Fossa, F. de. Le Château historique de Vincennes. 2 vols. Paris: 1907-09.

Franklin, Alfred. La vie privée d'autrefois. See above.

George, Wilma. "Alive or Dead: Zoological collections in the Seventeenth Century." In Arthur McGregor and Oliver Impey, The Origins of Museums: The Cabinet of Curiosities in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century Europe. Oxford: 1985.

Kemp, Gerald van der and Jacques Levron. Versailles and the Trianons. Trans., Ethel Whitehorn. London: 1958.

Kimball, Sidney Fiske. The Creation of the Rococo. Philadelphia: 1943.

----------. "Le decor du château de la Ménagerie à Versailles." Gazette des Beaux-Arts, LXXVIII (1936), 245-56.

Lacroix, Jean-Bernard. "L'approvisionnement des ménageries et les transports d'animaux sauvages par la Compagnie des Indes au XVIIIe siècle." Revue français d'histoire d'Outre Mer, LXV (1978), 153-79.

Loevenbruck, Pierre. Les animaux captivs. La vie des zoos. Paris: 1954.

----------. Les animaux sauvages dans l'histoire. Paris: 1955.

Loisel, Gustave. Histoire des ménageries. See above.

----------. "Les idées des Anciens et des Modernes sur l'utilisation scientifique des Ménageries." La Revue des Idées. XXXI (1906), 3-10.

Mabille, Gérard. "La Ménagerie de Versailles." Gazette des Beaux-Arts, CXVI (1974), 5-36.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

----------. "Les tableaux de la Ménagerie de Versailles." Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire de l'Art Français (1974), 89-101.

Marie, Alfred. Naissance de Versailles. Paris: 1968.

---------- and Jeanne. Versailles au temps de Louis XIV. Paris: 1976.

Maxwell, Constantia. The English Traveller in France, 1698-1815. London: 1932.

Milne-Edwards, M. A. La Ménagerie: rapport au ministre de l'instruction publique. Paris: 1891.

Pomian, Krzysztof. Collectionneurs, amateurs et curieux. Paris, Venise: XVIe - XVIIIe siècle. Paris: 1987.

Schnapper, Antoine. Le géant, la licorne et la tulipe. Collections et collectionneurs dans la France du XVIIe siècle. Paris: 1988.

Vasselot, Jean J. Marquet de. "La Ménagerie du Château de Versailles: La grotte et les pavillons." Revue de l'Histoire de Versailles et de Seine-et-Oise, V (1899), 81-96.

Verlet, Pierre. Versailles. Paris: 1961.

Whitman, Nathan T. "Fontainebleau, the Luxembourg, and the French Domed Entry Pavilion," Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians, XLVI, 1987, pp. 356-73.

Chapter 3. Perceptions of Animals in Seventeenth Century France

Primary Sources: Manuscripts

Anon. Explication des peintures, sculptures & autres ouvrages de Messieurs de l'Académie royal dont l'exposition a été ordonée, suivant l'intention de Sa Majesté par M. de Vandières. Paris: 1753. Collection Deloynes (Cabinet des Estampes, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris) V, pièce 53. In all following references to items in the Deloynes Collection, bracketed information is from annotations made by Mariette on the documents themselves.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Primary Sources: Printed

Boutauld, Michel. Le Théologien dans les conversations avec les sages et les grands du monde. Paris: 1683.

Condillac, l'Abbé de. Traité des animaux, où, après avoir fait des observations critiques sur le sentiment de Descartes, et sur celui de M. de Buffon, on entreprend d'expliquer leurs principales facultés. Amsterdam: 1766.

Cordemoy, Gérard de. Dissertations physiques sur le discernement du corps et de l'âme. Paris: 1689-1690.

Cureau de la Chambre, Marin. Traité de la connoissances des animaux où tout qui aa esté dict Pour & Contre le Raisonnement des bestes, est examiné. Paris: 1648.

Darmanson, Jean-M. La Beste dégradée en machine Amsterdam: 1691.

De Brosse, Guy. Description du Jardin royal des plantes médicinales, estably par le Roy Louis le juste, à Paris. Contenant le catalogue des plantes qui y sont de présent cultivées, ensemble le plan du Jardin. Paris: 1636.

Descartes, René. Discours sur la méthode. Paris: 1637.

Dilly, Antoine. De l'ame des bêtes, où, après avoir demontré la spiritualité de l'âme de l'homme, l'on explique par la seule machine, les actions les plus surprenantes des animaux. Lyon: 1676.

Duncan, Daniel. Explication nouvelle et méchanique des acctions animales. Où il est traité des Fonctions de l'ame. Avec une Methode facile pour démontrer exactement toutes les parties du Cerveau, Sans couper sa propere substance. Paris: 1678.

----------. Histoire de l'animal ou la connoissance du corps animé par la méchanique et par la chymie. Paris: 1687.

[M. Estève]. Lettre à un ami sur l'Exposition des Tableaux faite dans le grand Sallon du Louvre, le 25 Août 1753. N.p: 1753. Collection Deloynes, V, pièce 56.

La Fontaine, Jean de. Les Amours de Psyché. See above.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

----------. Fables choisies mises en vers par M. de La Fontaine. Paris: 1668. This is the original edition of the first six books of the Fables. Illustrations by François Chauveau. (BN Rés Ye 880).

----------. Fables choisies mises en vers par M. De La Fontaine. Paris: 1668-94. 5 vols. Illustrations by François Chauveau. (BN Rés Ye 3293-3296).

----------. Fables choisies mises en vers. Paris: 1755-59. Illustrations are by Charles-Nicolas Cochin after drawings by Jean-Baptiste Oudry.

----------. Discours à Mme de la Sablière (Sur l'âme des animaux). Henri Busson and Ferdinand Gohin, eds. Geneva: 1967. See H. Busson.

----------. Oeuvres complètes. 2 vols. I: Fables, contes et nouvelles. Jean-Pierre Collinet, ed. Paris: 1991.

Lamy, Dr. Guillaume. Discours anatomique avec des Reflexions sur les Objections qu'on luy a faites contre sa manière de raisonner de la nature de l'Homme, & de l'usage des parties qui le composent. Rouen: 1675.

[Abbé Laugier], Jugement d'un Amateur sur l'Exposition des Tableaux de l'an 1753. Lettre à M. le Marquis de V[ence]. N.p: 1753. Collection Deloynes, V, pièce 59.

Abbé Le Blanc, Observations sur les ouvrages de MM de l'Académie de peinture et de sculpture exposés au Salon du Louvre en l'année 1753, et sur quelques écrits qui ont rapport à la peinture. A. M. le president de B**. N.p: 1753. Delyones Collection, V, pièce 63.

Montaigne, Michel Eyquem de. Essais. Paris: 1588.

Oudry, Jean-Baptiste, "Manière d'étudier la couleur en comparant les objets entre eux." In Henri Jouin, Conférences de l'Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture. Paris: 1883, 378-387.

Pardies, Le Père Ignace. Discours de la connoissance des bestes. Paris: 1672.

Perrault, Charles. La Labyrinth de Versailles. Paris: 1679.

Secondary Sources

Bassy, Alain-Marie. "La Fontaine et ses deux reflets. A propos d'une illustration de *La Cigale et la Fourmi*." 34/44, VI (1979), 31-40.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

----------. "Le texte et l'image." Histoire de l'édition française. II: Le livre triomphant, 1660-1830. Paris: 1984.

----------. Les "Fables" de La Fontaine. Quatre siècles d'illustration. Paris: 1986.

Berger, Robert W. In the Garden of the Sun King: Studies on the Park of Versailles under Louis XIV. Washington, DC: 1985.

Busson, Henri and Ferdinand Gohin, eds. Jean de la Fontaine, *Discours à Mme. de la Sablière*. Geneva: 1967.

Busson, Henri. "La Fontaine et l'âme des bêtes." Revue d'histoire littéraire de la France, XLII (1935), 1-32.

----------. La religion des classiques (1660-1685). Brionne: 1948.

Campardon, Emile. Les spectacles de la foire. 2 vols. Geneva: 1970.

Collinet, Jean-Pierre. "La Fontaine et ses illustrateurs," La Fontaine, Oeuvres complètes, I (Paris, 1991), lxli-cxlviii.

Couton, Georges. La politique de La Fontaine. Paris: 1959.

Despres, Armand. Les éditions illustrées des Fables de La Fontaine. Paris: 1892.

Foucault, Michel. The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences. New York: 1973.

Gaucheron, Roger. "La préparation et le lancement d'un livre de luxe au XVIIIe siècle. L'édition des Fables de La Fontaine, dite d'Oudry." Arts et Métiers graphiques, II (1927), 77-82.

Genaille, Robert. "Les Fables de La Fontaine en tapisseries de Beauvais au XVIIIe siècle: contribution à l'étude de Jean-Baptiste Oudry. Mémoires de la Société Académique d'Archéologie, Sciences, et Arts du Département de l'Oise, XXVII (1933), 429-81.

Girardin, Marquis de. "L'édition des Fables de La Fontaine, dite d'Oudry." Bulletin de Bibliophile (1913), 217-36; 277-92; 330-47; 386-98.

Gohin, Ferdinand. L'art de La Fontaine dans ses fables. Paris: 1929.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Gutwirth, Marcel. "A Beast Fable for the Sun King: A Wry Poetical Offering." In David Lee Rubin, ed., Sun King: The Ascendancy of French Culture During the Reign of Louis XIV. Washington, DC: 1992, 103-114.

----------. Un merveilleux sans éclat: La Fontaine ou la poésie exilée. Geneva: 1987.

Harth, Erica. Cartesian Women: Versions and Subversions of Rational Discourse in the Old Regime. Ithaca: 1992.

Opperman, Hal. "Jean-Baptiste Oudry (1686-1755) with a Sketch for a Catalogue Raisonné of his Paintings, Drawings, and Prints." Doctoral dissertation, University of Chicago, 1972.

Roger, Jacques. Les sciences de la vie dans la pensée française du XVIIIe siècle. La génération des animaux de Descartes à l'Encyclopédie. Paris: 1963.

Rubin, David Lee. "Icon and Caricature: Poetic Images of a Sun King." In Sun King, 129-143.

----------, ed. Sun King: The Ascendancy of French Culture During the Reign of Louis XIV. Washington, DC: 1992.

Tocanne, Bernard. L'Idée de nature en France dans la seconde moitié du XVIIe siècle. Paris: 1978.

Chapter 3. Art and Science

Primary Sources: Manuscripts

Académie des Sciences. Archives. Dossiers Simonneau, Du Verney, Perrault; Cartonnier 13 (Histoire des animaux); Procès-verbaux; Pochettes de séances.

Archives Nationales. AJ/15/510. Archives du Muséum. Brevets to architects, painters, etc.

Primary Sources: Printed

Académie des Sciences. Histoire et Mémoires de l'Académie royale des sciences. 1666 à 1698. 2 vols. Paris, 1777.

Buffon, Georges-Louis de. L'histoire naturelle, générale et particulière. 44 vols. Paris, 1749-1804.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

De Brosse, Guy. Description du Jardin royal des plantes médicinales, estably par le Roy Louis le juste, à Paris. Contenant le catalogue des plantes qui y sont de présent cultivées, ensemble le plan du Jardin. Paris: 1636.

Dionis, Pierre. Cours d'opérations de chirurgie, demontrées au Jardin Royal. Paris: 1707.

Fontenelle, Bernard Le Bovyer de. Histoire de l'Académie des sciences depuis 1666 jusqu'à son renouvellement en 1699. 13 vols. Paris: 1733.

Hamy, J. T. E. "Les Anciennes Ménageries." See above.

Lacépède, Comte de. Discours de clôture du cours d'histoire naturelle de l'an VIII. Sur les avantages que les naturalistes peuvent procurer au corps social, dans l'état actuel de la civilisation et des connoissances humaine. Paris: n.d.

Le Prince, Nicolas Thomas. Essai historique sur la Bibliothèque du roi aujourd'hui Bibliothèque impériale avec des Notices sur les dépôts qui la composent et le cataloque de ses principaux fonds. Nouvelle édition, revue et augmentée des annales de la bibliothèque présentant à leur ordre chronologique tous les faits qui se rattachent à l'histoire de cet tablissement, depuis son origine jusqu'à nos jours. Paris: 1856.

Lister, Martin. A Journey to Paris in the Year 1698. 2nd edition. London: 1699.

Millin, Aubin-Louis, et Alex Brongniart. Rapport fait à la Société d'histoire naturelle de Paris, sur la necessité d'établir une ménagerie. Paris: 1792 (an I).

Perrault, Charles. Parallèle des Anciens et des Modernes en ce qui regarde les arts et les sciences. 4 vols. Paris: 1688-97.

Perrault, Claude. Description anatomique de divers animaux disséqués dans l'Académie royale des sciences. Augmentée d'une découverte particulière touchant la vüe. Paris: 1682.

----------. Description anatomique d'un caméléon, d'un castor, d'un dromadaire, d'un ours et d'une gazelle. Paris: 1669.

----------. Essais de physique, ou Recueil de plusieurs traités touchant les choses naturelles. 4 vols. Paris: 1680-88.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

----------. Extrait d'une lettre écrite à M. de La Chambre, qui contient les observations qui ont esté faites sur un grand poisson disséqué dans la Bibliothèque du Roy, le 24 juin 1667. Observations qui ont esté faites sur un lion disséqué dans la Bibliothèque du Roy, le 28 juin 1667, tires d'une lettre écrite à M. de La Chambre. Paris: 1667.

----------. Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire naturelle des animaux. Paris: 1671. Second edition: 1678.

Saint-Pierre, Bernardin de. Mémoire sur la necessité de joindre une ménagerie au jardin national des plantes de Paris. Paris: 1792.

Tauvry, Daniel. La Nouvelle anatomie raisonnée, ou les usages de la structure du corps de l'homme et de quelques autres animaux...suivant les lois des mécaniques. Paris: 1690.

Toscan, G. Histoire du lion de la Ménagerie du Muséum national d'Histoire-Naturelle & de son Chien. Paris: an III.

Secondary sources

Ashworth, William B., Jr. "Marcus Gheeraerts and the Aesopic Connection in Seventeenth-Century Scientific Illustration." Art Journal, LXIV (1984), 132-138.

Atkinson, Geoffroy. The Extraordinary Voyage in French Literature before 1700. New York: 1920.

----------. Les Relations de voyages du XVIIe siècle et l'évolution des idées. Paris: n.d.

Barritault, Georges. "L'Anatomie en France au XVIIIe siècle. Les anatomistes du Jardin du Roi (Dionis, les Cureau de la Chambre, Duverney, Pourfour du Petit, Hunauld, Winslow, Ferrein, Portal)." Doctoral thesis, University of Paris, 1940.

Bertrand, Joseph. L'Académie des Sciences et les académiciens de 1666-1793. Paris: 1869.

Beugnot, Bernard. "De quelques lieu rhétoriques du discours scientific classique." Revue de Synthèse, CI-CII (1981), 5-25.

Bonnefon, Paul. "Claude Perrault, architecte et voyageur." Gazette des Beaux-Arts, XXVI (1901), 209-222, 425-440.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Brown, Harcourt. Scientific Organizations in 17th Century France: 1620-1680. Baltimore: 1934.

Cap, Paul-Antoine. Le Muséum d'histoire naturelle. Paris: 1855.

Chastel, André. "Le Baroque et la mort." In Fables, formes, figures, 205-26. Paris: 1978. Originally published in Atti III: Congresso internazional di Studi umanistici. Venice: 1954, 33-46.

Cohen, I. Bernard. Revolution in Science. Cambridge: 1985.

Crosland, Maurice, ed. The Emergence of Science in Western Europe. New York: 1976.

Delaunay, Paul. La vie médicale aux 16e - 18e siècles. Paris: 1935.

Deleuze, Joseph-Philippe. Histoire et description du Muséum. Paris: 1823.

Denise, Louis. Bibliographie historique et iconographique du Jardin des Plantes: Jardin royale des plantes médicinales et Muséum d'Histoire Naturelle. Paris: 1903.

Edgerton, Samuel Y., Jr., guest ed. Art Journal, LXIV (1984). Issue entitled "Art and Science: Part I, Life Sciences."

Elias, Norbert, Richard Whitely, and Herminio Martins. Scientific Establishments and Hierarchies. Dordrecht: 1982.

Farber, Paul Lawrence. "Buffon and Daubenton: Divergent Traditions within the *Histoire naturelle*." Isis, LXVI (1975), 63-74.

Franklin, Alfred. La vie privée. See above.

Gabb, George. "`Scientific Apparatus' with Cannon! An 18th century Laboratory." The Illustrated London News, May 21, 1938, 897 900.

Gannal, Georges. "Cours d'anatomie au Jardin du Roi." Bulletin de la Société de l'histoire de Paris (1893), 21-24.

George, Albert J. "The Genesis of the Académie des Sciences." Annals of Science, III (1938), 372-401.

Gillispie, Charles Coulston. Edge of Objectivity: An Essay in the History of Scientific Ideas. Princeton: 1960.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Hahn, Roger. The Anatomy of a Scientific Institution: The Paris Academy of Sciences, 1666-1803. Berkeley: 1971.

----------. "Scientific Careers in 18th century France." in M. Crosland, ed., The Emergence of Science in Western Europe. New York: 1975.

Hirschfield, John M. The Académie Royale des Sciences (1666-83). New York: 1981.

Harth, Erica. Ideology and Culture in Seventeenth Century France. Ithaca: 1983.

----------. Cartesian Women. See above.

Howard, Rio. "Medical Politics and the Founding of the Jardin des Plantes in Paris." Journal of the Society for the Bibliography of Natural History, IX (1980), 395-402.

Jammes, André. "Louis XIV, sa Bibliothèque, et le Cabinet du Roi." Library, XX (1965), 1-12.

Kuhn, Thomas S. The Structure of Scientific Revolutions. Chicago: 1962.

Laissus, Yves and Monsigny. "Les plantes du roi." Revue d'Histoire des Sciences, XXII (1969), 193-236.

---------- and Jean Torlais. Le Jardin du roi et le Collège royal dans l'enseignement des sciences a XVIIIe siècle. Paris: 1986. Part III of René Taton, Enseignement et diffusion des sciences au XVIIIe siècle.

Lemaistre, Alexis. L'Institut de France et nos grands établissements scientifiques. Paris: 1896.

Lévi-Valensi, Joseph and Maxim-Paul Laignel-Lavastine. Histoire de la presse médicale française aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles. Paris: 1936.

Lough, John. France Observed in the Sevemteenth Century by British Travellers. Boston: 1985.

Lux, David. "The Reorganization of Science, 1450-1700." In Bruce T. Moran, ed., Patronage and Institution: Science, Technology, and Medicine at the European Court, 1500-1750 (Rochester: 1991), 185-194.

Maindron, Ernest. L'Académie des Sciences. Paris: 1888.

----------. L'Ancienne Académie des Sciences. Les Académiciens (1666-1793). Paris: 1895.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Martin, Henri-Jean. "Culture écrite et culture orale, culture savante et culture populaire dans la France d'Ancien Régime." Journal des Savants (1975), 225-82.

----------. Livre, pouvoirs, et société à Paris au XVIIe siècle (1598-1701). 2 vols. Geneva: 1969.

Ornstein, Martha. The Role of the Scientific Societies in the Seventeenth Century. Third edition. London: 1963.

Paul, Charles B. Science and Immortality. The *Eloges* of the Paris Academy of Sciences (1699-1791). Berkeley: 1980.

Pfeiffer, Jeanne. "L'engoument des femmes pour les sciences au XVIIIe siècle." In Danielle Dubosc and Eliane Viennot, Femmes et pouvoirs sous l'ancien régime (Paris, 1991), 196-222.

Picon, Antoine. Claude Perrault ou la curiosité d'un classique. Paris: 1988. Reviewed by Robert W. Berger, Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians, XLVIII (1989), 394-395.

Pinot, Madeleine. Ex. cat. Dessin et Sciences: XVIIe - XVIIIe siècles. Paris: 1984.

Pomian, Krzysztof. Collectionnerus, amateurs et curieux: Paris, Venise, XVIe-XVIIIe siècle. Paris: 1987.

Potts, Alex. "Natural Order." See above.

Pujoulx, Jean-Baptiste. Promenades au Jardin des Plantes, à la ménagerie et dans les galeries du Muséum d'histoire naturelle, contenant des Notions claires, & à la portée des Gens du monde, sur les végétaux, les animaux & les minéraux les plus curieux & les plus utiles de cet Etablissement. 2 vols. Paris: 1803 (an XII).

Rattansi, P. M. "Science and religion in the 17th century." In M. Crosland, ed., The Emergence of Science in Western Europe. New York: 1976.

Ritvo, Harriet. The Animal Estate: the English and Other Creatures in the Victorian Age. Cambridge, MA: 1987.

Root-Bernstein, Robert Scott. "On Paradigms and Revolutions in Science and Art: The Challenge of Interpretation." Art Journal, XLIV (1984), 109-118.

Salomon-Bayet, Claire. "Un préambule théorique à une Académie des arts. Académie royale des sciences, 1693-1696. Présentation et textes." Revue d'histoire des sciences, XXIII (1970), 229-50.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Schnapper, Antoine. Le géant, la licorne et la tullipe: collections et colectionneurs dans la France du XVIIe siècle. Paris: 1988.

Stafford, Barbara M. Body Criticism: Imaging the Unseen in Enlightenment Art and Medicine. Cambridge: 1991.

Stroup, Alice. A Company of Scientists: Botany, Patronage, and Community at the Seventeenth Century Parisian Royal Academy of Science. Berkeley, 1990.

----------. "The Political Theory and Practice of Technology under Louis XIV." In Bruce T. Moran, ed. Patronage and Institutions, 211-234.

----------. Royal Funding of the Parisian Académie Royale des Sciences During the 1690s. Philadelphia: 1987.

Taton, René, ed. Enseignement et Duffusion des Sciences au XVIIIe siècle. Paris: 1986. See Yves Laissus and Jean Torlais.

Tocanne, Bernard. L'Idée de nature en France dans la seconde moitié du XVIIe siècle. Paris: 1978.

Triaire, Dr. Paul. Les leçons d'Anatomie et les peintres hollandais aux XVIe et XVIIe siècles. Paris: 1887.

Waddington, C. H. Behind Appearance: A Study of the Relations between Painting and the Natural Sciences in This Century. Edinburgh: 1969.

Watson, E. C. "The Early Days of the Académie des Sciences as portrayed in the Engravings of Sébastien Le Clerc." Osiris, VII (1939), 556-587.

Webster, Charles. From Paracelsus to Newton: Magic and the Making of Modern Science. Cambridge: 1980.

Chapter 5. The Animaliers: Le Brun, Desportes, and Oudry

Primary Sources: Printed

Anon., Explication des peintures, sculptures et autres ouvrages de Messieurs de l'Académie Royale dont l'exposition a été ordonée, suivant l'intention de Sa Majesté, par M. de Vandières. Paris: 1753. Deloynes Collection, V, pièce 53, 11.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Deloynes Collection, document citations. See Chapter Two.

Desportes, Claude-François. "La vie de M. Desportes, peintre d'animaux" (August 3, 1748 éloge). In L. Dussieux et al, Mémoires inédits sur la vie et les ouvrages des membres de l'Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture, II, 108-09. Paris: 1968.

Gougenot, Abbé Louis. "Jean-Baptiste Oudry" (January 10, 1761 *éloge*.) In L. Dussieux et al, Mémoires inédits, II, 365-403.

Le Brun, Charles. Conférence de M. le Brun premier peintre du Roy de France, Chancelier et directeur de l'Académie de peinture et sculpture. Sur l'Expression generale et particuliere. Enrichie de Figures gravées par B. Picart. Amsterdam and Paris: 1698.

----------. Expression des Passions de l'âme représentées en plusieurs testes gravées d'après les desseins de feu M. Le Brun premier peintre du Roy. A Paris par Jean Audrun, graveur du Roy en son Académie, a l'hôtel Royal des Gobelins. Paris: 1727.

Oudry, Jean-Baptiste. "La manière d'étudier la couleur en comparant les objets entre eux." In Conférences de l'Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture. Paris: 1883, 378-403.

Secondary sources

Bazin, Germain. "J.-B. Oudry, animalier, décorateur et paysagiste." L'Art et les Artistes, nouvelle série, XVII (1928-29), 109-115.

Benisovich, Michael. "The History of the *Tenture des Indes*." Burlington Magazine, LXXXIII (1943), 216-25.

Blumer, M-L. "Quelques tableaux d'Oudry, de Desportes et de Bachelier peints pour le château de Choisy et actuellement au Muséum d'histoire naturelle." Bulletin de la Société d'histoire de l'art français (1945-46), 61-66.

Bodkin, Thomas. "`Les Nouvelles Tentures des Indes'." Burlington Magazine, LXXXIV (1944), 65-66.

Bryson, Norman. Word and Image: French Painting of the Ancien Régime. Cambridge: 1981.

Charléty, G. "Album d'aquarelles attribués à Oudry." Gazette des Beaux-Arts, CVI (1930), 11-17.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Clarke, T. H. "The Iconography of the Rhinoceros from Dürer to Stubbs." Connoisseur, CLXXXIV (1973), 2-13 and CLXXXV (1974), 113-22.

Cordey, Jean. Deux albums de portraits inédits peints par Oudry. Paris, 1928.

Galerie Cailleux. Ex. cat. L'Art du XVIIIe siècle: Jean-Baptiste (1686-1755) et Jacques-Charles (1723-1778) Oudry. Paris: 1982.

Duclaux, Lise. Ex. cat. L'atelier de Desportes: dessins et esquisses conservés par la Manufacture nationale de Sèvres. Paris, 1982.

Gaucheron, Roger. "La préparation et le lancement d'un livre de luxe au XVIIIe siècle, l'édition des Fables de La Fontaine, dite d'Oudry." Arts & Métiers graphiques, II (1927), 77-82.

Girardin, Marquis de. "L'édition des Fables de La Fontaine, dite d'Oudry." Bulletin de Bibliophile (1913), 217-36; 277-92; 300-47; 386-98.

Jarry, Madeleine. "`Les Indes': série triomphale de l'exotisme." Connaissance des Arts, LXXXVII (1959), 62-69.

----------. "L'exotisme dans l'art décoratif français au temps de Louis XIV." XVIIe Siècle (1958), 300-328.

----------. "The `Tenture des Indes' in the Palace of the Grand Master of the Order of Malta." Burlington Magazine, C (1958), 306-11.

Lastic, G. de. "Desportes et Oudry, peintres des chasses royales." The Connoisseur, CXCVI (1977), 290-99.

---------- and Marcelle Brunet. Ex. cat. Paysages de Françoise Desportes (1661-1743). Etudes peintes d'après nature. Paris: 1961.

Loquin, Jean. "L'art français à la cour de Mecklembourg au XVIIIe siècle: Jean-Baptiste Oudry et le Grand-duc Christian-Ludwig." Gazette des Beaux-Arts, XXXVI (1906), 301-14.

----------. "Catalogue raisonnée de l'oeuvre de Jean-Baptiste Oudry, peintre du Roi (1686-1755)." Doctoral dissertation, Université de Paris, 1912.

----------. "Les «Cinq sens» de Jean-Baptiste Oudry peints pour les appartements de Marie Leczinska à Versailles." Musées et Monuments de France, I (1907), 73-75.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

----------. Le paysage en France au début du XVIIIe siècle et l'oeuvre de Jean Baptiste Oudry (1686-1755.) Gazette des Beaux-Arts, XL (1908), 353-80.

Montagu, Jennifer. "Charles Le Brun's `Conférence sur l'expression générale et particulière.'" Doctoral dissertation, University of London, 1959.

Niclausse, Juliette. "`Chasses nouvelles' de M. Oudry." Gazette des Beaux-Arts (1957), 311-20.

Opperman, Hal. "Genesis of the Chasses royales." Burlington Magazine, CXII (1970), 216-24.

----------. "Jean-Baptiste Oudry." See above.

----------. Ex. cat. Jean-Baptiste Oudry. Fort Worth: 1983.

Potts, Alex. "Natural Order." See above.

Seidel, Paul. "Beiträge zur Lebensgeschichte Jean-Baptiste Oudrys." Repertorium für Kunstwissenschaft, XIII (1890), 80-110.

Staatliches Museum Schwerin. Ex. cat. Jean-Baptiste Oudry. Gemälde Handzeichnungen, 1686-1755. Schwerin: 1986.

Vergnet-Ruiz, Jean. Oudry: 1686 à 1755. Paris: 1930. Extract from Dimier, ed, Les peintres français du XVIIIe siècle.

Whitehead, Peter James Palmer and M. Boeseman. A Portrait of Dutch Seventeenth Century Brazil: Animals, Plants and People by the Artists of Johan Maurits of Nassau. New York: 1989.

Epilogue

Primary Sources: Printed

Anon. Déliberation des animaux. Jugement contre l'ours Martin, rendu par les animaux de la Ménagerie du Jardin des Plantes. Paris: 1820.

Anon. Détails exacts du malheureux événement arrivé au Jardin des Plantes, dans la fosse de l'Ours Martin. Paris: 1820.

Diderot, Denis. Oeuvres complètes. 15 vols. XV: Extraits de l'Encyclopédie. Paris: 1973.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Saint-Pierre, Bernardin de. Mémoire. See above.

Toscan, G. L'Ami de la nature. Paris: an VIII.

Secondary Sources

Berger, John. "Vanishing Animals." New Society, XXXIX (1977), 665.

Deleuze, Joseph-Philippe-François. Histoire et description du Muséum Royal d'Histoire Naturelle. Paris: 1823.

Evans, E. P. The Criminal Prosecution and Capital Punishment of Animals: The Lost History of Europe's Animal Trials. London: 1906.

Loisel, Gustave. Histoire des ménageries. See above.

Potts, Alex. "Natural Order." See above.

Ritvo, Harriet. The Animal Estate: The English and Other Creatures in the Victorian Age. Cambridge, MA: 1987.

Thomas, Keith. Man and the Natural World: Changing Attitudes in England 1500-1800. London: 1983.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

FIGURES

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

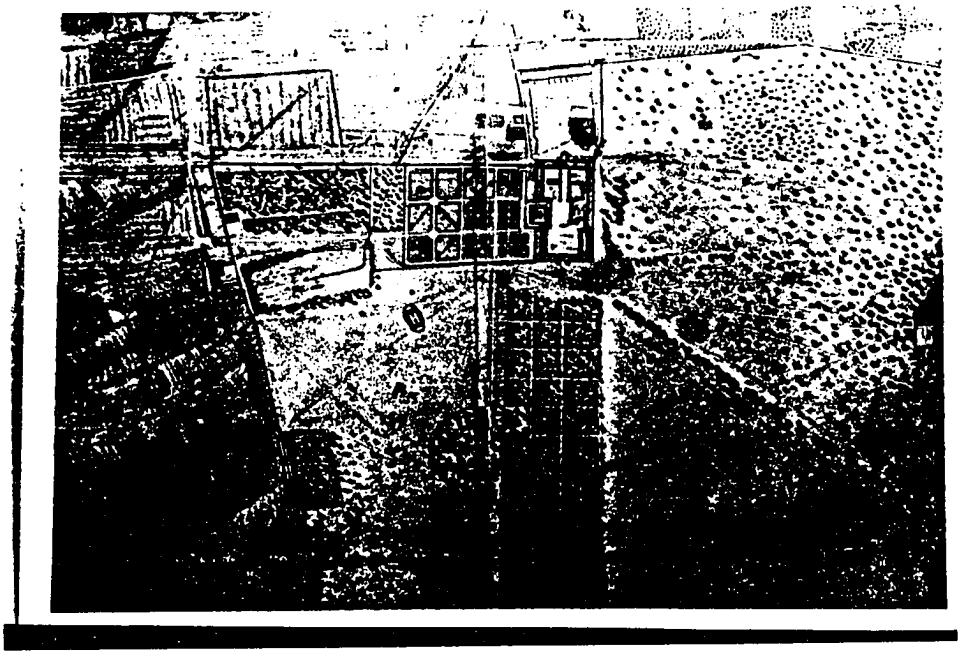


Fig. 1. Vincennes, plan of château and park. Paris: Archives Nationales. The Sérail des bestes sauvages is visible at the far west edge of the park.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

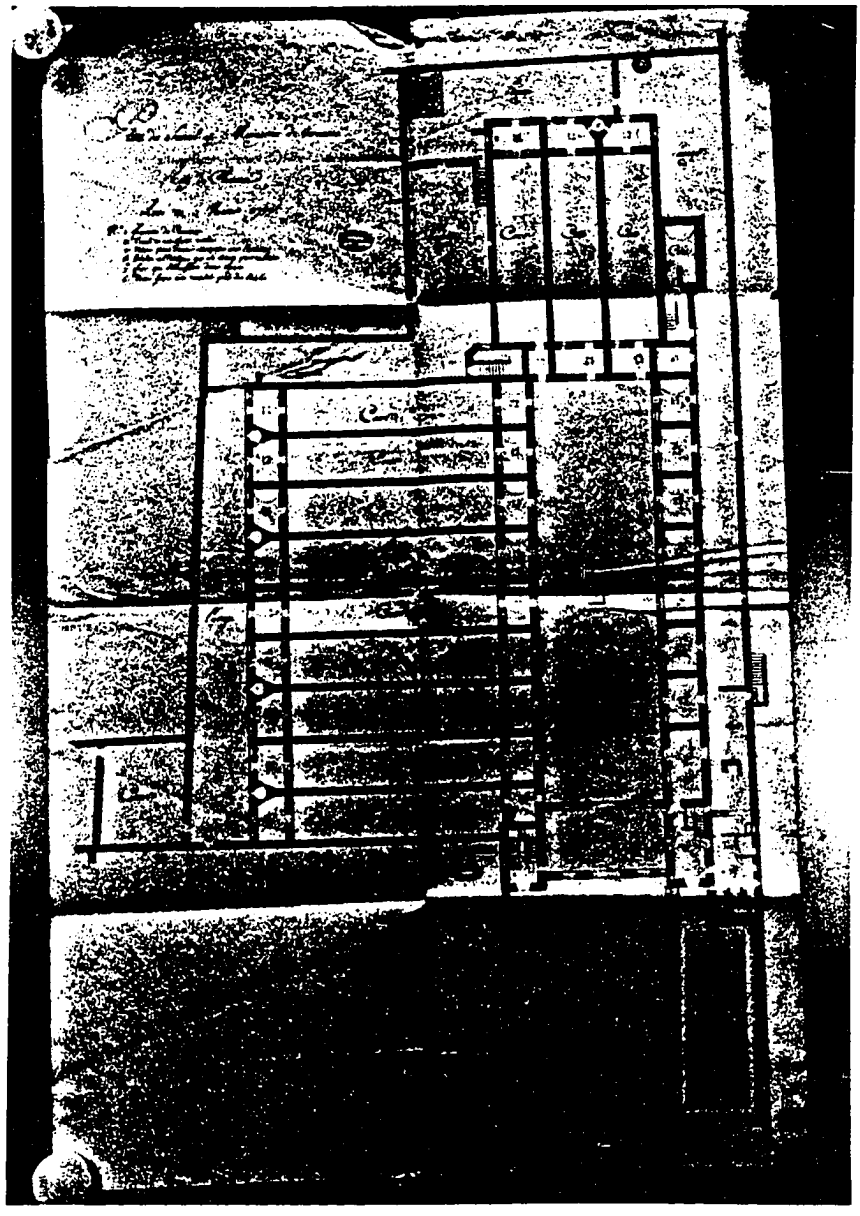


Fig. 2a. Vincennes, Sérail des bestes sauvages, ground floor, 1753. Paris: Archives Nationales.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

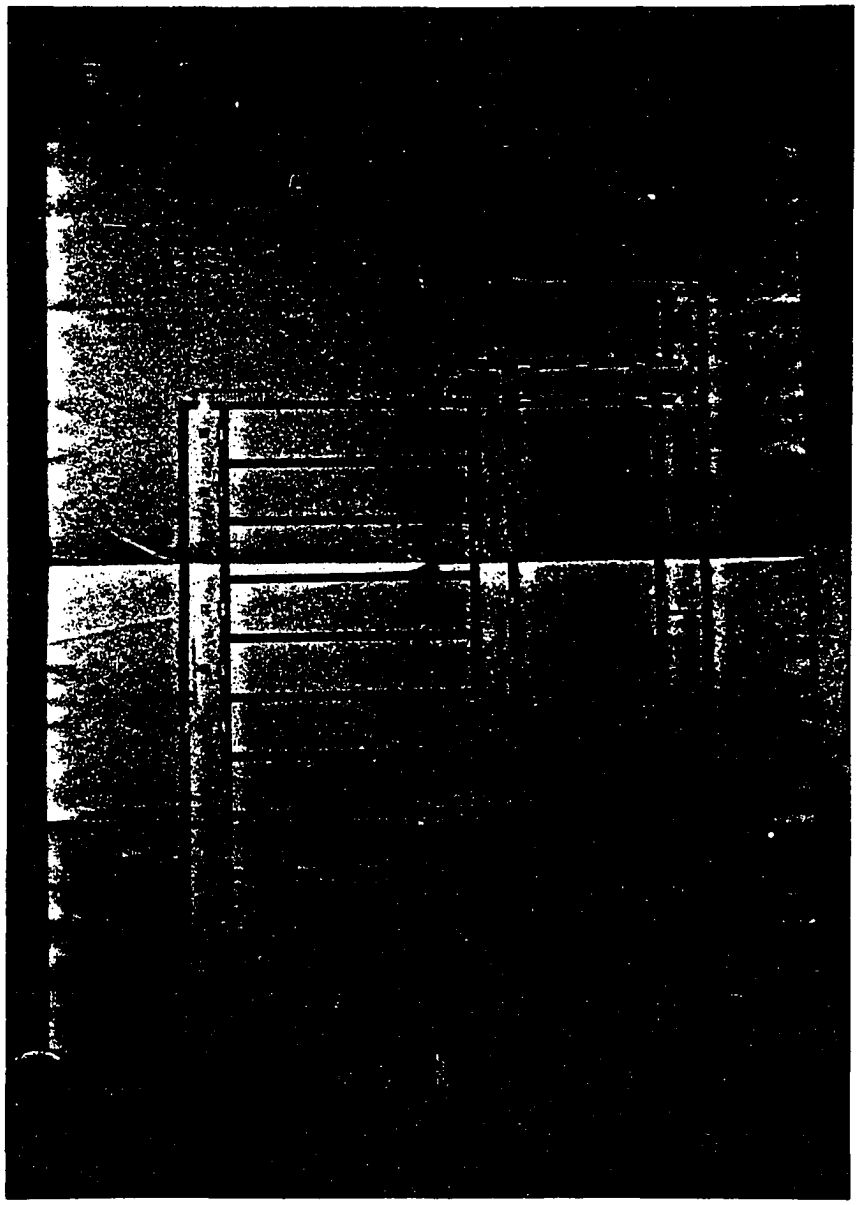


Fig. 2b. Vincennes, Sérail des bestes sauvages, second floor, 1753. Paris: Archives Nationales.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

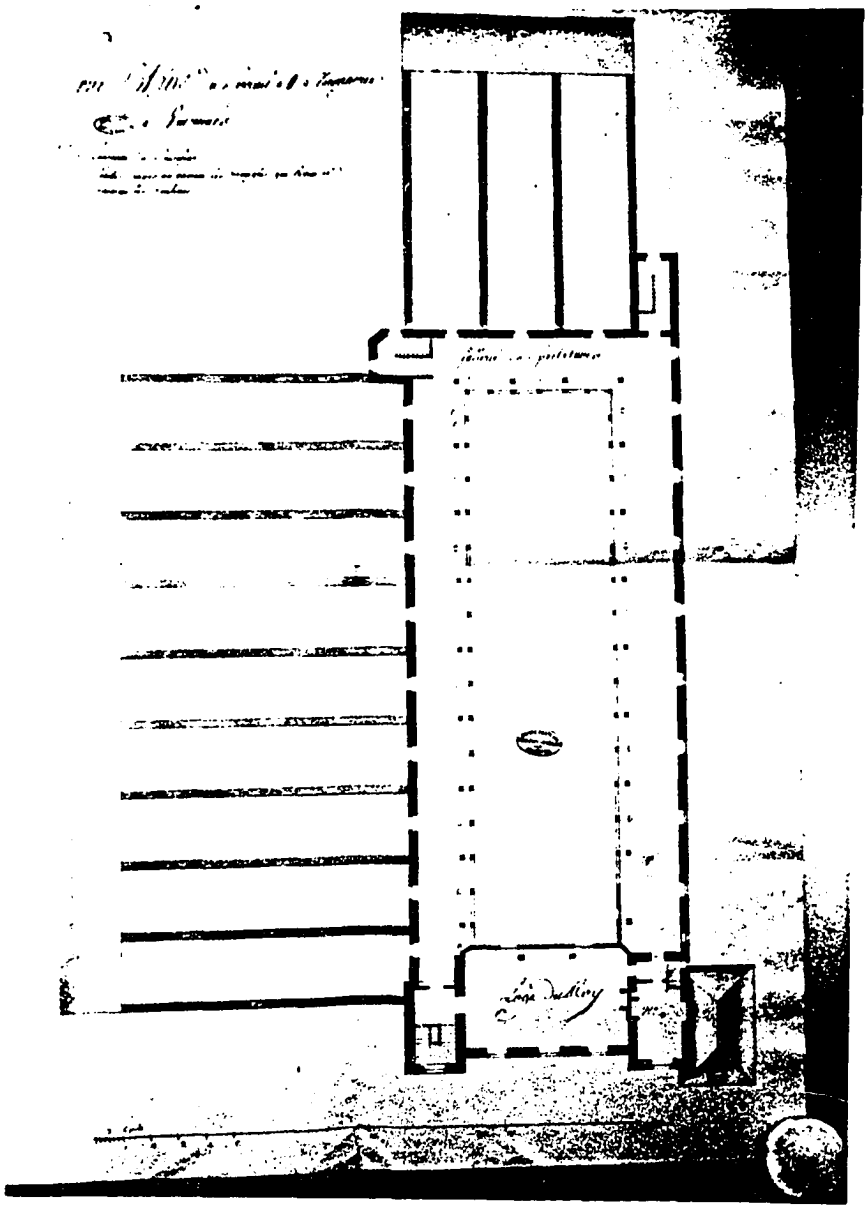


Fig. 2c. Vincennes, Sérail des bestes sauvages, third floor, 1753. Paris: Archives Nationales.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

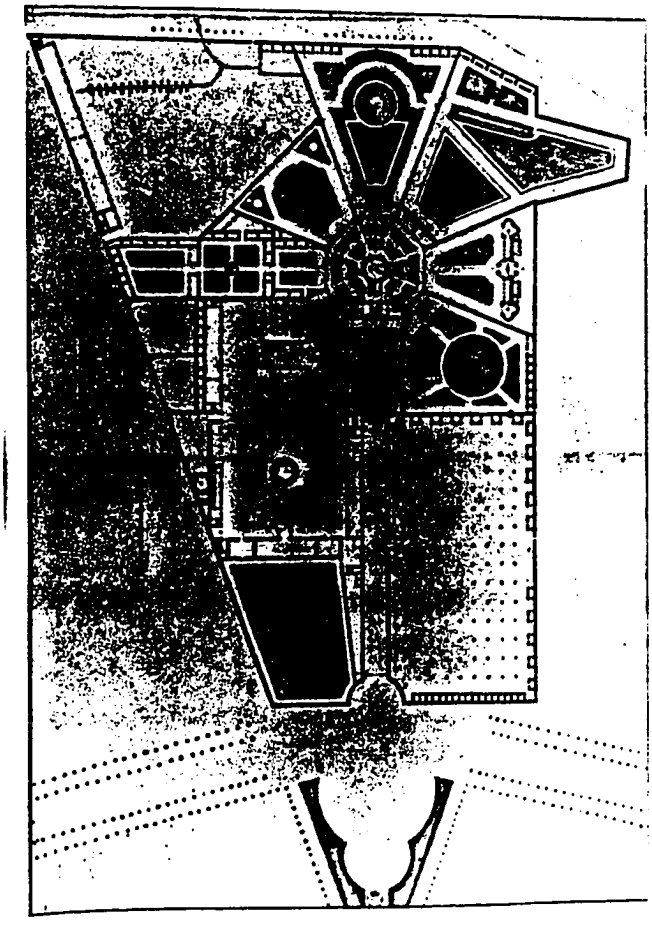


Fig. 3. Versailles, plan of Ménagerie, 1663.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

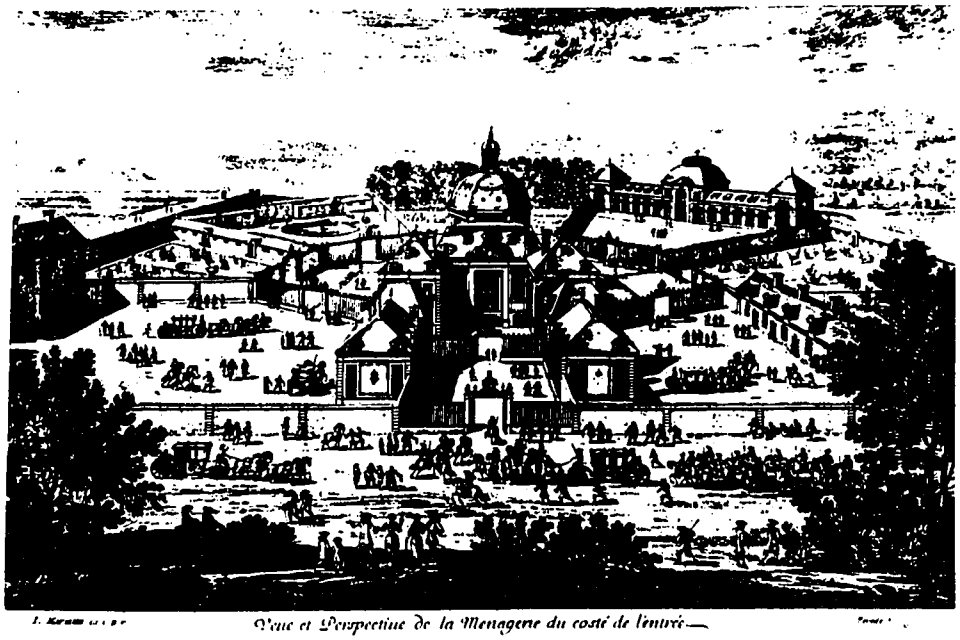


Fig. 4a. Nicolas Perelle, Veüe et perspective de la Ménagerie, entrance façade. Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des Estampes.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

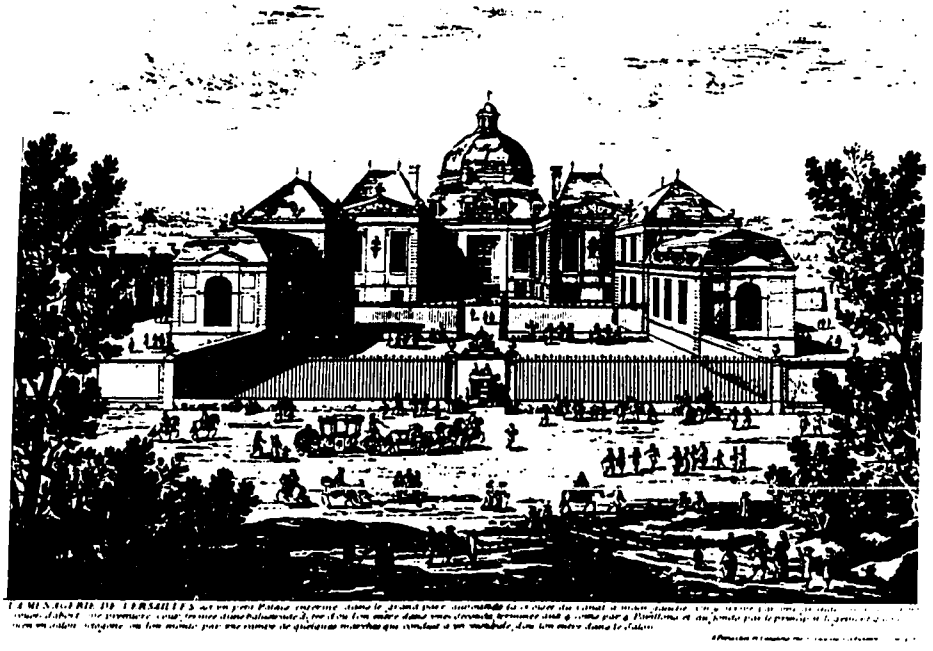


Fig. 4b. Nicolas Langlois, La Ménagerie des Versailles, entrance façade. Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des Estampes.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

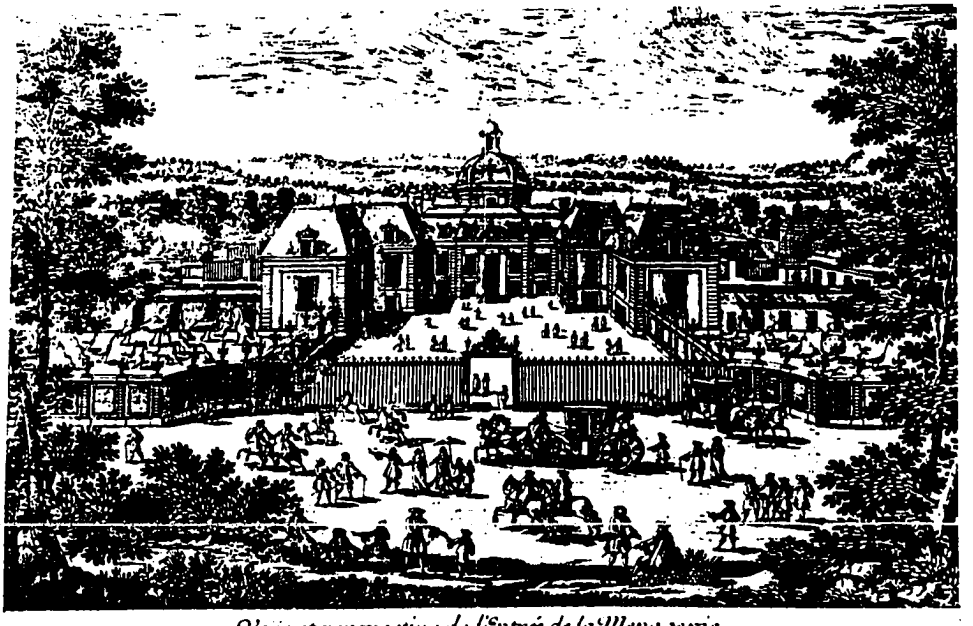


Fig. 4c. Pierre-Alexandre Aveline, Veüe et perspective de l'entrée de la Ménagerie. Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des Estampes.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

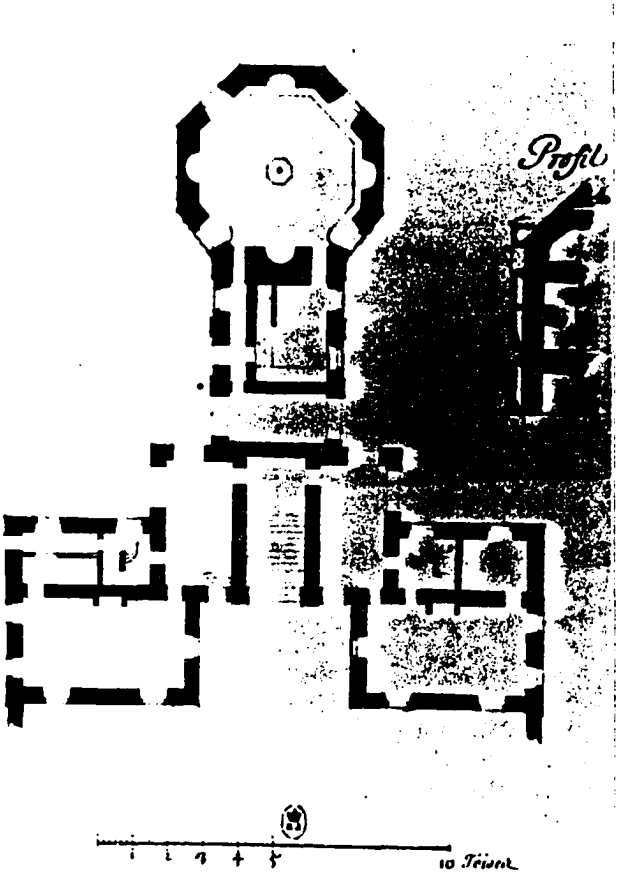


Fig. 5. Versailles, plan of Ménagerie, ground floor, 1663. Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des Estampes.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

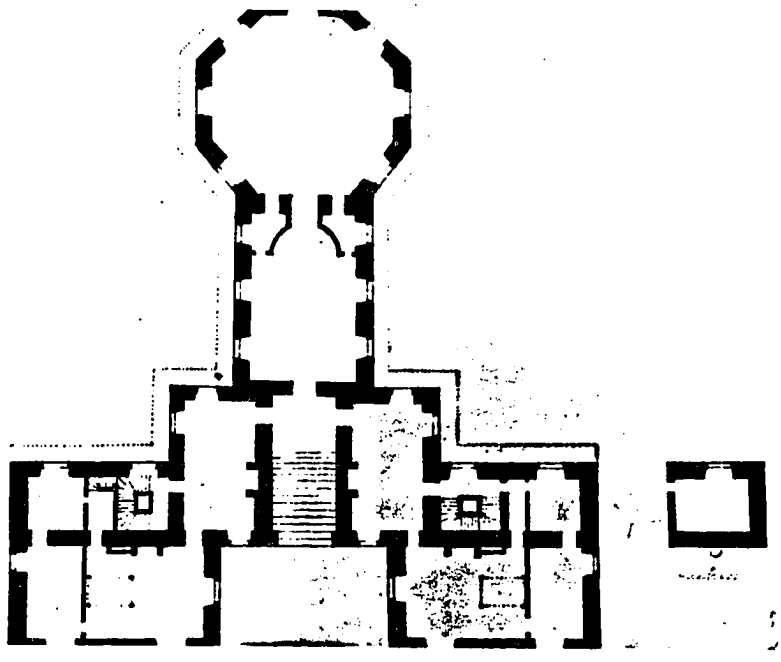


Fig. 6. Versailles, plan of Ménagerie, second floor, 1663. Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des Estampes.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

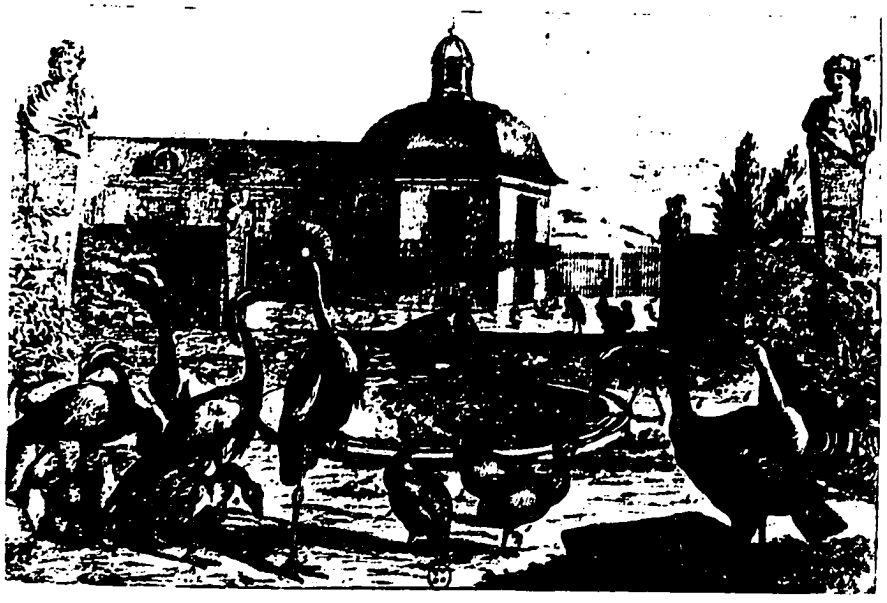


Fig. 7. Pieter Boël, Cour des Demoiselles. Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des Estampes.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.



Fig. 8. Costume for Summer in the fête of the Plaisirs de l'isle enchantée.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

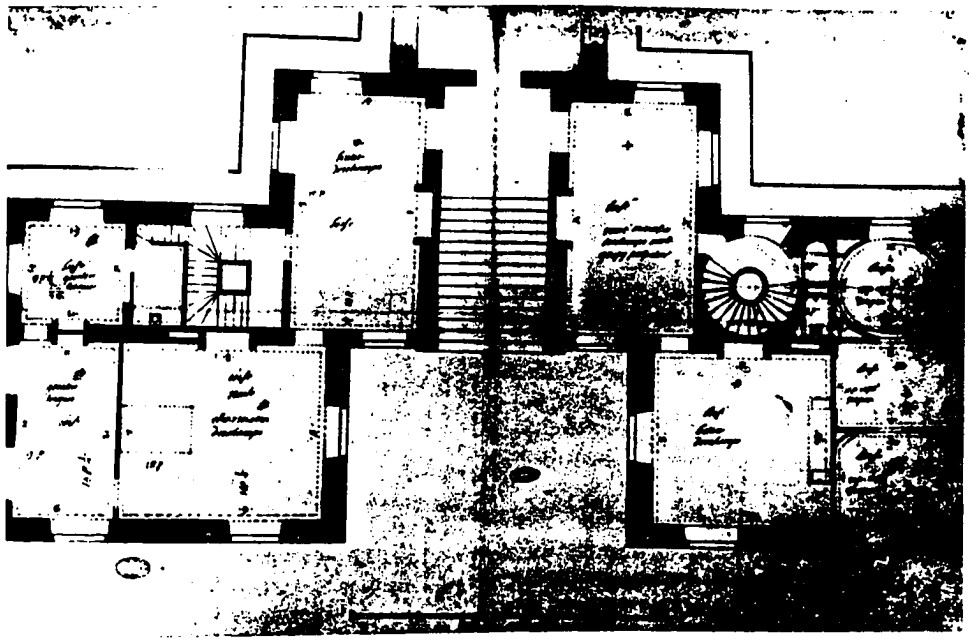


Fig. 9a. Versailles, Jules-Hardouin Mansart, plan of Ménagerie, ground floor, 1699.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

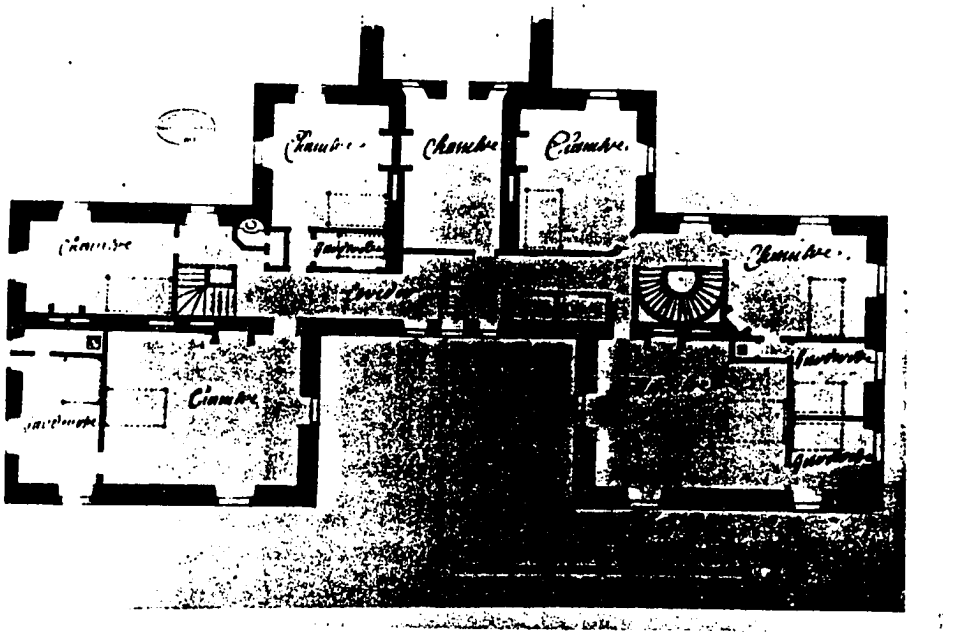


Fig. 9b. Versailles, Jules-Hardouin Mansart, plan of Ménagerie, second floor, 1699.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

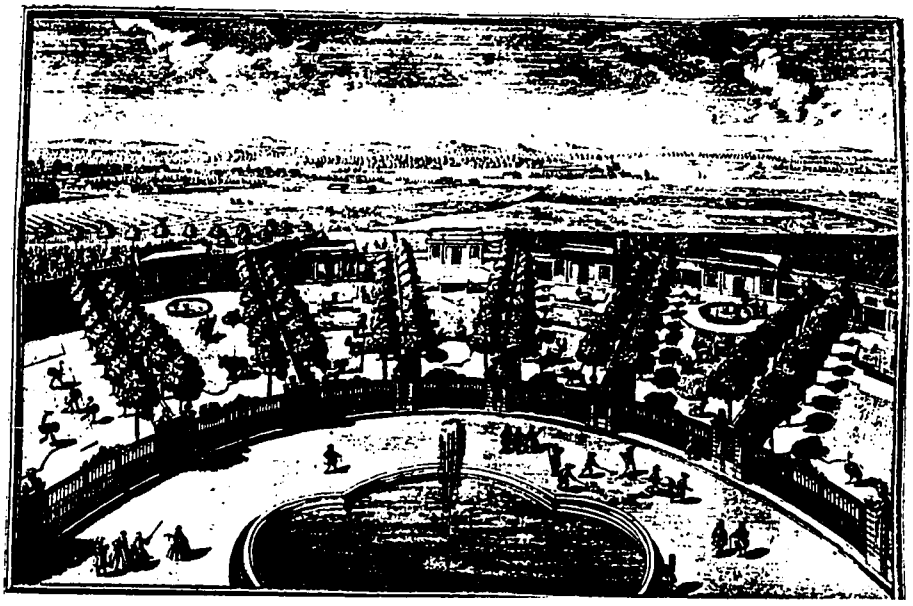


Fig. 10. Salomon Kleiner, Ménagerie of the Belvedere, view and perspective of the animal courts.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.



Fig. 11. J. Knipp, Ménagerie of Schönbrunn, late eighteenth century.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

SENEX, ET MORS.



Fig. 12. Gabriele Faërno, Senex, et Mors, from Fabulae centum, 1564.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.



Fig. 13. John Ogilby, The Limbs and the Stomach, from Fables of Esope, 1651.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.



Fig. 14. Aegidius Sadeler, Vom Bawren und Storch, from Theatrum Morum, 1608.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

LIVRE PREMIER.

FABLE PREMIERE.

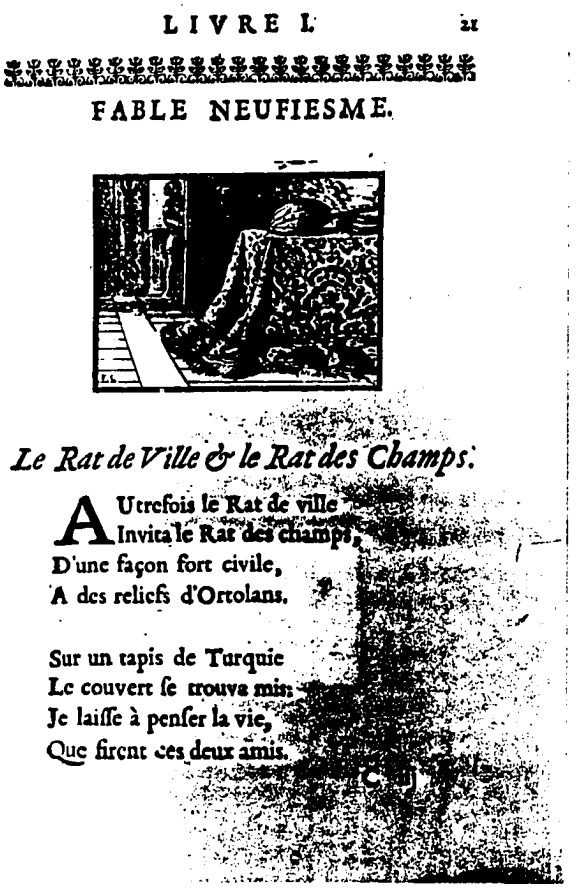


La Cigale & la Fourmy.

LA Cigale ayant chanté
Tout l'Eſté,
Se trouva fort dépourveuë
Quand la Bize fut venuë.
Pas un ſeul petit morceau
De mouche ou de vermiſſeau.
Elle alla crier famine
Chez la Fourmy ſa voiſine;
La priant de luy prêter

Fig. 15. François Chauveau, La cigale et la fourmi, from Fables, 1668. Houghton Library, Harvard University.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.



LIVRE I. 21

FABLE NEUFIESME.

Le Rat de Ville & le Rat des Champs.

AUtrefois le Rat de ville
Invita le Rat des champs,
D'une façon fort civile,
A des reliefs d'Ortolans.

Sur un tapis de Turquie
Le couvert ſe trouva mis:
Je laiſſe à penſer la vie,
Que firent ces deux amis.

Fig. 16. François Chauveau, Le rat de ville et le rat des champs, from Fables, 1668. Houghton Library, Harvard University.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.



Fig. 17. Jean-Baptiste Oudry, Le rat de ville et le rat des champs, from Fables, 1755. Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.



Fig. 18. Jean-Baptiste Oudry, La cigale et la fourmi, from Fables, 1668. Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.



Fig. 19. Jean-Baptiste Oudry, Le renard et la cigogne, first plate, from Fables, 1668. Houghton Library, Harvard University.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.



Fig. 20. Jean-Baptiste Oudry, Le renard et la cigogne, second plate, from Fables, 1668. Houghton Library, Harvard University.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

FABLE DIX-HUITIESME.



Le Renard & la Cicogne.

COmpere le Renard ſe mit un jour en frais,
Et retint à diſner commere la Cicogne.
Le Régal fut petit, & ſans beaucoup d'appreſts:
Le Galand pour toute beſogne
Avoit un broüet clair (il vivoit chichement :)
Ce broüet fut par luy ſervy ſur une aſſiete.
La Cicogne au long bec n'en pût attraper miete ;
Et le Droſle euſt lappé le tout en un moment.
Pour ſe vanger de cette tromperie,
A quelque-temps delà la Cicogne le prie:

Fig. 21. François Chauveau, Le renard et la cigogne, from Fables, 1668. Houghton Library, Harvard University.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

FABLE QUATORZIESME.



Le Lion malade & le Renard.

DE par le Roy des Animaux
Qui dans ſon Antre eſtoit malade,
Fut fait ſçavoir à ſes Vaſſaux
Que chaque eſpece en Ambaſſade
Envoyaſt Gens le viſiter:
Sous promeſſe de bien traiter
Les Deputez, eux & leur ſuite;
Foy de Lion tres-bien écrite.
Bon Paſſe-port contre la Dent,
Contre la Griffe tout autant.

Fig. 22. François Chauveau, Le lion malade et le renard, from Fables, 1668. Houghton Library, Harvard University.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.



Fig. 23. Jean-Baptiste Oudry, Le lion malade et le renard, from Fables, 1668. Houghton Library, Harvard University.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

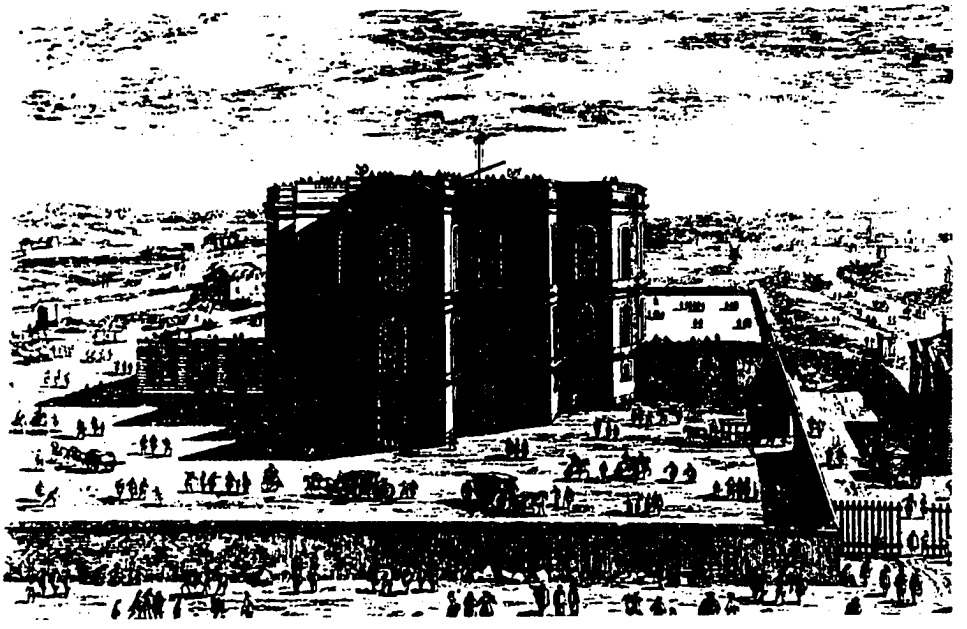


Fig. 24. Nicolas Pérelle, L'Observatoire, late seventeenth century. Paris: Musée Carnavalet, Cabinet des Estampes.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

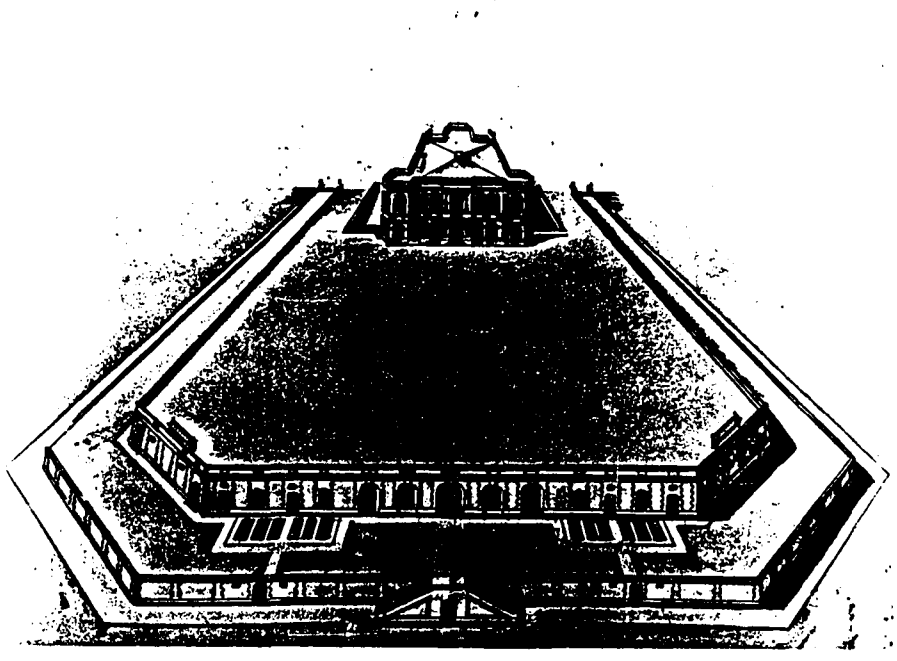


Fig. 25a. Claude Perrault, perspectival elevation of the Observatory, 1667. Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des Estampes.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

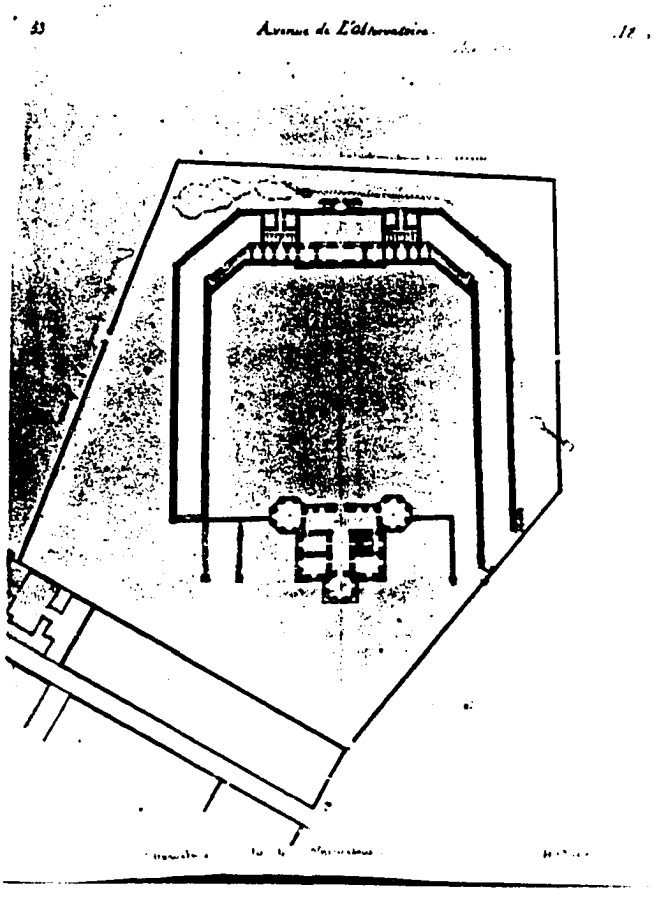


Fig. 25b. Claude Perrault, plan of the ground floor of the Observatory, 1667. Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des Estampes.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

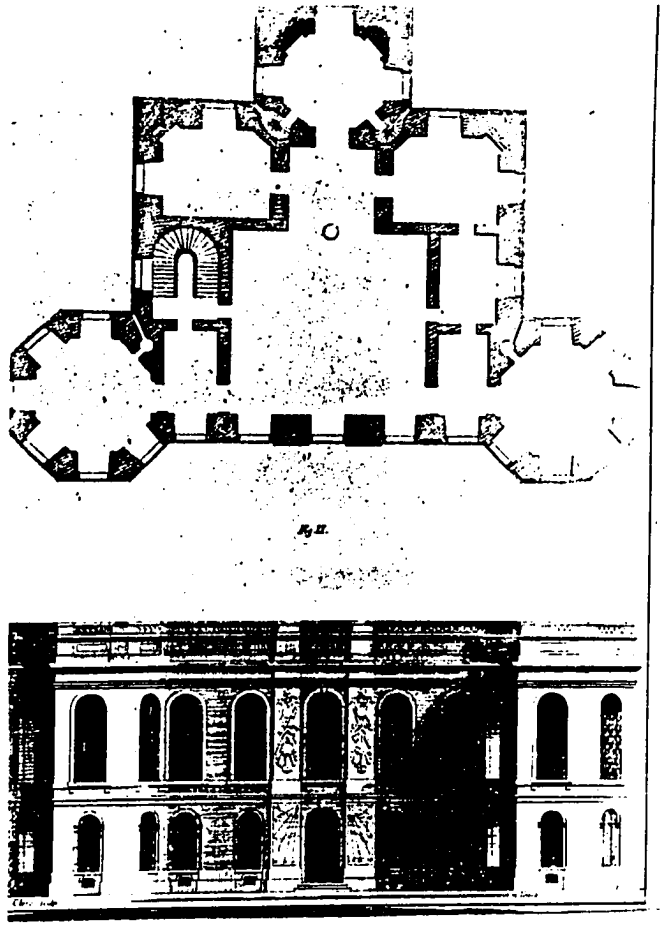


Fig. 26. Claude Perrault, Observatory, second floor, plate two from Abrégé des dix livres d'architecture de Vitruve, 1674.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.



Fig. 27. Sébastien Leclerc, frontispiece for Claude Perrault, Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire naturelle des animaux, 1671.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

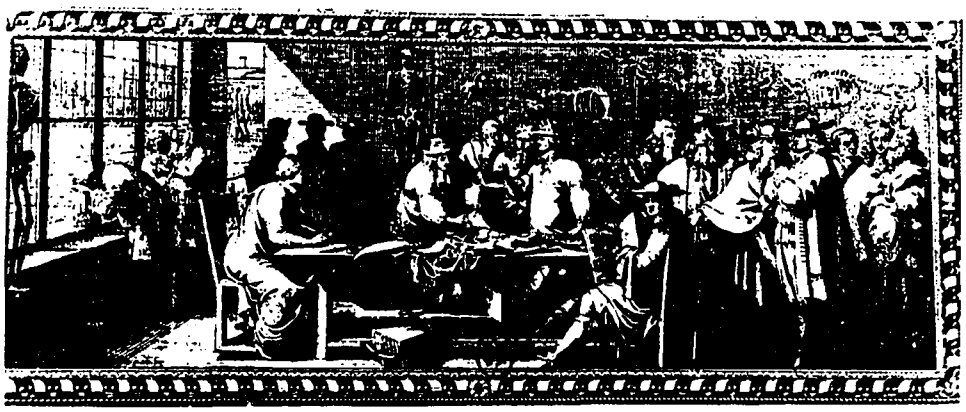


Fig. 28. Sébastien Leclerc, Dissections d'un renard, vignette for Claude Perrault, Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire naturelle des animaux, 1671.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.



Fig. 29. Claude Perrault, Lion, from Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire naturelle des animaux, 1671.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

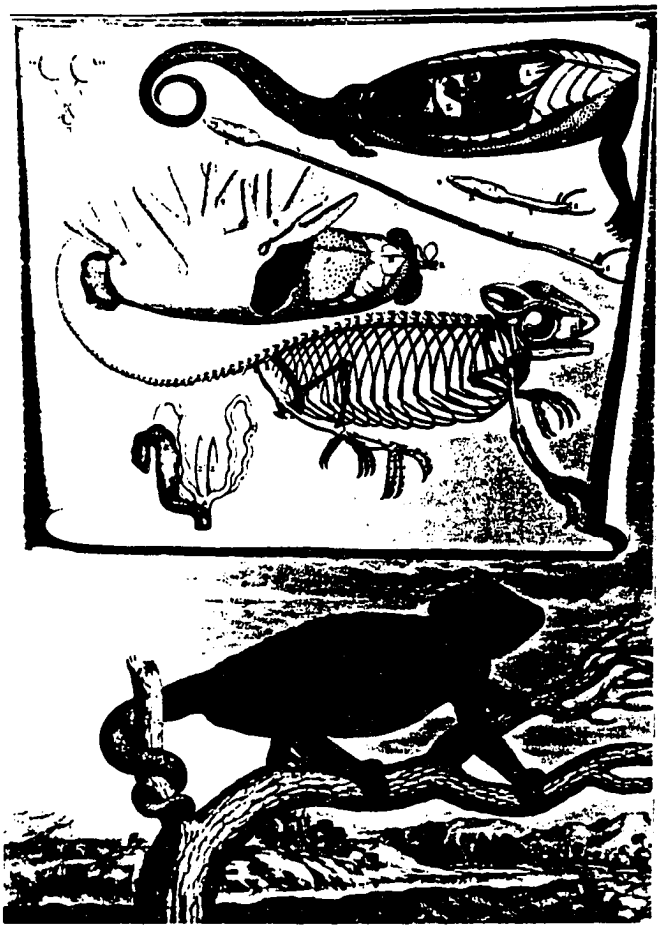


Fig. 30. Claude Perrault, Chameleon, from Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire naturelle des animaux, 1671.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.



OBSERVEES PAR P. BELON. 125

Le portraict du Chameleon.

Nous voyions les Gazelles sauuages, paissants par les campagnes, courants a grands bandes. Arrestasmes enuiron le midy pour reposer les montures, & pour euiter le grand chauld dessoubs noz tentes. Quand la nuict fut venue nous rechargeasmes bagage, a fin de cheminer la nuict au fraiz, & commençames à trouuer quelques petites montaignes & collines, & estants paruenuz à vne petite fontaine, & ayants recouuert des bestes en vie, que certains pasteurs conduisoient d'vn lieu en autre, les apprestasmes à manger. Campasmes pour la cinquiesme fois. Nous feismes du feu auec du bois de Tamarisque, & de l'arbre qui porte de la laine, & auec celuy de l'Acacia & Oenoplia, feismes cuire la chair fraische. Me pourmenant par ces petites montaignes, trouuay des Capriers qui estoient paruenuz à la haulteur de petits figuiers, tellement qu'il me failloit monter dessus l'arbre pour auoir de son fruict, qui est gros comme vn œuf de poulle, & dedens lequel la semence est enclose: ses cappres sont grosses comme noix. Qui gouste de sa semence la trouue chaulde comme poiure, comme aussi en est la Cappre, & tout ainsi comme les Lombards se seruent de moustarde blanche a mettre en la vernache pour la garder de bouillir & demeurer long temps doulce, tout ainsi les Arabes se seruent des semences des capriers pour mettre en leurs vins pour maintenir doulx comme aussi Auicene auoit ia coté. Ie trouue qu'Herodote a premierement faict mention du susdict arbre qui porte la lai-

Gazelles.

Arbre portãt de la laine.

Acacia.

Capriers arborescens.

Laine des arbres.

I

Fig. 31. Pierre Belon, Portrait of a Chameleon, from Les observations de plusieurs singularitez, 1554. Houghton Library, Harvard University.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

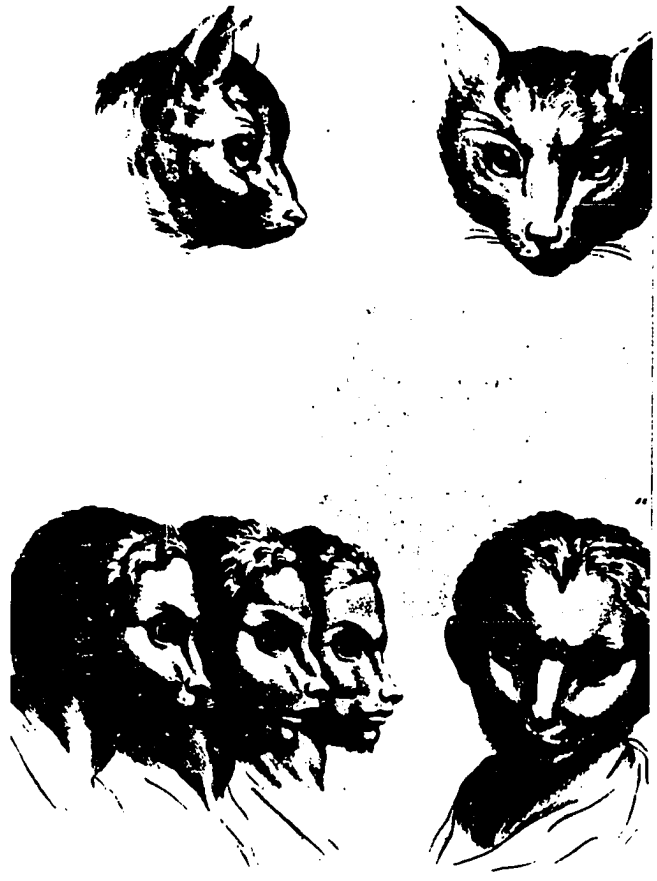


Fig. 32. Charles Le Brun, Physiognomic studies. Paris: Musée du Louvre.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.



Fig. 33. Charles Le Brun, Physiognomic studies. Paris: Musée du Louvre.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.



Fig. 34. Combat d'animaux, tapestry from the Anciennes Indes, 1689. Paris: Mobilier National.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.



Fig. 35. François Desportes, Combat d'animaux, cartoon for the Nouvelles Indes, 1738. Paris: Musée de la Chasse.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.



Fig. 36. François Desportes, Combat d'un lion et d'un éléphant, c. 1738. Sèvres: Manufacture de Sèvres.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.



Fig. 37. Jean-Baptiste Oudry, Abondance avec ses attribues, 1719. Versailles: Musée National du Château de Versailles.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.



Fig. 38. Jean-Baptiste Oudry, Leopard, 1741. Schwerin: Staatliches Museum.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

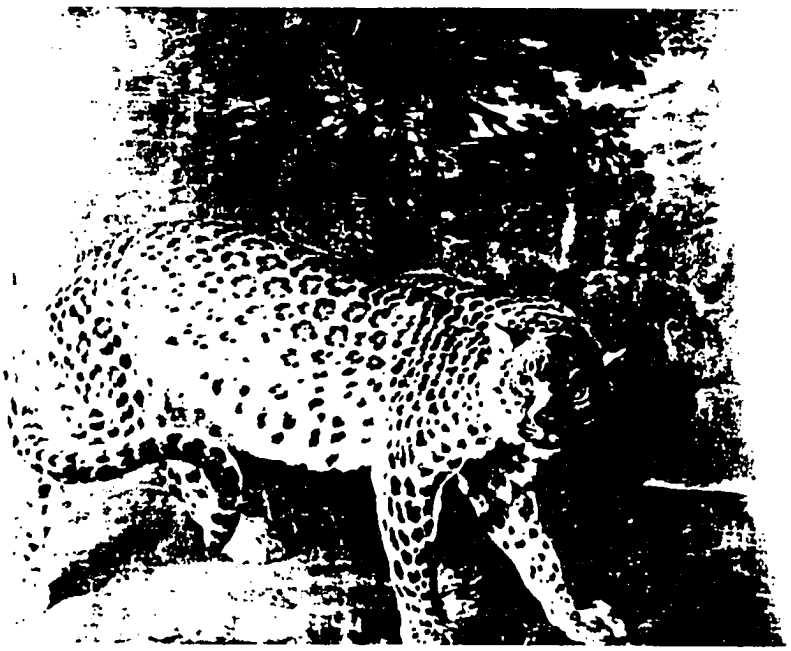


Fig. 39. Jean-Baptiste Oudry, Leopardess, 1741. Schwerin: Staatliches Museum.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.



Fig. 40. Jean-Baptiste Oudry, sketch for Leopard, c. 1740. Schwerin: Staatliches Museum.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.



Fig. 41. Jean-Baptiste Oudry, sketch for Leopardess, c. 1740. Schwerin: Staatliches Museum.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.



Fig. 42. Jean-Baptiste Oudry, Dead Crane, 1745. Schwerin: Staatliches Museum.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.



Fig. 43. Jean-Baptiste Oudry, Hyena Attacked by Two Mastiffs, 1739. Schwerin: Staatliches Museum.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.



Fig. 44. Pierre-François Basan, Barbary Sheep, engraving after a painting of 1739 by Jean-Baptiste Oudry, c. 1745-1750. Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des Estampes.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.



Fig. 45. Jean-Baptiste Oudry, Gazelle, 1739. Schwerin: Staatliches Museum.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.



Fig. 46. Jean-Baptiste Oudry, gouache sketch for Gazelle, c. 1739. Stockholm: Nationalmuseum.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.



Fig. 47. Jean-Baptiste Oudry, Three Dogs and a Gazelle in a Park, 1745. Ireland: Collection Sir Alfred Beit.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.



Fig. 48. Théodore Géricault, Head of a White Horse, 1815. Paris: Musée du Louvre

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

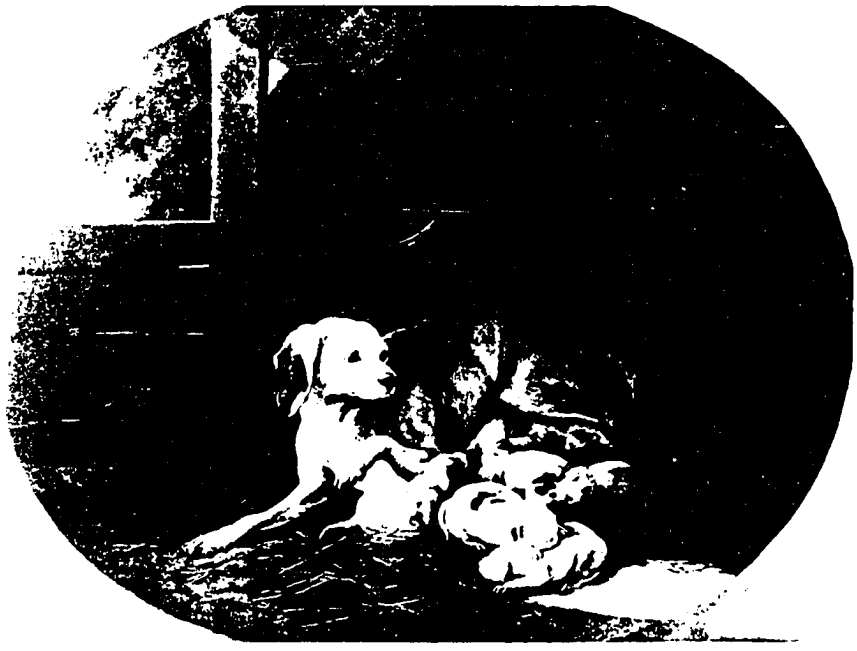


Fig. 49. Jean-Baptiste Oudry, Bitch Nursing her Pups, 1753. Paris: Musée de la Chasse et de la Nature.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.



Fig. 50. Rembrandt van Rijn, Holy Family, called "Le Ménage du Menuisier," 1640. Paris: Musée du Louvre.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.



Fig. 51. J. J. Grandville. La cigale et la fourmi, from Fables, 1838-40.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.



Fig. 52. J. J. Grandville. Le loup plaidant contre le renard, pardevant le singe, from Fables, 1838-40.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.



Fig. 53. J. J. Grandville. Le loup devenu berger, from Fables, 1838-40.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.