

12 THE LIVE EXHIBIT

12.1 Introduction

The representation of predator species in public displays, museums, zoos, photographic media and narratives, can have unwarranted influence on the laws and legislations that govern the management of these species in the wild. This is particularly salient for the dingo, whose public profile has often focused on human-wildlife conflicts; predation on livestock, perceived threats to human safety, and the question of their place as an outsider to the otherwise ancient flora and fauna of Australia – charged also of being responsible for the extinction of the Thylacine and Tasmanian Devil from the mainland. Their introduced status is a common focus in dingo narrative, shaping the representation of the species within educational institutions such as the zoological gardens.

To provide context to the arrival of the dingo in Australia, and give some temporal perspective to this event, I have examined the history of the keeping of carnivores worldwide, and looked at these shifting traditions and cultures of animal keeping. The history of the keeping of carnivores is believed to have originated around 3000BC in Ancient Egypt – the same time that the dingo appears in the scientific records of Australian ecological history. At this time in human history, the traditions of Egyptian animal worship were emerging along with the ‘feeding and taming of carnivores’ (see page p. 157). Three millennia before the emergence of the Christian religion, the dingo was travelling on ocean going vessels with human companions. To an ecologist the timeframe is perhaps short, but in context with human history the dingo’s migration is

respectably ancient. In the context, then, of human–animal studies, the dingo is pivotal.

To investigate the social representation of the dingo, this chapter traces their history as a live exhibit in zoological collections. It first looks at the history of carnivore displays and their place in human history to give context to the pursuit of animal collecting, and how this has changed over time – and also to provide temporal context to the oceanic human-assisted migration of the dingo. The chapter then documents formative zoological collections in Australia and abroad, (and their transport, Figure 12-1) exploring representations of the dingo in the public mind, as noted by conservationist/zoologist William Hornaday in *Celebrated Animal Characters*, 1914:

Wild animal celebrities run, or fall, into three classes: usually fine, admirably good, or notoriously bad.



Figure 12-1 Transporting exotic animals by ships involved months of confinement in cages on deck or in the hull of ocean liners Source: Baratay & Hardouin-Fugier, 2002

12.2 The Keeping of Carnivores

The history of the collection and exhibition of wild animals, and its emergence as a cultural institution has been well documented, and featured in the work of scientist Gistave Loisel (1912) and more recently in a number of studies including Hoage & Deiss (1996) *New worlds, new animals. From menagerie to zoological park in the nineteenth century*, and Baratay & Hardouin-Fugier (2002) *Zoos: a history of zoological gardens in the West*. This field is increasingly a focus of scholarship in the area of human–animals studies. Tracing the history of animal exhibits reveals how the representation of animals has been transformed by cultural and social interests and expectations over

time. Historian Thomas Veltre describes the institutions involved, as “primarily concerned with the symbolic role of animals within culture” (Veltre 1996, p. 20). Harriet Ritvo, whose writing encompasses the domestic, companion and captive history of animals in Victorian England (1989), describes the movement as one that gave people a sense of superiority and control over nature (Ritvo, 1987; Ritvo 1996); the animals were serving the psychological and sociopolitical needs and aspirations of the imperial project.

John Berger examined the institution of the zoological park in his book, *Why look at animals* (1980, p. 21) stating:

Public zoos were an endorsement of modern colonial power. The capturing of the animals was a symbolic representation of the conquest of all distant and exotic lands. “Explorers” proved their patriotism by sending home a tiger or an elephant. The gift of an exotic animal to the metropolitan zoo became a token of subservient diplomatic relations.

The following chapter first documents the history of animal collecting, then examines the representations of dingoes within the collections – how they were portrayed in zoo ephemera and popular media sources, highlighting the social and cultural representation of the species, their heritage value and their disordered place in national identity.

12.3 The Zoo

Zoo historian, Gistave Loisel, charted the development of formal animal collecting in human society, in the *History of Menageries. From the Antiquity to the present days*, published in Paris, 1912. Loisel divided animal collecting into five stages of development, from the co-existence of human–animal communities and totemic relationships, through to the modern day zoo, as follows: 1) prehistory, 2) paradeisos period, 3) menagerie, 4) classic zoo and 5) modern zoo. These are outlined in more detail below.

1) The first stage Loisel described, was the prehistory period, where human society celebrated totemic species before the development of systematic agriculture. “Nomadic peoples caught young wild animals that were not intended as food” Loisel recorded. The animals were kept as objects of play, and when they died, their body parts were

used as “elements of costume or decoration” (1912, p. 8). This description is similar to the level of inclusion of animals in traditional culture outlined in Chapter 8.

2) The paradeisos period was a move towards walled parks for hunting, and the emergence of sacred animal collections. Carnivorous species were kept as early as 2500 BC, including the hyena and the cheetah, and many species were used in religious ceremonies (Hoage & Deiss, 1996). Egyptian animal worship involved carnivores, birds, sacred reptiles, fish and insects; some were elevated to God-Animals, and involved in cultural practices including the feeding and taming of carnivores (Loisel, 1912, p. 12):

At Arsinoe, the sacred crocodiles of Lake Moeris were so tame that necklaces were put on their necks and bracelets (or rings) on their feet, and in answer to a simple call they used to come from one end of the lake to the other to receive cakes or pieces of meat brought to them by the devout visitors.

Illustrations of ‘animal keeping’ adorned the tombs of Egyptian nobles, dating back to 2400 BC; antelopes, hyenas and geese were sculptured into the walls, representing sources of spiritual meaning and sustenance (Bostock, 1994). A wall painting dated 1330 BC pictures antelope, cheetah, giraffe and monkeys being delivered to the Pharaoh. Lions were kept in royal pits and cages dating back to 2000 BC.

Bulls and snakes were kept for their mystical symbolism representing the sun and ‘primordial creative force’ (Bostock, 1994) along with hippopotamuses, owls, crocodiles and scarab beetles (Loisel, 1912).

The collection of lions became a precursor to the ‘blood sports’ and gladiator games of the Roman Empire around 200 BC, when the hunt moved into the arena, and spectator sports became customary (Loisel, 1912). The animal holding areas were called *vivaria*—associated with viewing arenas, *vivarium*. The Roman Emperor Octavius Augustus (29 BC–14 AD) had over 3,500 animals killed in 26 celebrations. These were “triumphant processions, official celebrations especially gladiatorial exhibitions in which animals were killed” (Hoage & Deiss 1996 p. 11). The animals of choice included large predators such as tigers, lions, crocodiles, plus elephants and rhinoceros and giant snakes. Staggering numbers of ‘wild beasts’ and tame animals were kept and slain.

Blood games continued until the 12th century in Constantinople, and at the time that Loisel was writing in 1912, they still survived in various forms in a number of cultures: bull fights, dog fights, badger baiting and cock fights. Hunting with animals, as opposed to hunting the animals themselves, came about with the taming of wild cheetah, falcons and eagles. Falconry was established by 650 BC, some 2000 years later than the alliance between the Aboriginal hunters and the dingo.

People in ancient Greece trained wild animals for processions with dancing bears and lions recorded as early as the 4th century BC and Aristotle wrote *The History of Animals*, systematically recording 300 species in 350BC.

As the demand for blood sports declined with the end of the Roman Empire, the collection of exotic animals became the tradition of the ruling classes, and were used as “diplomatic gestures in the form of tributes, bribes, reparations, or ceremonial gifts” (Hoage & Deiss, 1996, p.13). Menageries emerged *en force* after the middle ages, the domain of popes and bishops, sovereigns and wealthy patricians—the purpose being non-utilitarian, and for the gathering of knowledge. There were both stationary and travelling menageries, dating back to the 12th century in the Italian, Spanish and Portuguese court (Strehlow, 2001). Loisel (1912) described the menagerie as:

Little more than a collection of living trophies kept on the palace grounds, a reflection of the ruler’s importance and the extent of his empire.

Hoage & Deiss (1996), distinguished the menagerie from farms, ranches and stockyards. They were, in contrast, animal exhibits – representations, evoking an ‘emotional response’ different from other human–animal encounters. The word menagerie comes from ‘manage’: a place of containment, domination and control, for the management of animals of novel, exotic or freakish nature (Veltre, 1996, p. 20):

A menagerie reflects a culture’s ideas about political power and ultimately the place of animal and human beings in the universe...A menagerie, whatever its physical form, is primarily concerned with the symbolic role of animals within a culture.

Here, the emergence of menageries within cities and urban culture, expressed a ‘nostalgia for the wild’.

The classic zoo emerged originally as a place of spectacle, entertainment and

recreation, from a corner of the *Schloss Schonbrunn* in Vienna, 1752. The gardens of the ‘Palace of Enlightenment’ housed the Viennese Royal Family’s extensive collection of exotic animals. It was after the French revolution that animal collections had transformed into institutions dedicated to scientific advancement, education public entertainment and acclimatization centers (Hoage & Deiss, 1996, *p. viii*):

It was principally after the European navigators commenced their great ocean voyages that new fauna and flora became a rich source of bioexhibits.

The zoos evolved alongside the industrial revolution, with new political, philosophical, economic and scientific societies emerging in response to a cultural and scientific awakening in the population (Strethlow, 2001) – see also Chapter 10, Paris. These were private and publically funded institutions, for education and entertainment, ‘science and showmanship’, John Berger explains (1980, *p. 27*):

The zoo was an encyclopedia of life, illustrated with live animal exhibits ... a vast storehouse. A living panorama, a compendium of biological knowledge.

Loisel (1912, *p. 22*) describes this phase in animal collecting, as viewing animals as books: “turning menageries into living libraries of nature”. Paul Bouissac noted (1985, *p. 111*):

The only difference between the zoo and an archaeological museum, was that the objects on exhibit were moving and had to be contained in the display areas.

Throughout the 19th century there was a tension between acclimatization societies concerned with the breeding of domestic animals for “parks and tables” (Rivto, 1996, *p. 44*), and the naturalists who “wished the zoo to stock exotic animals of taxonomic interest, without regard to their attractiveness, edibility, or other usefulness” (Rivto, 1996, *p. 46*). However, they all wanted to display the animals in a way that “echoed and emphasized British pre-eminence”.

5) The modern zoo: The turn of the 20th century brought a new style of zoo design to the forefront, with German wild animal merchant, Carl Hagenbeck, designing bar-less animal displays that transformed the zoo experience. Here the enclosures attempted to re-create natural habitat, and to show animals in the context of their ‘natural’

surroundings, divided by moats and geographical barriers separating the viewing public from the exhibits. Hagenbeck was also the first to formalize the training of animals by 'kindness' (demonstrated in Figure 12-2) (Hamburg Zoo; Zoo Ephemera collection, NMNH):

For the first time, [Hagenbeck] managed to train his animals with 'gentleness'. The 19th century was dominated by brutal tamers who struck the animals with sticks, chairs or even pistol shots and red-hot irons. The audience was bloodthirsty and hungry for sensational displays. People wanted to admire raging and roaring wild 'beasts'. The sensationalism of the people went so far that some tamers even pretended to have accidents. But there were also plenty of real terrible incidents where tamers were torn to pieces, or the animals went for each others jugular.



Figure 12-2 The tradition of bizarre "animal Pyramids" was made famous by Hagenbeck-Star trainer Richard Sawade, 1900. Source: Zoo Ephemera collection, Smithsonian Institute.

While animal welfare greatly improved from the 19th century model, the zoos of the 20th century were ultimately designed for humans to view animals, masking the real state of the animals confinement (Hoage & Deiss, 1996).

12.4 The Zoo in the 21st Century

The major themes for zoos in the 21st century have moved towards ecology, environmentalism and biodiversity (Hoage & Deiss 1996). This includes incorporating

captive breeding programs, environmental enrichment (providing stimulating activities and opportunities for the animals to exercise some choice over their physical or social environment), and consideration for the animals psychological as well as physical wellbeing. An increasing focus has been on educating the public about extinction processes, coupled by a less anthropocentric representation of the animal displays.

12.5 Predator Representations

Nigel Rothfels (2002) traced the change in views towards predators in the public imagination, through their portrayal as live exhibits and in popular media. The demonizing of predators, including the dingo, was deeply embedded in the human–animal narrative in western culture until the late 20th century. Citing Peter Benchley’s novel and movie *Jaws* (1975) as an example, Rothfels (2002) traced the turnaround in the public’s views towards predators and the way they were portrayed in the media over the last quarter of the 20th century. At the time that *Jaws* was made, the demonizing of predator species was socially acceptable – there was an assumption that populations of sharks, wolves, lions etc. were infinite in nature, and that human safety was paramount. Benchley stated (cited in Rothfels, 2002 *p. xiii*):

With the knowledge that we have today *Jaws* would be impossible. Any story about an animal that I would write today would have to portray the animal as the victim, not the villain.

The increasing awareness of human engineered extinction events has shifted focus, in part thanks to advancing communication technologies. The work of naturalist such as David Attenborough, have pioneered the art of scientific communication on screen, and this, along with the rise of global organizations like the World Wildlife Fund and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) have changed public perception of predators. Movies like *Jaws* arguably are no longer acceptable to the general public, suggesting that there has been a significant cultural shift away from anthropocentric animal representations since the 1970s. This ‘consumer activism’ is discussed further in Chapter 16.

12.6 DINGO EXHIBITS - a chronological study

Twenty-five years after Baudin's dingoes went on display in Paris at the *Menagerie Jardin du Plantes* (for detailed history, see Chapter 11), there were dingoes recorded in two collections in London. The daybooks of the Tower of London in 1828 noted that the "Angora cat was killed by the dingo" (Thomas, 2008), the same year that a dingo was exhibited at the opening of the Zoological Gardens in Regents Park, London (Figure 12:3 original documents: ZSL record cards).

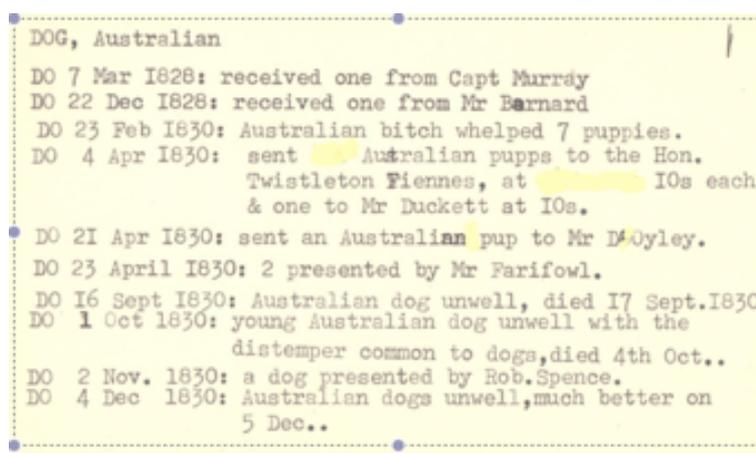


Figure 12-3 Original source material; record cards compiled from the Zoological Society of London daybooks (ZSL Library and archive)

Exotic animals had gained their own value or currency as animal exhibits, outside of the utilitarian value that livestock animals had as a source of food, beasts of burden, (or as domestic companions, sporting devices) and traders supplied a rapidly expanding market over the 19th century (Hoage & Deiss, 1996). Dingoes provided a popular display in the major zoological collections, and were also mentioned in the records of travelling menageries and circuses. The travelling menageries (often part of a circus troupe) were styled as both 'educational' and entertaining; introducing the working classes to natural sciences, and presenting exotic and increasingly curious or performing animals to the public.

A description of a huge procession of animals in the Lord Sangers travelling menagerie (Figure 12-4), dated 1867 reads (University of Sheffield: Circus archive):

Next came twenty or more red and gold beast cages, filled with lions and tigers, leopards, panthers, bears, wolves, dingo's [sic], kangaroos, seals, pelicans, flamingos, snakes, monkeys, emus....

Zoological gardens were gathering popularity by this time, and replacing the traditional menageries of the 19th century.



Figure 12-4 Lord Sangers Travelling Menagerie. William Keating Collection photograph, circa 1913. Reproduced with permission of the University of Sheffield 178C77.1082, 1913

12.7 Dublin

Dublin Zoo opened in 1831 and soon had its own dingo – possibly the dingo from the Tower of London, as the Tower closed the following year and the animals were transferred to the London and Dublin zoos (Historic Royal Palaces, 2016):

The [Tower] Menagerie finally closed after several incidents where the animals had escaped and attacked each other, visitors and Tower staff. The Duke of Wellington, who was Constable of the Tower, ordered the animals to leave ...

The Dublin Zoo dingo was described in *On the dog* by H.D. Richardson, 1845 as: “When good humored he is a dog, when vexed he is a wolf” (Richardson, p. 173):

When angry (he) lowers his tail and licks his lips, while his hair stands erect from his head to his stern; his ears thrown back and his whole countenance assumes an expression of distrust not to be mistaken. When pleased he whines, utters a sort of bark, jumps and frisks about, fawns and displays all the marks of genuine canine delight.

Richardson noted on the elusive nature of the dingo (p. 173):

The yellow dingo in the Irish Zoological Gardens is said to be rather a wicked fellow to strangers. Of that I can say little, but I know that he and I are very great friends, and that I never visit the gardens without

going to see him, and, if there be no-one by, entering his enclosure, and spending a quarter of an hour at least in play with him.

This account was published at the start of the five-year famine in Ireland (1845). The zoo animals survived on food 'not fit for human consumption' – rough barley and horsemeat – while an estimated one million people died of starvation or disease (Kinealy, 1997). Many animal captives did not survive.

During World War I, the Dublin Zoo dingoes faced another low point in their zoological history. During the Easter Monday Rising of 1916, the Park was forced into lock-down for over a week – visitors and zookeepers included – and they were stranded with no outside contact. The zoo was well stocked with food when the violence erupted in the city streets, but by the following weekend the stocks were exhausted. The zoo book published an article *A short history of Dublin zoo* (mid- 20th century, Zoo Ephemera collection NMNH) and recorded:

...when the food for the lions and tigers ran out, an old pony, a donkey and a goat had to be killed to feed them. Then some dingoes were used. Arrangements with the military restored supplies of horsemeat to the Zoo just in time to save the Zebu Bull from the same fate as the dingoes.

The paucity of value assigned to the dingoes in the collection can be noted in the reporting of the event by Zoo historian, Catherine De Courcy, (Costello, 2011):

... even though they used human food where they could, by the following Monday the meat supplies had run dry. They were forced to kill a few goats, an old donkey and a couple of dingoes. Thankfully none of the larger more precious animals had to be slaughtered. The meat kept them going until the zoo's superintendent was able to arrange a shipment of food.

There were a number of dingoes bred in the collection at London Zoo around this time – 280 in all over the 20th century until they went out of favor in the 1970s (ZSL daybooks), so perhaps the dingoes were considered relatively easy and affordable to replace.

12.8 America

The history of the dingo exhibit in America starts with the opening of the Philadelphia

Zoo in 1874. This was the first European style zoo to open in the United States — Tasmanian devils and dingoes featured in the opening display (Rachael De Caro, Philadelphia Zoo Archivist, *personal correspondence*). By 1903 they were on exhibit near the thylacines at Washington Zoo (Smithsonian Institutional Archives, Record Unit 95, Box 47, Folder 12), and many were kept over the 20th century in American institutions. Today there are live dingo displays in Prospect Park Zoo in New York, and at a number of smaller zoos in the United States and central America (Species360, 2016).

12.9 Australia

In Australia, dingoes were exhibited with the original collection of animals at Melbourne Zoo – the first to open in Australia in 1862, then Adelaide Zoo, opening 1883- a pair were donated from Melbourne plus one ‘in reserve’ (personal correspondence, zoo archives 2014), and they were present at the opening of the Perth Zoo, 17 October 1898 – detailed in Chapter 12, Australia. The zoo records are drawn from primary archive documents and newspaper reports [I did ask Taronga Park Zoo in Sydney about their records, and got a short reply from the archivist stating that they were busy with important research, so did not have time for requests such as my own.] There is a paucity of data, as it was not customary to keep detailed records on zoo animals. I did enquire to see if there were any records of interactions between Thylacines and dingoes in the zoos, as they were displayed close to each other in a number of institutions in Australia and overseas, but unfortunately no records remain. Thylacines were kept at Adelaide Zoo for 18 years, from 1886. The zoo historian wrote (Rix, 1978):

during the eighteen years of its 'reign', the Thylacine rated only nine words, apart from the annual listing of the name, and these consisted of "Tasmanian Wolf, two (or pair)" three times when referring to additions to the collection. No photo was published and the plan of the Zoo in 1898 did not even show its enclosure.

12.10 The Oldest Photographic Record

The oldest photographic records of Australian fauna in zoological collections were taken in London (Figures 12-5 & 12-6), featuring a kangaroo and a dingo (Stewart,

2015):

These are almost certainly the earliest known photographic images of a living kangaroo or a dingo. The pair formed part of Haes' first series of portraits of animals in London Zoo, taken in 1864. He produced a second series in 1866. Haes' photograph of the kangaroo is remarkable for the fact that it does not capture the animal in what we have come to regard as its characteristic, even iconic, profile. It concentrates instead on anatomical detail, depicting the female standing upright with her pouch exposed. The dingo is photographed with a top-hatted handler who, whilst he holds the dog on an iron chain, pats the animal reassuringly with the other hand, an early recognition of this animal's ability to be domesticated.

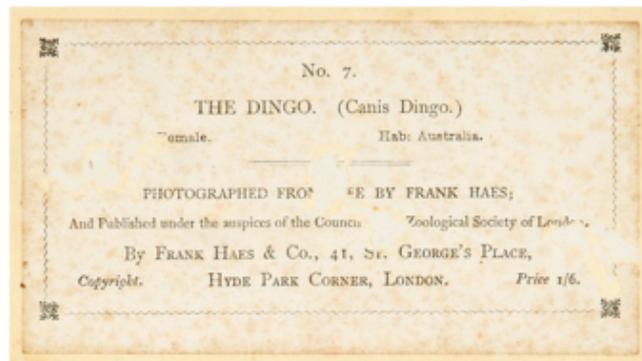


Figure 12-5 Reverse of photograph — details of the dingo and photo studio.



Figure 12-6 Portrait of dingo at London Zoo, by Frank Haes, 1864

A dingo had arrived that year aboard the *Defence* and was recorded favorably by Brehm (1864):

Pechuel-Loesche observed a beautiful strong Dingo on board the English iron-clad ship *Defence*, which roamed about all over the ship like a Dog, climbed the steep stairs with sure-footed dexterity and was on good terms with everybody on board.

The following year, The London Zoological gardens exchanged two dingoes along with a rhinoceros, a jackal, a possum, a kangaroo, and a pair of eagles in exchange for a young African elephant (*Loxodonta Africana*) named Jumbo, who lived to become one of the most renowned (and largest) of zoo captives.

There are many accounts of dingoes travelling in circus troupes such as Lord Sangers Travelling Menagerie mentioned on p. 157, but only within the confines of the menagerie cages, there is no record of one being trained despite many attempts. In 1903, dingoes, elephants and other exotic wildlife were transported with the Barnum and Baileys circus to America aboard the *Minneapolis*. As an indication of the popularity and scale of these displays, the circus troupe had been on tour in Europe for five years, and 1000 circus staff and 852 beasts were listed in the shipment records (*A Modern Noah's Ark*, 1903). The Wirth Brothers Circus and Travelling Zoo was performing on the Australian circuit the following year, and also listed dingoes in their travelling menagerie, listed alongside fortune tellers, a tightrope walking tiger, and a performing lion, goats, dogs, bears and a pony (*Wirth Bro's Circus*, 1904 p. 2):

The menagerie connected to the circus consists of dens of lions, tigers, leopards, panthers, wild beasts, hyenas, bears, wolves, tapirs, alligators, pumas, dingoes, kangaroos, baboons, monkeys, elephants, camels, wild sheep, Barbary apes, a two headed calf and other curiosities.

Sea travel was arduous. In an account recorded in the *Washington Post*, November 11 1914 (*Lion breaks loose on ship*, 1914, p. 6), a dingo narrowly survived a voyage from London Zoo to Brooklyn Zoo (Prospect Park), in the company of a number of other carnivores. During the voyage the vessel had encountered rough weather, delaying the journey by three days. The ship ran out of food for the animals and the crew had to kill one of the animals to survive the voyage. One of the bears drew the short straw. "Added to the likelihood of being swept overboard was a chance that one or more of the crew might be eaten alive," reported the *Washington Post*, as one lion had escaped

below deck during the voyage. On reaching shore, one of the bears escaped briefly before the animals were finally delivered to New York Zoo.

From the zoo records it appears that the dingoes were not considered a threat to public safety, a theme that emerges clearly in the following war records. They were also never successfully trained despite years in captivity and many attempts by circus trainers, zoo keepers and enthusiasts to help them adapt to western notions of good behavior. Walter Rothschild (Baron) kept a pet dingo for years at his property in Tring, but never successfully trained her – she took over the Rothschild stables to have her pups, and attempted to move the horses out (“the dingo was always a bit unreliable” wrote Miriam Rothschild, 1983). Walter is one of the only people to successfully train zebra, an animal described by William Bingley, 1803 (p. 180):

All attempts to tame this animal so as to render it serviceable have been hitherto fruitless. Wild and independent by nature it seems ill adapted to servitude and restraint.

Harriet Ritvo writes of this incapacity of wild animals to respond to training as being particularly problematic in their relations with colonial society, noting in *Bad Creatures* (1987, p. 231):

Some domestic animals had trouble meeting even the minimal standards of obedience set by sheep and cattle, let alone the high standards of cooperation set by the dog and the horse. Like disrespectful underlings, they did not adequately acknowledge the domination of their superiors.

12.11 War And Zoological Collections

World War I had a major impact on zoological collections, with food and medicine shortages being the main cause of fatalities amongst the captive populations. World War II, however, found the animal collections in the direct line of fire, and many thousands of animals were killed in the conflict. Dangerous animals – the bears, tigers, lions etc. – were shot or euthanized before the air raids, to protect the public if the animals could no longer be contained within the zoo gardens.

Dingoes were again not perceived to be any threat, and survived in all of the zoo documentation and media reports that I have come across, including Dublin, London, Amsterdam, Warsaw and Moscow. This is significant, in that the top order predator of

Australia, considered today to pose a risk to human safety in National Parks and particularly K'gari Fraser Island, was not considered of any threat to human life until the end of the 20th century. This will be discussed further in the thesis analysis.

During the German bomb raids on London in December 1940, the newspapers reported a dingo gave birth to three pups (*Germans bomb London*, 1941). London Zoo and Whipsnade Zoo were bombed many times over the war years, but there were few casualties, despite many enclosures being destroyed and some animals escaping. The zoo adoption scheme was launched in 1940 (ADW—adopted during the war— this is marked on the animal registration cards): people could adopt an animal for the duration of the war by paying a weekly fee to cover food. The name of the adopter was displayed beside the animal's cage. The elephant was 1£ per week, Bears – 3 shillings, alligators – 3/6. Australian specimens up for adoption included cockatoos for 2/6 per week, and emus and dingoes at 5/ (*London Zoo Bombed*, 1941, p. 2).

One of those adopted was Pat, a dingo born in London on 27 December 1941 (ZSL record cards). Pat was adopted by a Polish soldier, and at the end of the war he was then sent in exchange to Copenhagen zoo with a female dingo, Ruth. Both animals were eventually preserved and their remains are in the collection of the Copenhagen Natural History Museum (Morgens Andersen, Collections Manager, University of Copenhagen, Personal correspondence).

Dingoes breed easily in captivity, and they were often mentioned in exchanges between the institutions. By 1930 Moscow and Vienna recorded success with dingo breeding, and a number were traded between Moscow, Vienna and London. One Viennese dingo pup was adopted by ethologist Konrad Lorenz and has a chapter in *Man and Dog* 1954. The pup was taken home for the Professor's dog 'Senta' to raise with her own pups, but she always retained a distance. In Figure 12-7, the pup is introduced to Senta for the first time. Senta had jumped back in fright, hissing like a cat- a sound Lorenz said he had never heard then or since in a canine, and she would not approach the pup - eventually sitting back and letting out a distressed, long, wolf-like howl.

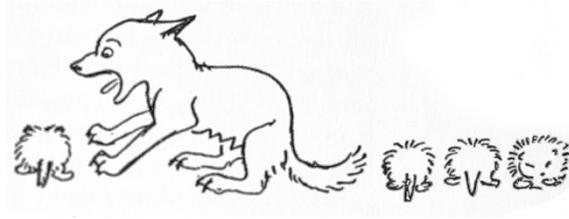


Figure 12-7 Seina meets dingo pup. Line drawings by Konrad Lorenz & Annie Eisenmenger Source:

'Man Meets Dog' 1954

As is often the case, it has not been possible to find out much more about Lorenz's dingo. We know from his notes, that Senta only partly dropped her reserve with the pup, and gave it a clip to the ear later on that scarred the dingo for life. The pup was six days old when adopted by Lorenz, in the spring of 1940. In the fall of 1940, Lorenz took up the position as Professor of Psychology at the University of Koenigsberg, Prussia (now Russia), and moved to Koenigsberg with one of his canine companions, but if this is Senta or the dingo is uncertain. Drafted into the Wehrmacht German army shortly after (1942), he then spent from 1944 to 1948 as a prisoner of war in the Soviet Union (Hess, 2016).

In another account well publicized in the London papers, three dingoes were exported from Adelaide zoo to London Zoo in 1931, and when the box was opened in London they discovered the two females had each given birth to six pups on the voyage, leaving London Zoo with an unanticipated 15 dingoes in the collection, but many did not survive the first few weeks (figure 12-8) The headlines were *The Dingoes Magic Box Trick; Uninvited Guests; Dingoes Surprise London.*



Figure 12-8 Four pups that arrived unexpectedly en-route to London Zoo. Source: The Zoological Society of London Archives, 1931

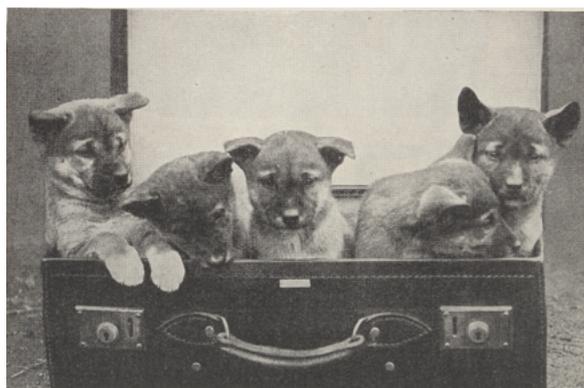


Figure 12-9: Pups born to Queenie and Billycan at London Zoo, 1932. Source: Hutchinson Dog Encyclopaedia

The mother of 6 of the pups, *Queenie*, survived until 20 June 1939 when her registration card is marked KBO (killed by order) “Unfit for exhibition. Old Age. Dermatitis. Nephritis”. The father, *Billycan*, died on 24 January 1938, the vet report stating “Over-distension of stomach. Acute gastritis, Haemorrhage, Septicaemia.” They had many pups during the 1940s that were adopted out to members of the public (Figure 12-9), one zooborn pup ending up living in the country home of artist Rachel Reckitt and pictured in a series of woodcuts (Figures 12-10 and 12-11). The caption for the photograph of Queenie and Billycans pups in Figure 12-9 read (Hutchinson 1934, p. 473):

A TRUNK FULL OF MISCHIEF (1932) Five of a litter of seven Dingo puppies, born at London Zoo, in April 1932. It is interesting to learn that, like wolves, they lift their noses in the air to howl, which is a matter of habit and not of melancholy.



Figure 12-10 Rachel Reckitt: Dingo Digging, 1939 20.5 x 25.5cm Source: Garrett 1978

The following is an article from *The Times* London, advertising pups for adoption (24 February 1940, p. 4)

Zoo animals as pets. The wildness of the dingo.

Several animals arrived at the zoo this week. Three dingo pups were doing well in the wolves' den. Every year the zoo breeds quite a number of these interesting Australian dogs both at Regents Park and Whipsnade, and sometimes it has surplus puppies to dispose of. The dingo makes a very good, tame, and affectionate pet, but as an addition to a human family it has certain drawbacks, which the Zoo is always at pains to point out to prospective customers. For instance, the querulous wail of the dingo, which seems to be its substitute for the normal dog-like bark, does not often recommend it to the neighbor next door. Although it is quite trustworthy with children and of an affectionate disposition, its nature is such that when it is kept in the country it is often prone to fits of wildness. It is very likely to chase sheep and is almost certain to murder poultry.

By the late 1940s, the zoo no longer adopted the dingoes out to the public, as they had been routinely returned to the zoo within a few months, having proved unsuited to domestic life (ZSL record cards).



Figure 12-11 Rachel Reckitt: Dingo Rachel Reckitt Dingo . Source: Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu

12.12 Dingoes for the Coronation, 1953

In 1953, Sir Edward Hallstrom, chairman of Taronga Park Zoo in Sydney, arranged to send a shipment of Australian animals to London as a Coronation present to Queen Elizabeth, and gift commemorative of the Royal Tour (*Sea Zoo*, 1954 p. 2). Four dingoes were included in the total of 131 animals that arrived in London on 1 April 1954. They were recorded on film for the British archives, entering their newly built enclosures. One shaken dingo is filmed emerging from her crate (Figure 12-12) in the silent movie *Australian Section at London Zoo 1954* in the British Pathe online archives.



Figure 12-12 Film still of Dingo emerging from crate at London Zoo. Source: British Pathe

On the first night the four dingoes dug their way out of their enclosure, the newspapers reported (*Four dingoes nearly free in London*, 1954, p. 3) but were caught by a zookeeper before causing any trouble. Only two of the four dingoes survived longer than 12 weeks, the others died of infections which they had picked up on the journey (ZSL daybooks). One named *Buddy*, featured posthumously in the London fashion supplement of the *Australian Women's Weekly*, 9 March 1955 *Cats, hats and High Fashion* (Figure 12-13.) The caption reads beside an image of Australian model Patti Morgan:

HEAD-HUGGING ear coverer is also favoured by another Australian living in London—Buddy the dingo, who's in residence at the Zoo.



Figure 12-13 Buddy. Source: Womens Weekly 1955

The photograph was taken in the zoo sanatorium where *Buddy* was placed, suffering from a virus contracted during the voyage. He had died shortly after arriving in London in 1954 (ZSL record cards).



Figure 12-14 Photograph of the caged animals on deck of the *Cymric*, "They have a tough six weeks ahead before they reach England." Source: Truth 1954

The reports of the transportation of live animals to London were described as tragic in the newspapers (Figure 12-14), and there were calls for a ban on animal exports (*No luxury cruise for Australian animals, birds*, 1954, p. 5). The animals in the Coronation collection had been confined to small wooden crates on the open deck of the *Cymric* for the 42 day voyage.

There are records of 280 dingoes over the 20th Century, either arriving at London zoo, or born in the collection. They were exhibited, dispatched, traded and exchanged until they lost favor as a zoo exhibit in the 1970s. This may have been due to the increasingly common narrative that the dingo was just a domestic dog gone wild, or

concerns that most of the dingoes remaining were hybrid – I have found no documentation to clearly indicate the reasoning, however they were out of fashion years before the Chamberlain case made worldwide news in 1980 (see p. 91).



Figure 12-15 “What about us, Mr Bradman?” 1948 This litter of dingo pups named Cobber, Dinkum, Anzac, Digger and Matilda, were the progeny of Pam and Patrick, born at the London Zoo five weeks previously. Source: The Nottingham Evening Post 1948

The representation of the dingo, along with their Australian heritage, is often reflected in the naming of the zoo exhibits (Figure 12-15); Billycan, Queenie, Sandy, Pat, Buddy, Peggy, Reva, Bruno, Cobber, Dinkum, Anzac, Digger, Matilda and more recent additions, Mick and Hogan.

12.13 Zoo Ephemera

The following excerpts are from newspaper articles, and zoo guide books housed in the zoo ephemera collection at the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History in Washington D.C. The narratives echo colonial sentiment towards the dingo in Australia.

1878, 1889 Philadelphia Zoological Gardens

THE DINGO , or WILD DOG (*C. dingo*), of Australia was formerly supposed to be an aboriginally wild stock, but they are now taken to be descended from imported progenitors, which ran wild, cowardly brutes, susceptible of little domestication, and caused by their depredations much loss to the sheep-raisers of Australia.

1884 *About the zoo*, South Australian Register (p. 6)

I could string out stories about the dingo's craftiness till further orders, but there is no end to that sort of thing when once one begins, like a lawyers bill.

1887 Manchester Times

As for the dingo, or Australian wild dog, only half domesticated by the savage natives, he represents a low ancestral dog type, half wolf and half jackal, incapable of the higher canine traits and with a suspicious, ferocious, glaring eye that betrays at once his uncivilizable tendencies.

1903 *The Mercury*, Hobart

The American Consul took a number of Tasmanian animals to the United States including one dingo that he picked up en-route in Sydney. (Anon., p. 6):

[The dingo] was quite tame, and would be taken for a walk up on deck twice a day. It made many friends among the passengers of the *Marama*.”

The shipment included four Tasmanian devils that became quite tame as the voyage progressed, the journalist noted: “the general opinion that the Tasmanian devil is impossible of taming might be incorrect” (see p. 108). The animals were all headed to the National Zoo in New York and the Lincoln Park Zoo in Chicago.

1907 Philadelphia Zoological Gardens 1907 (and subsequent yearbooks to 1918)

It is an open question whether the Dingo, or Wild Dog (*C. dingo*), of Australia is an aboriginally wild stock, or is descended from introduced progenitors which ran wild. In any case their fossil remains are found in Pleistocene strata. They are cowardly brutes, susceptible of little domestication, and have caused by their depreciations much loss to the sheep-raisers of Australia.

1920s Calgary Zoo (the dingoes were displayed between the wolf and coyote exhibits).

The Dingo is not a native to Australia, but was brought to the island as a domestic dog by aborigines and, since they had no competition, dingoes turned wild. Being the only carnivore on the island it destroys many domestic and native animals

1923 Taronga Park Zoo (Figure 12-16)

The Dingo or Warrigal (*Canis dingo*) is the wild dog of Australia. It ranges over the whole continent, but never reached Tasmania. It is about the size of a collie and has a brushy tail and prick ears; the colour

varies from yellow to black. There are two varieties, the Plain Dingo, a slighter, and the Mountain Dingo, a heavier dog. It can never be properly tamed, nor does it bark; it hunts singly or in packs. Though a nuisance to sheep-breeders it is never dangerous to man. It inter-breeds freely with the domestic dog. It has been debated whether the Dingo is of foreign origin or really native to Australia. The teeth of it were found in cave deposits at the Mount Macedon and the Wellington caves, in association with fossil extinct species. And again a Dingo skull was dug out under 60 feet of ash, ejected by an extinct volcano in Victoria, so that it dates back to remote ages. But there was no possible ancestor for it in this country, and, in the opinion of the writer, it is a descendant of some form of Asiatic dog, transported to Northern Australia by Malays or Papuans.



Figure 12-16 Taronga Park Zoo dingo enclosure, 1930 Dingo d1_22271 Source: State Library of NSW
1924 Toledo Zoological Gardens, Year Book Two.

There are several examples of the wild dog in the Toledo collection, the one that may truly be called the wild dog being the Dingo of Australia. These powerfully built little animals in their native land are found both wild and domesticated for when they are taken as puppies and trained they become very fond of their owners and faithful to their trust. In their native state they hunt in packs and are destructive to herds of sheep especially.

The color is tawny to black. The animal stands about two feet in height at the shoulder and is two-and-a-half feet long. Its hair is longer and rougher than either the coyote of America or the wolf both of which are represented in the Toledo collection.

Sir Colin MacKenzie Sanctuary 1934-

Dingo (*Canis dingo*): As the generic name *Canis* shows, the dingo is basically the same sort of animal as the original stock of domestic dogs, but it yaps or howls instead of barking. A friendly looking animal in captivity, but it cannot be trusted in contact with visitors because it can be unexpected and vicious in biting.

1936 – 1946 Chicago Zoological Park

This feral DOG was probably carried by man to Australia at a very early date. It is assumed it came from the north, for the dingo more closely resembles the wolf, from which our domestic breeds originated, than it does the jackal...it is the largest and one of the few predators in Australia.

1938–1942 Philadelphia Zoological Gardens

THE DINGO or wild dog of Australia, has the unique distinction of being the sole non-pouched mammal of any size which lived in that great island continent before the arrival of Europeans. It resembles a domestic dog and is indeed trained by the natives.

1944 San Diego Zoo

The Dingo (*Canis dingo*) or Warrigal, a wild dog of Australia, is believed to have been imported to Australia thousands of years ago by primitive man, The dingo roams in packs and causes much damage in its ruthless slaughter of livestock.

1956 Ceylon

The Dingo or Australian wild dog is said to be a domestic animal introduced by the aborigines, and which later reverted to the wild state. Like the wolf it readily crosses with domestic dogs.

1959 San Diego

This dog is the most destructive predator on the continent. Roaming in large packs, it is taking a terrific toll on livestock as well as native wild fauna.

1960 San Diego

This dog is the most destructive predator on the continent.

1960 Taronga Zoological Park

Pups of the dingo or warrigal (also known as the Australian Wild Dog) are playful youngsters, but an adult animal can seldom be trusted. Dingoes do not bark, but utter yelps which develop into mournful howls.



Figure 12-17“Dingo pups given freedom of the kangaroo house are company for Charles Foster. Ordinarily the pups are penned” Bronx Zoo, Source: New York Times, 1961

1961 New York, May 9

The Bronx zoo shut down for 4 weeks due to striking workers. The *New York Times* published an article *People-free zoo a lonely place: Monkeys Mope and Squirrels Scrounge for Handouts as Strike Goes On*. “... in the Kangaroo house, two dingo pups have been released and run about freely after the keepers.” (Figure 12-17). The keepers pleaded for the curators and aids to please walk through the monkey-house, as the inmates were pining to see a human face (Henry-Freeman, 1961, p. 41).

12.14 Conclusion

The zoological gardens worldwide avidly collected dingoes for live exhibits, at the same time as reinforcing colonial dialogue that accelerated the physical and cultural marginalization of the species remaining in the wild in Australia.

The dingo exhibit within western menageries and zoological gardens was almost devoid of any cultural or heritage context, with the exception of the naming of the animals that reflects colloquial Euro-Australian character. The dingo-Aboriginal story was entirely erased from the public representation of the animals in all of the zoo catalogues that I found after 1830.

The London Zoological Gardens published a catalogue in 1830 describing the appearance and behavior of the dingo, and did disparagingly mention the fact that the canine was an Aboriginal companion – a detail omitted entirely from later zoological charts (Bennett, 1830 p. 52-54):

(of) the specimen now before us we have him in that condition in which he may be supposed to approach most nearly to a state of nature, as companion of a race of savages...

The dingoes in the gardens were said to have shaken some of their wildness from two years in captivity, but remained highly anxious, easily startled and watching with ‘suspicious eagerness’ the motions of anyone approaching—clearly ‘not at ease in the society of civilized man’ (Bennett, 1830, p. 54).

The history of the menagerie and the early zoo was based on the display of animal bodies outside of any ecological or cultural function, making them poor educational tools or repositories of ecological knowledge. They were places reinforcing the Judeo-Christian belief in the superiority of (civilized) man, by exhibiting “wild and exotic beasts, exaggerated ferocity, colonial adventure, enthusiasm for empire.” (Henning, 2006)

Anthropologist Molly Mullin (1999, p. 201) summarized:

If wild animal products helped to provide economic motivation for imperialism and if domestic animals facilitated the establishment of colonies, it has been argued that hunting and the collection and display of exotic species played an important ideological role. Examining the development of Regents Park Zoo and other animal exhibitions, Ritvo writes that the maintenance and study of captive wild animals offered an especially vivid rhetorical means of reenacting and extending the work of empire.

The narrative applied to the dingo within the zoo exhibit was strangely devoid of any context, outside of wolf-like characteristic’s of predating on sheep. The following chapter examines this area of Australian cultural narrative and national identity as represented through animal form, in the prosopography of one dingo called *Australia*, a live exhibit at Perth Zoo at the time of Australian Federation 1903.