



André Kertész, *At the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, 1936

Animal reproduction

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The extinction of animals is offset by their textual reproduction. We do not claim that this is a satisfactory condition, but that it is the pre-eminent manner in which our culture recoups its losses.

What we offer here is a romp through our menagerie. We move from philosophical reflection, through photographic acts of appropriation, to the psycho-sexual Freudian and Canadian imaginaries, as a dog would track a broken scent. We have had to trail animal reproductions through the wildest of terrain, to not fall prey to the pretty reproduction of "environmental concern." In short, we have forsaken the environmental etiquette with which we were reared.

Philosophical Dogs

Descartes has bequeathed us a dead dog (as it happened, his wife left him after he nailed her dog to a table in order to vivisect it). If he had been a dog fancier, we would be much less troubled by the heaps of unfeeling brutes piling up in the philosophical coffers. It is, however, with the Brazilian novelist Machado De Assis that we ask: *Philosopher or Dog?* Here, the

"or" is a soft disjunction, making it a bit of folly to separate Quincas Borba, the ailing philosopher of the novel, from Quincas Borba, the philosophical dog who carries forth his master's intellectual legacy.

What is it to think like a dog, to be a thinking dog, rather than a thinking man's dog? What is it to die like a dog? Let Kafka explain.

At the end of *The Trial*, K is stabbed in the heart with a butcher's knife. With his final breath, he yelps: "Like a dog!" In "A Crossbreed," Kafka again raises the two themes of becoming a dog and awaiting the knife of the butcher, although here it is a half-kitten, half-lamb which insists on being a dog and in doing so challenges its owner "to do the thing of which both of us are thinking."

Writing from the perspective of an inquisitive dog in "Investigations of a Dog," Kafka's peripatetic pooch leads us into a conundrum of dog philosophy: "Every dog has like me the impulse to question, and I have like every living dog the impulse not to answer." Consider the case of the soaring dogs. It was, at first, difficult for Kafka's dog to believe in their existence (after all, what a senseless life for a dog to lead, floating in the air, letting one's legs, "the pride of dogs, fall into desuetude"). After making a few inquiries, however, Kafka's dog is convinced of their existence. These soaring dogs "are perpetually talking, partly of their philosophical reflections with which, seeing that they have completely renounced bodily exertion, they can continuously occupy themselves." The thinking dog's dog is nearly self-sufficient in the uselessness of its reflections, although like Aristotle's philosopher, it must defecate now and then.

Animal Sign

In his collected essays *What is Cinema?*, André Bazin presents his case for the efficacy of the photographic image: "The photograph as such and the object in itself share a common being, after the fashion of a fingerprint" — (or paw print). Using this analogy as our point of departure, let us take ourselves out of an entirely urban environment, and reflect upon the fittingness of this axiom.

Let us say we are walking along a local trail, and we sight an animal track on the path in front of us. The finding of the series of prints leads us to conclude it comes from some small common mammal. There may seem little to marvel at; we have seen such prints often enough. But let us now imagine we are hiking along the continental backbone, and it is a grizzly print, much larger than our own. Only then will the distinction between the paw print of the animal and its photograph likely be thrown into relief, for it is as if the air has become "electric."

Clearly the paw print is not the sign of something which once was — an *absence*, as Bazin would have it — but something which may still be there: a *presence*.

The Bloodless Fray

As we walked along the trail, twelve or so miles from another person, we noticed the grizzly and black bear tracks crossing our path. This went on for miles and miles. One of us was more afraid that day (she was menstruating). With only a few possessions on our backs we felt especially vul-

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nerable, as if the space that had separated them from us was now somehow nonexistent, as if the breaths that we took were the same. There was no scent, though, just the bear sign full of huckleberry. As we stooped to pick at the last berries, we knew there were many bears in close proximity, doing just that.

We felt naked, fragile, vulnerable, and understood that preposterous scene in the film *Never Cry Wolf* where the biologist had run naked with the wolves, marking his territory with urine.

As we continued, we were conscious of the fact that we should make some noise, warn the bears that we were coming. We started talking. Our conversation returned

over and over again to *ursus arctos horribilis*, as all conversations had in one way or another all summer. The terrain was well mapped, familiar.

One of us stopped abruptly. "Bear?" the other wondered. Together we tried to make out the dark shape at the river's edge, and realised we were talking "moose," not bear.

Darkness, the uncertainty, grips us, makes our hair stand on end. Not the animal seen, but the animal imagined. The thing we perhaps fear the most would be if our eyes were to meet: what would we do, how would we react? We tend to keep our eyes averted, like children afraid to tell all—partly to watch where we step, and partly to avoid the likelihood of looking into their eyes.

Freud's Menagerie

Freud's apartment at 19 Berggasse was, for a time, a kennel of sorts. His beloved chow chows Yofi and Lun, as well as Anna's Alsatian, Wolfi, were permanent, sentient fixtures; upstairs at Dorothy Burlingham's, one could find a Bedlington under the couch. In London, Freud's final dog — a substitute for Lun who had been quarantined by the British authorities — was a Pekinese named Jumbo.

Before Yofi and Lun arrived at Berggasse, Freud's first chow, Lun-Yu, was lost under the wheels of a train while being escorted to Vienna by Eva Rosenfeld.

Perhaps the most touching moment of Freud's long devotion to dogs came in January 1937 when Yofi, his companion for some seven years, died following an operation which saw the removal of two ovarian cysts. Yofi had been an important member of the Freud household, one who greeted and sat with Sigmund's patients, remembered the doctor's birthday, and understood her master's protracted struggle with cancer — or so Freud believed. In 1936, Freud read Princess Marie Bonaparte's book *Topsy, Chow-chow au poil d'or* about her dog who had responded favourably to an operation for cancer of the mouth (the very form of cancer which had struck Freud). Freud began his translation of Bonaparte's book shortly after Yofi's death. Earlier, Freud had expressed in a letter to the Princess a reverie on Yofi: "When stroking [her] I have often caught myself humming a melody which, though quite unmusical, I could recognise as the aria from Don Giovanni: 'A bond of friendship binds us both, etc.'"

Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari are suspicious about Freud's doggedness in his handling of the Wolf-Man. Their "reading" of the case in *A Thousand Plateaus* begins with a dramatic flourish:

That day, the Wolf-Man rose from the couch particularly tired. He knew that Freud had a genius for brushing up against the truth and passing it by, then filling the void with associations. He knew that Freud knew nothing about wolves.... The only thing Freud understood was what a dog is, and a dog's tail. It wasn't enough. It wouldn't be enough.

No matter how much the Wolf-Man howled, Freud's answer was the same: "It's daddy."

We have, then, more dogs on our hands. For Freud, where wolves were, dogs shall be. Freud argued that the six or seven white wolves of the Wolf-Man's famous nightmare "were actually sheep dogs;" as a child, the Wolf-Man may have observed copulating dogs, only to subsequently displace that sight onto his parents. If he had not actually witnessed animal coitus, he nevertheless possessed, as the Freudian fable goes, the phylogenetic experience of having observed parental intercourse, which must have been performed *a tergo more ferarum*, since Freud favoured that position.

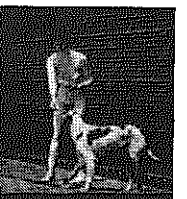
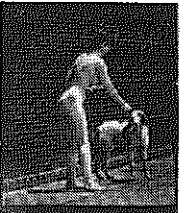
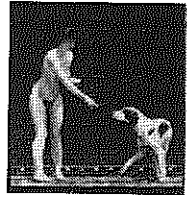
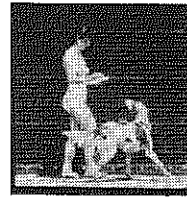
What did the Wolf-Man see "that day" on Freud's couch which made him so tired? A chow, perhaps? No, Freud did not run his patient through this model since his first chow hadn't yet arrived. There was another dog in the apartment that day: Wolfi. Ruth Mack Brunswick reports in her analysis of this case that "when visiting Freud, the [Wolf-Man] had on more than one occasion seen a large gray police dog, which looked like a domesticated wolf."

Let's be clear: the Alsatian is a German shepherd, a common police dog. Moreover, it belonged to Anna, although Sigmund loved it. So, the Wolf-Man may have met a dog which was a Wolf[i] a number of times.

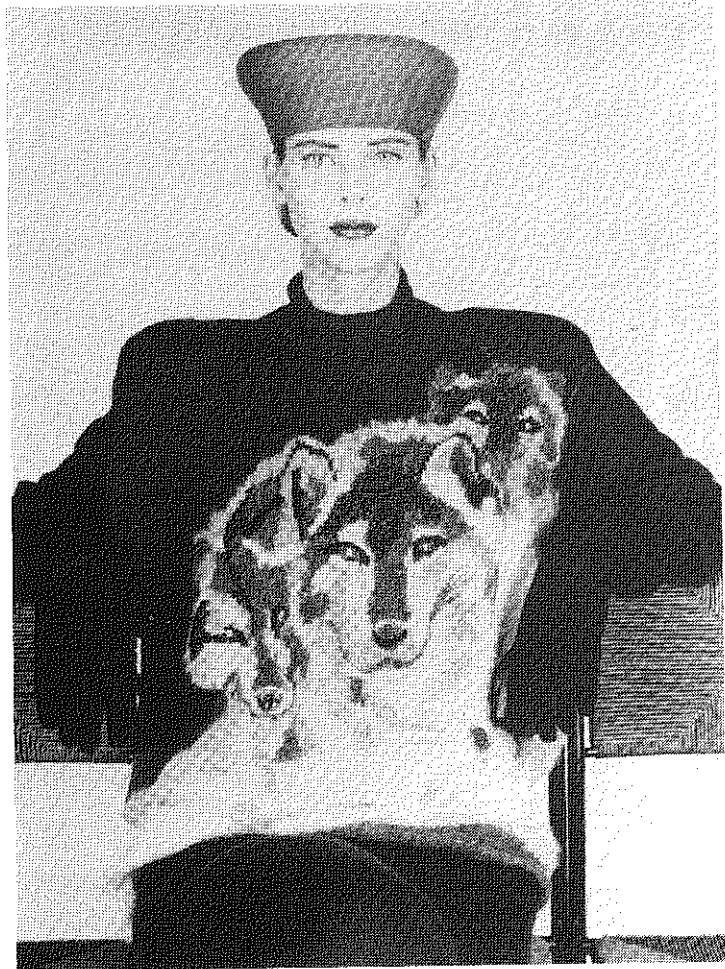
Such a speculation only reinforces Freud's reduction of *canis lupus* to *canis familiaris*. On the other hand, why is a pack of wolves so precious to Deleuze and Guattari? It's true, when Freud "brushes up" against the pack — an allusion to the way in which members of a wolf-pack nudge one another — he fails to understand it. Even though everybody but Freud knows that wolves travel in packs, those who possess this knowledge need not pack their interpretations of the case with predatory wolf-multiplicities, *bandes de loups*.

The "deleuzoguattarian" pack must be unpacked because their zoological given is mutable. Indeed, Deleuze and Guattari are a pair and not a pack. Beyond the wild-domestic dichotomy, both Freud's doggies and Deleuze and Guattari's ideal formation must give way to the diversity of unpacked packs: wolves banished from their packs, dog-wolf hybrids, *bande de chiens*, neurotic designer dogs, etc.

One of Freud's last patients at Berggasse, Hilda Doolittle, once complained that "the Professor was more interested in Yofi than he was in my story." Psychoanalysis had gone to the dogs when Freud could not resist the urge to domesticate his patients' animals and let his own animals loose. Let's not forget that the analytic situation was played out with a third party present, not the Censor, Cerebus, but a chow and/or an Alsatian. Freud, then, had a few living totems among his clay Coptic dogs and sculptures of Romulus and Remus. Of course, in his papers on technique he said nothing of this.



Eadweard Muybridge, *Animal Locomotion*. Woman feeding a dog from three different camera angles.



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Krizia reproduces the imaginary.

Hyper-husbandry

For us, the Canadian imaginary is populated by a peculiar libidinal aesthetic. To be sure, the wild still calls us, only because it is a canon that we have been educated to hear. To the extent that we answer this call by venturing forth with our cameras ready to "snap up" the wild, or put it down on paper or canvas, we reproduce our own imaginary, and perhaps even turn ourselves into imaginary Canadians.

There are others, however, who have not heard a call, but felt a presence; these are the ones who have smelt bear. They have been seduced by wildness, by the passions of nature. This is not an idle anthropomorphism, for anthropomorphism is never idle or frivolous. Anthropomorphism cannot be filled with something more rigorous because it is the foundation upon which we continuously invent our relationship with human and nonhuman others. To forget this is to forfeit much of our humanity.

Of course, there are still others who have sought to couple with nonhumans, although for us acts of bestiality cannot constitute an answer to the call of the wild, and primarily because most often the partners in question are domesticates. For example, in his case histories, Karl Menninger describes the "curious, furtive search" of a travelling salesman for an "approachable" mare or cow. In another case, a successful businessman and horse fancier suffers debilitating attacks of anxiety and guilt

after consummating his marriage because he feels that he has been unfaithful to his mare. Those sexual congresses are, here at least, instances of what we call *hyper-husbandry*: male phantasies directed at surrogate women.

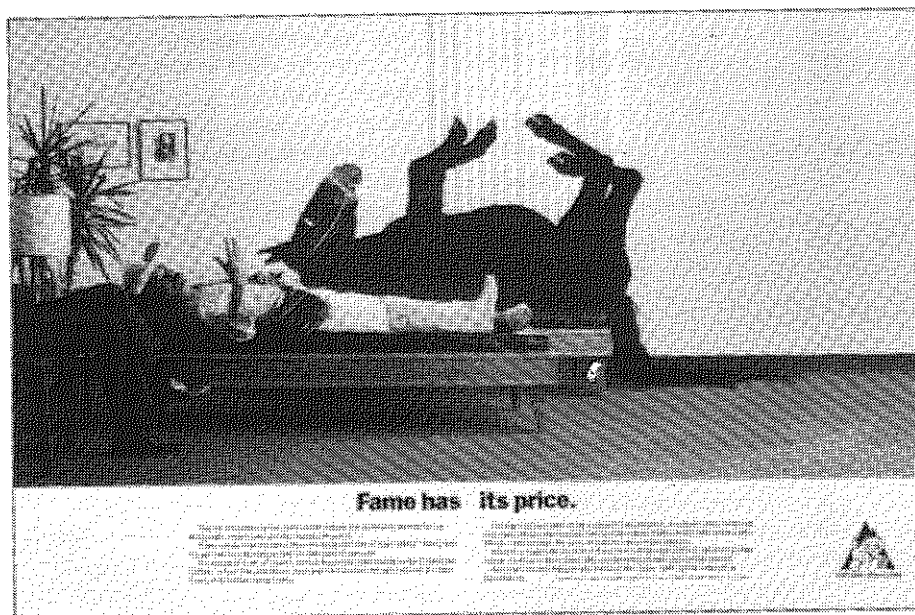
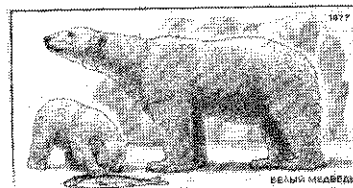
The reproduction of similar bonds in our aesthetic imaginary also concerns us—in particular, the extent to which these reproductions express the *collision* of the instinctual forces of the human and non-human. This libidinal collision course is rendered in Marion Engel's *Bear* (1976):

He sat up across from her, rubbing his nose with a paw and looking confused. Then he looked down at himself. She looked as well. Slowly, majestically his great cock was rising.

It was not like a man's, tulip-shaped. It was red, pointed, and impressive. She looked at him. He did not move. She took her sweater off and went down on all fours in front of him, in the animal posture. He reached out one great paw and ripped the skin on her back.

In the collision of the human and non-human, and the seductive power which the latter exercises over the former, there are then catastrophes borne of miscalculation: the inappropriate slackening of fear and respect for the object of desire and the *object's desire*. Yes, we need to consider the "object's desire," for if these collisions teach us anything, it's that the object we desire rarely desires us.

A Tail Note



Famo has its price.

We lick the behinds of bears on stamps, two gay robins frolic on our two dollar bills, and Snow geese flock above manes of faux-fur. Financial forces are instinctual forces in this habitat. We've paid dearly to see the analyst's doggie. Even Juan Valdez's equine companion, abused by the corporate agenda, must join him on the analytic couch. ■

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