In July 2004, Bleda Düring called me to the building he was excavating at Çatalhöyük, a large Neolithic site in central Anatolia (Turkey). While working on a burial pit, he encountered a closely grouped set of sheep's feet, pointing straight up. Together, we excavated what turned out to be the first animal burial at Çatalhöyük: a lamb, lying next to a human skeleton but separated from it by the remains of a mat or blanket that lay over the human and under the lamb (Russell and Düring in press). The lamb lay on its side, with its legs pulled awkwardly straight up, as they must have been carefully held while the pit was filled, perhaps to prevent them from falling across the human body. The intimacy and ambivalence evident in this burial makes the human–animal relationship preserved in this grave hard to label. The lamb’s young age (ca. 12 months) prevents an assessment of its morphological domestication, but because the vast majority of the sheep at Çatalhöyük are domestic, this one probably came from someone’s flock. None of the other numerous sheep at the site ended up intact in a grave. Why would a pet be so carefully held away from its owner? The enigma posed by this strangely positioned animal encapsulates the multiplicity of relations included under the rubric of domestication.

My purpose in this chapter is to explore some of the uses of the concept of “domestication” in anthropology and archaeology, to point out some of the difficulties of the concept, and to suggest how these very ambiguities can provide fertile ground for future work. Although I will discuss a number of different applications of “domestication,” I focus mainly on animal domestication. This is both closer to my own expertise and arguably the arena in which the definition of “domestication” has been most problematic.
For the most part, the concept of domestication has been applied within anthropology to the domestication of plants and animals. Decades of discussion have shown that this is not a simple concept, at least as applied to animals. Many anthropologists have found that biological definitions of animal domestication, drawn from other disciplines, inadequately describe the phenomenon of husbandry. They have tended instead to emphasize social—legal (property rights) aspects, or psychological (domination) factors. The form of biological definition that has found the most favor with anthropologists (chiefly archaeologists) is domestication as symbiosis. At present, the major locus of debate is whether domestication is best understood as symbiosis or a change in social relations.

Meanwhile, in recent decades there has been an increasing tendency to use “domestication” in a broader sense, both beyond but especially within anthropology. These applications play on one or the other of two senses of “domestication”: as equivalent to “taming” (although most who address animal domestication in fact distinguish between these two concepts), or drawing on the original roots of the word, referring to the house or household (i.e., playing on the dual sense of “domestic”). An exception is “domiculture,” which retains the original biologically based sense of domestication as control but applies it to the environment at large rather than individual plant and animal species (Chase 1989). Although rare or absent in anthropology, in other disciplines “domestication” is occasionally also used in a sense opposing “domestic” to “foreign,” as in “the domestication of industry.”

The concept and study of domestication has already provided fertile ground for communication and collaboration across disciplinary and subdisciplinary boundaries. In general, archaeologists and biologists and animal scientists find common ground in exploring the biological aspects of domestication. Biologists, archaeologists, and biological anthropologists could fruitfully explore further the similarities between the physical changes of domestication and those seen in human evolution, notably neoteny (Coppinger and Smith 1983; Leach 2003). Sociocultural anthropologists and archaeologists have already joined in the consideration of the social and cultural dimensions of animal domestication. This could usefully be pushed further through analysis of animal domestication as a form of kinship. The broadening use of domestication suggests that many disciplines and subdisciplines could benefit from the work on domestication by others. However, it is also necessary to be explicit about the meaning of “domestication” in each case, and to be precise about which aspects of this multifarious concept are invoked. I propose that approaching the topic in terms of the specific practices of domestication at work in each case will aid in bringing together these various approaches.

The Anthropology of Domestication: A Very Brief History

Although there are earlier discussions, serious studies of plant and animal domestication begin to appear in the second half of the 19th century (e.g., Candolle 1885; Darwin 1868; Galton 1865; Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire 1861; Hahn 1896; Roth 1887). At that point they are based on speculation, textual sources that we now know to be many millennia too late to be useful, and observations of contemporary plants and animals. These accounts tend to be cast in terms of glorious human progress, with humans consciously taking control of animal species. After proposing that plants were domesticated by women, Mason (1966/1895: 258–260), in a chapter entitled War on the Animal Kingdom, gives the following account of animal domestication (condensed here):

In his contact with the animal kingdom, the primitive man developed both militancy and industrialism. He occupies two attitudes in the view of the student, that of a slayer, and that of a captor and tamer. ... It is important to ask how our species came to be masters of the brute kingdom, and what intellectual advantages were gained in the struggle. ... By and by they turned the artillery of Nature on herself. The dog raised a flag of truce and came in to join the hosts of man against the rest. The mountain sheep and the wild goat descended from their rocky fortresses, gave up the contest, and surrendered skins and fleece and flesh and milk to clothe and feed the inventor of the fatal arrow. ... Those that refused to enter in any way into these stipulations are doomed sooner or later to extinction, and many species have already disappeared or withdrawn to the waste places of earth in despair.

With the exception of Pumpelly’s (1908) innovative work at Anau in the early 20th century (also now known to involve societies much later than the earliest farmers), there was little archaeological evidence to address plant and animal domestication until after 1950. Notably, the work of Braidwood (Braidwood and Howe 1960) in the Near East and MacNeish (Byers 1967) in Mesoamerica began to provide some direct information on the processes of domestication. The need to identify the beginnings of plant and animal domestication stimulated attention
to the nature of this process, first by natural scientists collaborating
with archaeologists (e.g., Bökönyi 1969; Ducos 1969; Harlan 1967;
Mangelsdorf 1958; Reed 1961; Zeuner 1963), and later by archaeologists
specializing in the study of plant and animal remains (e.g., Flannery
to these discussions, sociocultural anthropologists have also offered
perspectives on the nature and origin of domestication (e.g., Alexander

Definitions

I have discussed varying definitions of animal domestication and their
implications elsewhere (Russell 2002), and will only summarize briefly
here. Domestication is difficult to pin down, partly because it involves
both biological processes of alteration to organisms and social and
cultural changes in both humans and animals. Additionally, a wide
range of human–animal relationships is included, at least by some, in
the rubric of domestication. It is not easy to find a meaningful definition
that includes barnyard animals, ranched livestock, pets, animals such
as honeybees (but also pigs in some New Guinea societies) that until
recently were routinely captured from the wild and never bred in
captivity, tuna confined outside the Straits of Gibraltar and fed with
herring imported from the North Sea (Bestor 2001), laboratory mice
(Rader this volume), and urban pigeons (Feeley-Harnik this volume)
yet excludes wildlife culled or even managed through birth control,
restored through captive breeding programs, or held and often bred in
zoos (Suzuki this volume). Some of these problems arise through casting
definitions in dichotomous terms: “wild” or “domestic.” Although some
(e.g., Jarman 1977) solve this by arranging human–animal relationships
in a continuum of control from random predation to factory farming
(or today direct genetic manipulation), I find it more fruitful to think in
terms of a spectrum of different kinds of relationships. Pets, for example,
can be members of either wild or domestic species and represent a
fundamentally different relationship from livestock.

Definitions of domestication generally stress either the biological or
the social aspects. Those from zoological and animal science backgrounds
(e.g., Bökönyi 1989; Clutton-Brock 1994) have tended to stress control
of breeding, in particular, along with control of feeding and movement.
It is control of breeding that produces biological changes observed in
domestic organisms. It must be stressed that control of breeding does
not necessarily mean deliberate selective breeding, although this tends
to be viewed as the fullest expression of domestication, but in essence
refers to practices that lead to genetic isolation from the wild population.
Indeed, recent work increasingly tends to view early changes in plants
and animals as adaptations to the conditions of cultivation and herding
rather than the results of human selection (e.g., Crockford 2000; Harlan
1995: 30–39; Hillman and Davies 1999; Price 2002: 10–11; Zohary,
Tchernov, and Horwitz 1998). Given this, some have sought to remove
intentionality entirely from the domestication process, characterizing
it as an instance of symbiosis or coevolution (e.g., Leach this volume;
O’Connor 1997; Rindos 1984). Although this term has not yet entered
the archaeological literature, the currently popular ecological concept
of “facilitation” may be even more appropriate (Fuentes this volume).

Although coevolutionary models are embraced by many archaeo-
logists, other archaeologists and anthropologists, with their focus on
the human end of domestication, have emphasized the social aspects in
their definitions. Here, the transformation of animals into property is
generally seen as the key to domestication, and as initiating profound
changes in both human–human and human–animal relations (e.g.,
Ducos 1978; Ingold 1980). Suzuki’s (this volume) proposal that designated
game animals are domestic in the eyes of the state (because they are
appropriated as property) while wild in the eyes of the individual takes
this in a fruitful direction that helps to resolve some of the difficulties of
a simplistic wild–domestic dichotomy. Some sociocultural anthropologists
have examined the psychological underpinnings of domestication (e.g.,
Digard 1990), stressing human domination as the motivating factor for
animal domestication, an argument that has been taken up by some
archaeologists (Cauvin 1994; Hodder 1987).

Domestication Beyond Plants and Animals

“Domestication” is thus a multifarious concept as applied to plants
and animals, where “domestic” is opposed to “wild.” It becomes more
so thanks to the trend in the last 25 years or so to apply the term to
other spheres of human activity, particularly within anthropology. The
pioneer in this regard appears to be Jack Goody (1977), whose title The
Domestication of the Savage Mind plays off Lévi-Strauss’s (1966) The Savage
Mind to cast writing metaphorically as a taming influence, transforming
human thought. This sense of domestication as metaphorical taming
is followed by other authors. Interestingly, those who study animal
domestication generally distinguish between taming and domestication,
with “taming” referring to a relationship between an individual animal
and an individual human whereas "domestication" involves populations and successive generations. This distinction goes back at least as far as the mid-19th century (Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire 1861). Taming is a necessary precursor to domestication but does not inevitably lead to it. However, when applied to aspects of human life, this distinction is lost.

Wilson (1988, this volume) played on the major significance attached to plant and animal domestication (the Neolithic Revolution) in the evolution of human societies (domestic as not wild), while primarily referring back to the etymological roots of "domestication" (domus, the house or household in Latin), in arguing that substantial architecture was more important than the origins of agriculture for human societies in _The Domestication of the Human Species_ (domestic as not public).

Outside of anthropology, domestication applied to humans almost always harkens back to an earlier meaning: "to habituate to home life" (Webster 1913: 444) and to feminize (containing senses of domestic as not public, not male, and not wild or out of control). This usage has boomed beginning in the 1990s. Third-wave feminists are reclaiming this older meaning as they explore gender issues in various contexts, usually prior to or outside of contemporary Euro-American culture. Others, though, not writing from a feminist perspective, use "domestication/domesticating" in a pejorative sense, equating feminization with a lessening of vitality (e.g., Placher 1996).

Hodder (1990) manages to draw on virtually all the meanings of domestication in his _The Domestication of Europe_. The term refers most directly to the importance of the house and the household sphere (his domus, as opposed to agríos) in Neolithic Europe. However, he also builds an argument that the importance of the domus lies in its power to domesticate people, more precisely to control the wild in men by bringing the wild into the domesticating female sphere of house and hearth (although he also suggests there may be attempts to control the wild and dangerous in women). Moreover, he follows Cauvin (1972) in arguing that this symbolic domestication of the wild precedes the domestication of plants or at least animals in the conventional sense. Indeed, he suggests that plant and animal domestication may be a by-product of the changes in attitude toward nature brought about by the symbolic control of the wild. Hodder’s domus model has been extensively critiqued on various grounds (e.g., Tringham 1991; Davis 1992), notably by some suggesting that the obsession with controlling the wild may be more of a modern than a Neolithic concern (Halstead 1996), but has become an established concept in discussions of the European Neolithic and beyond.

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### Domesticating Kinship

Although there are various ways in which domestication can and does serve as a locus for interaction among disciplines and subdisciplines, here I want to explore what archaeologists and sociocultural anthropologists can gain from thinking about domestication in the context of kinship, and particularly in terms of the "new kinship" theory (e.g., Franklin and McKinnon 2001b; Haraway 1997; Strathern 1992b). At the least, domestication and kinship involve a number of similar issues, some of which I explore here. It may even be appropriate to view animal domestication as an extension of kinship to other species. After all, the term itself implies bringing animals into the household.

### Society and Biology

I have briefly alluded to the difficulties and potential rewards of dealing with a concept such as domestication that combines biological and social components. These thoughts are echoed by new kinship theorists. Kinship has traditionally been seen as a social structure built on the foundation of biological relatedness, as gender is to sex. As Franklin (2001) notes, not only do many contemporary anthropologists question the epiphenomenal character of kinship but biology is no longer seen as a solid base. The biological is also constructed, in part modeled on society.

New kinship theory draws on at least two sources in challenging classical approaches to kinship. One impetus is queer theory, which asserts the validity of other kinds of families and relationships than those classically composing kinship structures. Another comes from science studies, in which scholars contemplate the implications of new biological technologies. In vitro fertilization, cloning, and transgenic chimeras create new kinds of relationships that somehow need to be incorporated in reckoning kinship. Theorists such as Donna Haraway (1997) embrace this indeterminacy. Strathern notes that

kinship [is] a hybrid of different elements. Human kinship is regarded as a fact of society rooted in facts of nature. Persons we recognise as kin divide into those related by blood and those related by marriage, that is, the outcome of or in prospect of procreation. However, the process of procreation as such is seen as belonging not to the domain of society but to the domain of nature. _Kinship thus connects the two domains_. (1992b: 16-17)
Domestication likewise connects society and nature, and we must grapple with but also celebrate its indeterminacy. It is irreducibly both biological and social, and one cannot meaningfully be subordinated to the other. Definitive definitions are impossible, but there are many avenues to explore.

**Taxonomy**

Kinship is of course a classificatory system that orders human beings. Domestication itself involves a simple (on the surface) classification into wild versus domestic. It complicates biological taxonomy, however. Biological taxonomy is kinship writ large, defining relationships among species. Linnaean taxonomy is a kinship system based only on descent; it, too, is based on notions of degrees of relationship. There has been considerable controversy about how to classify domestic animals (e.g., Corbet and Clutton-Brock 1984; Gautier 1993, 1997; Gentry, Clutton-Brock, and Groves 1996; Groves 1995; Uerpmann 1993). Should domesticated animals be considered separate species from their wild ancestors? Are they merely subspecies? Do we need a separate category (forma) Should the same taxonomic criteria apply, for example, to dogs, which when feral no longer revert to wild type as most domestic animals do, and to reindeer, which are little different from the wild form? What of pigs, whose domestic form is visually quite different from wild boar, but which easily revert to the wild form? As an archaeologist, how do I refer to early domestic animals, whose bones are indistinguishable from their wild ancestors yet were herded in a domesticatory relationship and whose descendents will demonstrate physical changes? Domestication poses challenges to taxonomy that anticipate those of genetic engineering.

Biological taxonomy (folk or Linnaean) has long been used as an analogy to kinship in a variety of ways. The totemic use of plant and animal taxa to classify human groups is a widespread and no doubt ancient example. In a classic article, Leach (1964) famously equates animal edibility on the basis of a classification of human–animal relationships somewhat more complex than wild–domestic with human kinship categories and incest and marriage rules. Thus, pets are like siblings and taboo to eat just as siblings are taboo for sexual relations, and so on. It is not only their proximity that makes pets taboo, though. By becoming virtual family members, they take on quasi-human status and blur human–animal boundaries, so that eating them feels like cannibalism (Fiddes 1991: 133; Shell 1986). Kinship is all about boundaries, both fixing them and crossing them (Franklin and McKinnon 2001a: 19). Not only pets but all domestic animals complicate the boundaries between humans and animals, nature and culture.

**Intimacy**

The varying degrees of intimacy with animals that are created by domestication pose problems that are solved by mechanisms familiar from kinship systems. I have already alluded to pets (not necessarily domesticated by many definitions because this is essentially a relationship between individual humans and animals that may not lead to genetic isolation), which become virtual humans. Herded animals are not quite so close, but more in the human sphere than are wild animals. Leach (1964) equates them to first cousins and clan sisters: kin with whom marriage is usually prohibited, but extramarital sex may be tolerated. By analogy, he suggests that these animals are edible only if immature or castrated, whereas wild animals (equated to neighbors, friends, enemies, and the pool of potential spouses) can be eaten as intact adults. I am inclined to interpret castration and the consumption of young animals as related to the practical exigencies of herding and the market. However, one could argue that people often overcome the guilt of slaughtering and eating animals they have raised through classifying them as not only less than human, but inferior to their wild counterparts.

Another way of deflecting guilt is to frame slaughter as sacrifice. Prior to sacrifice, the animal is often taunted and tormented, to distance it from its human companions emotionally and symbolically (Serpell 1986: 148–149). This tactic bears a striking resemblance to the joking relationships that mark potentially difficult relationships. Such relationships are affinal, involving the crossing of boundaries just as does domestication.

Care, in both the emotional and the practical sense, is an essential part of both kin relations and animal husbandry. Borneman (1997) proposes foregrounding care and caring as a central aspect of kin relations. Clark (this volume) proposes a similar approach to animal domestication.

**Power and Property**

In addition to classification, “kinship is also utilized to articulate the possibilities for social relations of equality, hierarchy, amity, ambivalence, and violence” (Franklin and McKinnon 2001a: 15). Kinship relations
define lines of power within the household and beyond, and specify how property is transmitted. They shape gender and age hierarchies. Kinship systems can do this because “kinship is a technology for producing the material and semiotic effect of natural relationship, of shared kind” (Haraway 1997: 53).

For example, Delaney (1991, 2001) has shown how an understanding of reproduction as involving a male seed containing the essence of the child that is merely incubated in the female has profound implications for kinship and gender relations. Because only the father is truly related to the children, naturally a patrilineal system results. Fathers have property rights in their children, whereas mothers do not, as exemplified in the story of Abraham and Isaac. Women’s contribution is minimized and their position marginalized.

Animal domestication inevitably involves domination as well as caring. From the point of view of the animals, many researchers have noted that, with a few minor exceptions such as cats, domesticable animals are those that live in groups with hierarchical dominance systems, among other traits (Clutton-Brock 1994). Humans are able to control them by substituting for the dominant animal. From the human point of view, animals join particular households. In societies in which social relationships are largely conducted within a kinship idiom, it is, thus, highly likely that such animals will be given a status analogous to some kin category.

Livestock often play a key role as bridewealth, and this value may have encouraged the spread of herding (Russell 1998). Here, they are structurally equivalent to women in the kinship system, facilitating marriage and especially paternity. In some African societies in which most marriages are transacted with bridewealth, marriages are also possible without bridewealth, but the children then remain affiliated with their mother’s lineage whereas offspring of marriages in which bridewealth has been paid become members of their father’s lineage (Goody 1973).

Domestic animals have a complex relationship with power relations mediated through the kinship system. On the one hand, human domination of animals is most likely based in the first instance on prior unequal relations among humans within the household (Ingold 1987: 254). If, however, domestic animals take the position of children, they convert a temporary position of inferiority to a permanent one. On the other hand, domestic animals promote inequality among humans through the patron-client relations they enable (often enacted within the household through the idiom of kinship). Bridewealth, though, tends to be a leveling mechanism across households, so that livestock keep circulating. On a metaphorical level, the extension of kinship categories to animals probably helped enable what would otherwise have been unthinkable: human domination of animals. Foragers generally regard animals as their equals (Ingold 1994). And once domestic animals existed in their permanent subordinate position within the human sphere, it became easier to conceive of humans subordinated like animals. Algaze (2001) traces the emergence of the world’s first states in southern Mesopotamia to what he calls the Labor Revolution, based on applying human relations with livestock to subordinate humans.

Southern elites came to view and use fully encumbered laborers in the same exploitative way that human societies, over the immediately preceding millennia, had viewed and used the labor of domestic animals. This represents a new paradigm of the nature of social relations in human societies. … Scribal summaries detailing the composition of groups of foreign and native-born captives used as laborers describe them with age and sex categories identical to those used to describe state-owned cattle. … It would appear that the two classes of labor (captive “others” and domestic animals) were considered equivalent in the minds of Uruk scribes and in the eyes of the institutions that employed them. Early Near Eastern villagers domesticated plants and animals. Uruk urban institutions, in turn, domesticated humans. (Algaze 2001: 212)

Regulating Reproduction

Control of reproduction is both a particular focus of the power relations of kinship and central to most definitions of domestication. This can play out in many different ways, as there are many kinship systems and many styles of herding. Again, human kinship and domestic animals are often intertwined. Domestic animals may affect the form of human kinship. A recent study shows that African matrilineal societies are more likely to become patrilineal if they acquire cattle, and that once established, the combination of cattle and patrilineal is very stable, because bridewealth encourages the channeling of wealth through sons (Holden and Mace 2003). More speculatively, Tapper (1988) suggests that cattle herders may tend to be patrilineal to distinguish themselves from their herds, which are intrinsically matrilineal (calves stay with their mothers).

In recent centuries, the careful selective breeding of animals (Leach’s eugenic stage [this volume]) has led to the emergence of the pedigree
along with formal breeds. As Leach’s terminology implies, these notions of “good breeding” and pedigree have been applied to both humans and animals. It is primarily the high status animals (horses, dogs, and to some extent cattle and cats) that have pedigrees, to match those of their owners. Because the stakes are high, there is often some manipulation of pedigrees (false claims of noble ancestry) in both cases (Borneman 1988; Cassidy 2002).

Concluding Ruminations

Despite its difficulties, domestication has been a useful concept for anthropology and archaeology. The difference between appropriating wild resources held in common and ownership of land and animals by individuals or households is a crucial one with major implications for social relations. I have explored briefly a few of these with respect to animal domestication, but there are many more important topics that could be pursued, such as the implications of wealth in land and in animals. Moreover, domestication has recently been applied more widely to other aspects of human life. Some of these uses are tied to plant and animal domestication, and some are not. We can fruitfully consider more deeply the connections among these various domestications, material and metaphorical (and the two are not always easily separated).

In this chapter, I have examined some of the intersections between domestication and another of anthropology’s problematic concepts: kinship. I have suggested, on the one hand, that the two concepts encounter similar difficulties, and, on the other hand, that domestication can be approached as a form of kin relation. I now consider each of these propositions a bit further.

Kinship and domestication share some characteristics. Both involve systems of classification, which are in turn tied to issues of power and of affect. Both are transacted primarily in the household sphere broadly construed (the *domus*). Just as human social relations are mediated by kinship structures, so are they negotiated through domestic animals (through exchange of animals, patron–client relations based on loans of livestock, etc.). The two intersect in bridewealth, which is classically transacted mainly with livestock. Both kinship and domestication are inherently simultaneously biological and social. This makes them complicated to study, but the struggle to come to grips with how these aspects interact and shape each other (not one determining the other) is salutary. Perhaps it can even help us to a fuller understanding of both biology and culture.

Strathern (1992a) and Franklin (2003) have suggested that kinship involves not only relationships among people but the creation of what they call “merographic connections” between parts of different spheres, such as biology and society. Certainly domestication also creates these connections, for instance between nature and culture through the bodies of domestic animals. Exploring the nature of these connections will bring us to richer understandings of both kinship and domestication.

However, I am not suggesting that kinship and domestication can be treated as equivalent or fully comparable. Kinship systems involve more complex classification systems than does domestication per se. Kinship can perhaps be summarized as being about procreation and the regulation of interpersonal relations. Domestication is about the transformation of animals both bodily and socially.

Although I think it may be useful to approach animal domestication as a form of kin relation, I would not argue that this is the only way to think of it. In terms of human relations, it seems to me that the most crucial thing about animal domestication is that “wild” animals are converted to property. However, domestication, as its etymological roots imply, also involves bringing animals into the household. Perhaps the transspecies “family” thus created foreshadows the complicated kin (and taxonomic) relations engendered by transgenic creatures. Moreover, animal domestication disrupts the animals’ own “kin relations.” Tani (1996) stresses that herding depends on practices that disrupt the vertical bond between mother and offspring, and substitute a horizontal bond among same-age animals to form a cohesive herd. Tani also notes that this, in turn, depends on the prior establishment of intimacy between the human herder and the herd.

Kinship may be a useful model for thinking about domestication in another way. It has long been recognized that kinship relations serve many simultaneous purposes that, although sometimes contradictory, are not mutually exclusive. Kinship is an idiom that can be deployed to many ends. The same is true of human–animal relationships, and perhaps this can help us to move beyond the simple wild–domestic distinction that causes us such difficulty. “We do not feel forced in the social world—for example in the field of our relations with kin—to choose between either exploiting others for personal profit or avoiding all direct contact. Yet in the context of relations with animals, this is precisely the choice that is forced on us by the conventional dichotomy between wildness and domestication” (Ingold 1994: 11–12).

Bridewealth is perhaps the most obvious, but certainly not the only place where kinship and animal domestication interact. It has usually
been analyzed in terms of “classic” kinship studies. How can we rethink bridewealth in light of the “new” kinship theory? What are the effects of bringing animals into the family—on the animals, the kinship system, and the other members of the household?

The same might be asked of domestic animals more generally. For the most part, the incorporation of domestic animals into human societies that had previously only interacted with “wild” animals must be approached archaeologically. Here, we must expand our studies of animal domestication to include not only the animal bones themselves but the archaeological and social contexts in which they are embedded. I suspect that such studies will reveal not a single process of animal domestication, but multiple kinds of domestication. Some may be more coevolutionary, some more consciously directed to property or provision of meat for diet or sacrifice, and some more concerned with controlling the symbolic power of the animal.

In general, I would propose that we can best bring together the varied work on domestication in anthropology and other disciplines by focusing on domesticatory practices. Rather than worrying whether a particular case “counts” as domestication, we can examine the specific practices used to create domestication or wildness (sometimes simultaneously, as seen in several of the articles in this volume). This focus on practices will help to elucidate the various domestications: in what specific ways are they similar or different? In this way we can build a nuanced understanding of the domesticatory process grounded in local and particular histories. We can link the biological and the social, and the various scales of analysis evident in the studies in this volume.

We may find that some domesticatory practices do not lead to animal domestication in either the biological or the social sense. This is one way to understand the “wildlife farms” analyzed by Suzuki (this volume). Likewise, Fuentes (this volume) shows that feeding temple monkeys has biological and social effects, but it is not clear that it will ever lead to morphological change in the monkeys nor to anyone owning them.

This approach also helps to resolve questions of intentionality. Both intentional and unintentional practices can and often do have unintended consequences. Thus, for instance, intentional herding practices create the conditions that produce unintended alterations in animal and human bodies and behavior (Leach this volume; Zohary, Tchernov, and Horwitz 1998). Moreover, the specific herding practices will affect what changes result, even if these are not the goals of the practices. Or the alteration of the environment through architectural practices intended to provide shelter, privacy, storage, and so on unintentionally create new niches for human–animal interaction that may lead to animal domestication under some definitions, and certainly bodily and behavioral changes (Wilson, Fuentes in this volume).

Elucidating the practices of “wilding” may be an especially useful contribution that anthropology can make to the larger world, as seen in several of the articles in this volume. Lawrence’s (1982) examination of rodeo and Morales Muñiz and Morales Muñiz’s (1995) of the Spanish bullfight are other excellent studies along these lines. On a more applied level, naïve beliefs about wildness lead to poor wildlife management decisions. Here both zooarchaeological studies that clarify the actual history of “wild” animals (e.g., Lauwerier and Plug 2003; Lyman 1996; Reitz 2004) and critical studies of the conceptualization of wildness can be most salutary. Although this is related to the more general literature on the construction of nature, I propose a particular focus on (1) the creation of the wild in the midst of the domestic and in highly structured environments (e.g., Mullin this volume), and (2) the paradoxical use of the very techniques of domestication to produce the wild (e.g., Morales Muñiz and Morales Muñiz 1995).

Domestication is a concept with a long history. Its increasing application to new contexts shows that it retains its power as a way to think about a variety of transformations in human and human–animal or human–plant relations. Rather than trying to choose among ways to define domestication, or to recognize it, we will understand it better by elucidating its practices.

Let us consider the domesticatory practices involved in the human and lamb burial at Çatalhöyük described earlier. We archaeologists immediately wondered whether the lamb was morphologically domestic, a member of the numerous flocks that were tended around the site. This seemed important because Çatalhöyük has yielded a great deal of animal imagery, nearly all of it depicting wild animals. Yet most of the animal remains at the site are of domestic sheep, the main meat source. This lamb was too young to be sure whether it was born into the sphere of daily life (domesticity) or the wild as the inhabitants of Çatalhöyük understood it. However, we can see other domesticatory practices at work. The lamb was quite literally brought into the domestic sphere, buried as humans are beneath a house floor. It was placed on the construction of nature, I propose a particular focus on (1) the creation of the wild in the midst of the domestic and in highly structured environments (e.g., Mullin this volume), and (2) the paradoxical use of the very techniques of domestication to produce the wild (e.g., Morales Muñiz and Morales Muñiz 1995).

Domestication is a concept with a long history. Its increasing application to new contexts shows that it retains its power as a way to think about a variety of transformations in human and human–animal or human–plant relations. Rather than trying to choose among ways to define domestication, or to recognize it, we will understand it better by elucidating its practices.

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avoided by the subsequent burials, suggests that this kinship was not uncontested. Whatever the nature of the relationship between the man and the lamb, it was a relationship between individuals that crosscut, perhaps uncomfortably, the relations between people and animals, wild and domestic, at Çatalhöyük more generally. The act of burial in itself naturalizes this relationship, just as Haraway (1997) argues that kinship naturalizes relationships, and is itself a domesticatory practice. This small example serves to illustrate how much more we can learn by exploring domesticatory practices than simply by asking the question: Is this domestication?

Notes

This article has benefited immensely from the input of all the participants in the “Where the Wild Things Are Now” symposium. I am grateful to each of them and especially to the organizers, Molly Mullin and Rebecca Cassidy, and to the Wenner-Gren Foundation and its staff that made it all possible. I would also like to thank my colleague, Annelise Riles, who first pointed out to me the similarities between domestication and kinship.

References


Russell, Nerissa, and Bleda S. Düring, in press. Worthy is the lamb: A double burial at Neolithic Çatalhöyük. Paléorient.


It hardly needs to be said that this is not a good time to view the fate of animal domestication with great hope or satisfaction. Although companion species may enjoy certain privileges, especially when their human handlers live amidst relative abundance, those animals that are valued for their flesh or other parts tend to be denied such creature comforts. Market-driven pressures to minimize inputs and maximize outputs of animal bodies have led to increasingly industrialized agricultural practices in which technologies of control and modification are applied to ever-more-intimate aspects of biological being. Factory farming, doses of growth hormones and antibiotics, genetic modification: this is the price animal domesticates pay for our savings at the supermarket checkout. As philosopher Jacques Derrida claims, “no one can deny the unprecedented proportions of this subjection of the animal. ... Everyone knows what the production, breeding, transport, and slaughter of these animals has become” (2002: 394).

If such forms of violence or violation are difficult to stomach when this processing of animal bodies proceeds according to plan, there is worse to behold when the system breaks down. With what appears to be growing regularity, diseases are breaking out amongst farmed animals. Foot and mouth disease in the United Kingdom, France, Brazil and much of East Asia; avian influenza in numerous outbreaks over several continents: each new epidemic accompanied by the extermination of the infected or at-risk animal population. Ending in mass burnings and anonymous burials, these events are an unpleasant reminder how far “domestication” has strayed from its association with the cozy hearth and sheltering enclosures of the domus.