

Zoomorphism

The word *zoomorphism* derives from the Greek ζῶον (*zōon*), meaning "animal", and μορφή (*morphē*), meaning "shape" or "form". It can mean:

- Art that imagines humans as non-human animals^[1]
- Art that portrays one species of animal like another species of animal
- Art that creates patterns using animal imagery, or animal style
- Deities depicted in animal form, such as exist in ancient Egyptian religion^[2]
- Therianthropy: the ability to shapeshift into animal form^[3]
- Attributing animal form or other animal characteristics to anything other than an animal; similar to but broader than anthropomorphism
- The tendency of viewing human behaviour in terms of the behaviour of animals, contrary to anthropomorphism, which views animal or non-animal behaviour in human terms



Zoomorphic text

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Zoomorphic representation in religion

- The appearance of the Holy Spirit like a dove in the New Testament (The Gospel According to Luke 3: 22), "and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove..."
- Mark the Evangelist as a lion in later Christian iconography.
- The Egyptian gods were often depicted as zoomorphic or as hybrid
- The names of the two most prominent Hebrew Bible female prophets - Deborah and Huldah - were in the Babylonian Talmud interpreted in zoomorphic terms as "wasp" and "weasel."^[4]

Zoomorphic language for things, ideas

- A literary phrase such as "The roar of the ocean".
- Sin lurking like a beast waiting to devour Cain in Genesis.^[5]

Humanity portrayed in evolutionary context

Desmond Morris in The Naked Ape and The Human Zoo, Robert Ardrey in African Genesis and Konrad Lorenz in On Aggression all wrote from a sociobiological perspective. They viewed the human species as an animal, subject to the evolutionary law of Survival of the fittest through adaptation to the biophysical environment.^[6]

Other

- Fenrisulfr, a wolf in Norse mythology
- Airavata, the king god of elephants in Indian mythology.
- Paw feet bathtub, with feet in the shape of a lion's paws
- The sphinx from the "Oedipus Rex" by Sophocles
- Elephantine Colossus, a hotel
- In The Flintstones and Night at the Museum, the dinosaurs Dino and "Rexy" behave and vocalize like dogs.
- Aslan in The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe is a lion that is the king of Narnia
- Robotic pets, like AIBO, modeled on dogs or other animals
- In 2010 city planners from Southern Sudan, which would become independent a year later, unveiled plans for the city center of its capital, Juba, to be built in the shape of a rhinoceros. The city of Wau was to be transformed in the shape of a giraffe.^[7]

See also

- Amity-enmity complex

References

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 2. Simson R Najovits, *Egypt, Trunk of the Tree: A Modern Survey of an Ancient Land*, Algora Publishing, 2004, p 279. [ISBN 0-87586-201-2](#)
 3. Gerina Dunwich, *Wicca A to Z: A Modern Witch's Encyclopedia*, Kensington Pub Corp, 1998, p 155. [ISBN 0-8065-1930-4](#)
 4. Blaženka Scheuer; Animal Names for Hebrew Bible Female Prophets, *Literature and Theology*, Volume 31, Issue 4, 1 December 2017, Pages 455–471, <https://doi.org/10.1093/litthe/frx032>
 5. *Synthesis: bulletin du Comité national de littérature comparée / Comitetul Național pentru Literatură Comparată, Institutul de Istorie și Teorie Literară "G. Călinescu."* - 2002 "Sin is personified as (an animal?) which "crouches" at the door of Cain (Gen 4:7). As [Gerhard von Rad](#) (Genesis, 105) remarks, 'The comparison of sin with a beast of prey lying before the door is strange, as is the purely decorative use "
 6. [William Ickes](#), *Compatible and Incompatible Relationships*, Springer Verlag, 1985, p.26
 7. Howden, Daniel (2010-08-19). "Turn left at the horn: 'Rhino City' revealed - Daniel Howden, "9 August 2010". *The Independent*" (<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/africa/turn-left-at-the-horn-rhino-city-revealed-2056321.html>). Independent.co.uk. Retrieved 2014-03-14.
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