

THE TRANSNATIONAL EXPERIENCE OF A CATALAN NATIONALIST: PERE ROSSELL I VILAR AND THE REFORM OF THE BARCELONA ZOO (1918-1921)

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Abstract: Pere M. Rossell i Vilar (1883-1933), a veterinarian and later politician, is well known as a promoter of scientific animal husbandry. He applied his ideas of a «Catalan race» not only to livestock (cattle and pork) but also to human beings. Because of his insistence on «racial purity», historians called him a «modern racist». Much less known is his important role in the attempts to reform the Barcelona Zoo between 1918 and 1932. In this context, in 1919 and 1921, Rossell produced two voluminous memoranda that have not yet been studied. In these memoirs, he tried to present the state-of-the-art in zoo management by presenting a wealth of data on European and North American zoos. They dealt with issues such as the construction of animal houses, animal diseases, economic parameters, and zoo personnel. The first memorandum was to a large part based on reports published by the French zoo reformer Gustave Loisel. The second one was the fruit of Rossell's zoo voyage through Western and Central Europe in the summer of 1920. Rossell was deeply influenced by the «zoo revolution» of Carl Hagenbeck and his concept of enclosures without visible bars or fences put into practice in the «animal paradise» of Stellingen outside Hamburg. This article will show how both Rossell's reading of Loisel and his enthusiasm for Hagenbeck, drove the reform discussion in Barcelona in the 1920s and beyond. It will thus highlight the relevance of transurban networks of zoos as well as the ongoing debate about the goal of the zoo, torn between scientific research, acclimatization, and site of mass culture. Through constant communication, cooperation but also competition, zoos co-evolved. Finally, the article will ask how Rossell's Catalan nationalism and biological racism coexisted with his transnational vision of a modern zoo.

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Key words: *zoological gardens, zoo reform, transnational networks, Hagenbeck, nationalism, racism*

Resum: *Pere M. Rossell i Vilar (1883-1933), veterinari i al final de la seva vida polític, és molt conegut com a impulsor de la ramaderia científica. Va aplicar les seves idees d'una «raça catalana» no només al bestiar (boví i porcí) sinó també a l'ésser humà. A causa de la seva insistència en la «puresa racial», els historiadors el van qualificar de «racista modern». Molt menys conegut és el seu paper important en els intents de reforma del Zoo de Barcelona entre 1918 i 1932. En aquest context, el 1919 i el 1921, Rossell va elaborar dos voluminosos memòries que encara no s'han estudiat. En aquestes memòries va intentar presentar l'estat de la qüestió en la gestió de zoològics presentant una gran quantitat de dades dels zooks europeus i nord-americans. Van tractar temes com la construcció de cases d'animals, les malalties dels animals, els paràmetres econòmics i el personal del zoològic. El primer memoràndum es basava en gran part en informes publicats pel reformador francès del zoo Gustave Loisel. El segon va ser fruit del viatge de Rossell al zoo per l'Europa occidental i central l'estiu de 1920. Rossell va estar profundament influenciat per la «revolució del zoològic» de Carl Hagenbeck i el seu concepte de tancaments sense barres ni tanques visibles posat en pràctica en el «paradís animal» de Stellingen a les afores d'Hamburg. Aquest article mostrarà com ambdues, la lectura de Loisel de Rossell i el seu entusiasme per Hagenbeck, van impulsar la discussió sobre la reforma a Barcelona dels anys vint i més enllà. Així, es posarà en relleu la rellevància de les xarxes transurbanes de zoològics, així com el debat en curs sobre l'objectiu del zoo, dividit entre la recerca científica, l'aclimatació i la cultura de masses. A través de la comunicació constant, la cooperació, però també la competició, els zooks van evolucionar conjuntament. Finalment, l'article preguntarà com van conviure el nacionalisme català i el racisme biològic de Rossell amb la seva visió transnacional d'un zoològic modern.*

Paraules clau: *jardins zoològics, reforma dels zoològics, xarxes transnacionals, Hagenbeck, nacionalisme, racisme*

1. Looking for a new director

On April 8, 1918, the director of the Barcelona Zoo Francesc Darder passed away. He had been running the zoo since its foundation in 1892. Administratively the Zoo formed part of Barcelona's natural history museum, the Museu Martorell, a municipal institution. The Junta de Ciències Naturals (from here on Junta) was the board that governed these institutions situated in the Parc de la Ciutadella close to the city centre. It was their task to search for a new director. In December 1918, the position was advertised in the local newspapers (AH-MCNB id1485: 38-40; e.g., *La Vanguardia*, 18.12.1918: 7). Apart from Spanish, the applicants had to speak Catalan and one foreign language. Furthermore, they had to demonstrate their «expertise in zoology and in the organisation and operation of zoological

parks».¹ In order to do so, they were asked to submit «a report in which they explain their knowledge of the national and foreign Zoological Parks they have visited and the organisation that would be most convenient for the one in Barcelona».² The new director should be a person up-to-date with the newest developments in zoo management, in particular internationally.

The Junta received three applications for the vacant position. Apart from the veterinarian Ricardo González Marco from Lleida there were two serious contenders. One was Francesc Darder's son Jeroni (or Geroni) Darder i Rodés (1876-1938), who had been named the interim director after his father's demise. The other applicant was the veterinarian Pere M. Rossell i Vilar (1883-1933), the protagonist of this article. In the following, we will focus on Rossell's initiatives to gather and synthesize information about foreign zoos in response to the demands of the Junta. This article will describe and analyse two virtually unknown sources (see Artis, 1994: 70, for a brief mention of the second one). First, Rossell's memorandum with which he applied for the directorship in 1919. This memorandum, entitled «Els Jardins Zoològics estrangers i el Parc de Barcelona» («The Foreign Zoos and the Barcelona Park») was in its international part based on his reading of the French zoo traveller Gustave Loisel (quoted as Rossell, 1919). Less than two years later, Rossell redacted a second memorandum entitled «Jardins zoològics d'Europa. Memòria del viatge a l'estranger» (Europe's Zoological Gardens. Memorandum of a journey abroad). It was based on his extensive zoo journey on behalf of the Junta in the summer and early autumn of 1920, a first-hand description of 23 Western and Central European zoos (quoted as Rossell, 1921). This time Carl Hagenbeck's «zoo revolution», enclosures «without fences», was the central reference point for Rossell's discourse on how to reform the Barcelona Zoo.

This article will start off with a brief summary of the original orientation of the Barcelona Zoo under Francesc Darder. It will then introduce the person of Pere M. Rossell i Vilar. Nowadays he is nearly exclusively known for his deeply racist views. We need to contextualize his thinking within the rise of Catalan nationalism in the first third of the twentieth century. The main part of the article will be dedicated to the analysis of the two memoranda, contrasting the different ways he gathered information. How was his vision of a modern zoo nurtured by his readings and travelling, by Loisel, Hagenbeck and the transurban network of zoos? In its conclusion, the article will ask how Rossell's nationalist and racist views could co-exist with his «internationalism» when it came to matters of zoo reform. And in what way did these attempts to gather information on foreign zoo models shape the further development of the Barcelona Zoo?

1. All translations of non-English quotes by the author. «sus conocimientos en Zoología y en la organización y régimen de Parques Zoológicos».

2. «una memoria en la que expongan sus conocimientos acerca de los Parques Zoológicos nacionales y extranjeros que hayan visitado y la organización que sería más conveniente para el de Barcelona».

This article will mostly use the terms transurban and transnational rather than interurban and international. Building on concepts from urban history, it emphasizes the dynamic, mutual and multidirectional exchanges *between* urban centres in Europe and beyond. Around 1900 it was already a well-probed method for cities to overcome (what they perceived as) their own backwardness by tapping into transurban networks. With the help of specially appointed commissions, they gathered best practice models with respect to urban infrastructure and public health (Hietala, 1987; Ewen, 2015: ch. 6; Gantner et al., 2020). «European cities are seen as nodes in communication networks that created a transurban public sphere» (Møller Jørgensen, 2017: 558). This exchange of «applied» urban knowledge was pursued with respect to virtually all features considered essential for a modern city: public transport, sewage systems, electricity supply or institutions such as museums, parks and zoos. The historiography on transurban questions whether the emerging nation-state of the nineteenth century should be the main frame of historical analysis (Müller & Torp, 2009: 614). The well-documented transnational and in particular transurban connections offer a complementary perspective (Møller Jørgensen, 2017: 558).

2. Acclimatization: Darder's zoo model

The European Zoo is a child of the nineteenth century. While there was only a handful of zoological gardens in the first half of the century (Paris, founded in 1793, London 1828, Amsterdam 1839, Antwerp 1843, Berlin 1844, being the most important ones) their number increased significantly in the second half, also outside Europe. From early on, zoos were very much aware of one another across national borders, bound together by the serious challenges they faced, not least in keeping the exhibited animals alive. They exchanged information through personal contacts, journeys and publications. One may say that they co-evolved. Van Reybrouck (2005: 232) put it more bluntly: «There is no modern zoo that was not copied from another.»

Yet circumstances and objectives differed from zoo to zoo. There was not one model they would all try to emulate. Which model did the Barcelona Zoo follow? The initial name of the zoo, inaugurated in September 1892, was «Parque zoológico de aclimatación y naturalización». This clue points to the Jardin d'Acclimatation, founded by Isidore Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire (1805-1861) in Paris in 1860, considered the spearhead of the French acclimatization movement. Its objective was to introduce useful species to strengthen the national economy through the production of wool, meats, feathers and other animal products.

The Spanish acclimatization movement followed very closely the steps of the French one led by Mariano de la Paz Graells (1809-1898) (Aragón, 2005). According to historians, the acclimatization movement in France and elsewhere had been in decline since around 1870 (Anderson, 1992: 151-153; Osborn, 1994: 125-127). Yet it still had its adepts such as the Catalan banker Lluís Martí-Codolar (1843-1915) who ran his private menagerie called La Granja Vella outside Barcelona from 1865. Starting in the early 1870s, Martí-

Codolar employed none other than Francesc Darder as an animal expert. Darder travelled numerous times to Paris, the first time probably already in 1872 and then in particular in the 1880s in order to purchase animals for the Granja Vella (see, e.g., Darder, 1880). These journeys brought him into touch with Albert Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire (1835-1919), son of Isidore Geoffroy and then director of the Jardin d'Acclimatation.

In 1892 Martí-Codolar, who had run into financial difficulties, sold his collection of animals to the City of Barcelona, and his roughly 160 animals formed the nucleus of the new municipal zoo, with Darder becoming its director. If Darder had any model at all – he did not say so explicitly – it would have been the Jardin d'Acclimatation in Paris. In the quarter of a century of Darder's directorship, the Barcelona Zoo was dedicated to the acclimatization of economically useful animals, at least programmatically. This included breeding programs on poultry and later on freshwater fish among other initiatives (Valls, 2019: ch. 5 and Valls, this dossier). This clashed with the expectations of the public which Darder did not pay much attention to as biologist Ramón Turró Darder (1918) (1854-1926) wrote in the obituary of his cousin: «People wanted strange, long-necked and brightly painted birds, wild ravens and eagles with hard beaks and claws of prey, lions, tigers and panthers that roared night and day.»³

3. Catalanist, racist, zoo-director - Rossell i Vilar

Pere M. Rossell i Vilar (1918a) also published an obituary praising Darder as a selfless patriot who had always worked for the common good. He belonged to the «generation of "88"» that had pulled off the Universal Exhibition in Barcelona in 1888. Rossell even alluded to the «racial qualities» of Darder of being of good old Catalan stock. «A race is always the same throughout the centuries.»⁴

In his obituary, Rossell mentioned all of Darder's zootechnical activities. He also picked up the question of the zoo model. «The combination of both factors, ornamental and useful, may be said to have constituted Mr. Darder's ideal, which for many years he put into practice.»⁵ Rossell defended Darder suggesting that he had not neglected the «entertaining» mission of the zoo, as Ramón Turró had observed in his obituary. Rossell might not have wanted to criticize the person he was singing the praises of. He did acknowledge though that «[f]or various reasons, the zoological collection has been somewhat declining in recent years.»⁶ This was certainly the general perception around the time of Darder's

3. «La gent volia aus estranyes, dell coll llarg y molt pintades, corbs feréstecs i àligues de bec dur i ungles de presa, lleons, tigres i panteres que bramulessin nit i dia.»

4. «Una raza es siempre la misma á través los siglos.»

5. «La reunión de ambos factores, ornamental y útil, puede decirse que constituyó el ideal del señor Darder, el cual durante muchos años lo tradujo prácticamente.»

6. «[p]or causas diversas, la Colección zoológica en estos últimos años se muestra algo decaída.»

death (even going back a few years) and was reflected in the job advertisement of the Junta mentioned at the beginning. The Barcelona Zoo, which mainly consisted of a uniform row of bleak cages and unadorned enclosures was in dire need of reform. In a subsequent article published in June 1918, Rossell (1918b, 554) was more explicit and named «two major shortcomings: first, too few specimens and second, defective facilities».⁷ Yet what kind of zoo did Rossell envisage himself?



Fig. 1 Between Catalan nationalism and Transurban zoo reform: Pere M. Rossell i Vilar (around 1916)
Creative Commons/Courtesy Mercè Rossell i Rosal

Before we turn to his two memoranda, we shall briefly sketch his career up to this moment as well as contextualize his thinking in the Catalan context of his time. Artís i Mercadet (1994; 1995) has provided the most comprehensive treatment of Rossell. A short but precise biographical outline is provided by Palomas i Moncholí (no year), rather hagiographic is Corominas (1990). Rossell, a native of Olot, was a veterinarian by training, just like Darder. Although Rossell was over 30 years Darder's junior, their zootechnical agendas were quite similar. At least in scientific terms, they moved during the 1910s in similar circles. In 1913, Rossell became a professor at the recently established Escola Superior d'Agricultura de Barcelona (on the Escola see Artís, 1994) where Darder taught as well.

Rossell had always been a convinced Catalan nationalist. The establishment of the Mancomunitat de Catalunya in April 1914 was thus a watershed for him as he could now at-

7. «dos defectes capitals: primer, pobresa de exemplars i segon, instal·lacions defectuoses».

tempt to fuse his zootechnical and political agenda (Rossell, 1930b: 4; Bofill, 1930: 34). The Mancomunitat, «unifying» the historical 4 provinces in an administrative structure revindicated the political unity and cultural identity of Catalonia. Trying to seize the moment, Darder, Ramón Turró and Rossell proposed in 1914 the establishment of a Veterinary School in Catalonia (Turró, 1914; Bofill, 1930: 34; Artis, 1995: 1092; Pumarola Batlle, 2002). In fact, all three lobbied throughout their careers to fill this «gap» albeit without success (for Darder see already *La Dinastia*, 8.5.1889: 2). From 1917 to 1924 Rossell was the «Cap de serveis de ramaderia» («head of livestock services») of the Mancomunitat. The Coup d'état of Primo de Rivera in September 1923 and the eventual dismantling of the Mancomunitat in 1925 marked the next reverse watershed in Rossell's career, also with respect to the stunted reform of the Barcelona Zoo as we will see later on.

The bulk of Rossell's publications in this period concerns the keeping and improving (through breeding) of livestock. His intended audience was the Catalan farmer who in his view was much in need of «scientific advice» (Rossell, 1918c; Artis, 1995: 1097). He was instrumental in organizing a large number of prize competitions among Catalan breeders. Both Rossell and Darder were concerned with recuperating «ancient» Catalan races (that means their «purity») of livestock breeds; cattle, pork, donkeys and horses in the case of Rossell (Rossell, 1930b; Corominas, 1990: 55; Artis, 1995: 1099-1102) and primarily poultry (chicken) in the case of Darder (Darder, 1892; Orozco, 1985: 155).

Despite their similar scientific mindsets (pursuing applied natural history and «belief» in ancient animal races), there is one major difference. Ideologically Darder is not easy to place because he never declared himself. He belonged to the bourgeois and conservative milieu of Barcelona but at least explicitly, he neither sided with the Catholic conservative naturalists (Aragon 2012; Valls 2015) nor with the Catalanists (politically on the rise since 1905). It is telling that nearly all of Darder's writings were in Spanish while Rossell very consciously published nearly exclusively in Catalan (one of the few exceptions being his obituary for Darder because it was for the conservative newspaper *La Vanguardia*). Rossell's attempts to identify «ancient» (that is to say autochthonous) Catalan livestock breeds had a clear political dimension. His goal was to establish a direct relationship between the Catalan people and the domesticated species with which they «cohabited» Catalonia since pre-historic times (Rossell, 1930b: 5; for a different way of fusing discussions about race in both humans and hogs in the United States at the time see Rosenberg, 2016). His methodology to track down these «ancient» species was eclectic: he used anatomy (animal remains, living specimens), archaeology and even art history (the visual representation of horses in the Middle Ages but also prehistoric cave paintings) to identify specific «original» traces of these domestic animals. (Rossell, 1930b; Artis, 1994: 1098-1101)

His main reference in prehistory was the renowned Catalan archaeologist Pere Bosch i Gimpera (1891-1974) (Rossell, 1930b: 4-7). Bosch i Gimpera and other researchers attempted to build the Catalan nation through cutting-edge research in linguistics, archaeol-

ogy, history and related fields. The crucial point here is that in the early twentieth century, Catalan scholars were increasingly connected internationally. Bosch i Gimpera was trained in Germany and thus equipped with the methodological tools to argue in favour of the uniqueness of the Catalan people (Díaz-Andreu, 2006: 302). Architect and art historian Josep Puig i Cadafalch (1867-1956), also a staunch Catalanist, reached out to Romanian colleagues in the 1920s, producing national history transnationally (Mallart, 2020: 230). This was the intellectual milieu from the 1910s until the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War in which Rossell operated and thought to do «his part» of nation-building by identifying ancient livestock breeds. It is certainly no coincidence that all three scholars mentioned here held political offices at some stage in their careers. Puig i Cadafalch was the second president of the Mancomunitat (1917-1923). In 1919 he named Rossell «director dels Serveis de Patologia Animal i de l'Ensenyament Agrícola Postal» (Pons, 1992: 104). Bosch i Gimpera and Rossell (see below) joined politics at the beginning of the Second Republic (1931-1939).

As a historical actor, Rossell does not have the same stature as Bosch i Gimpera or Puig i Cadafalch. Nevertheless, he is a relatively well-known figure in historiography for his racial ideas. These ideas were most clearly spelt out in his opus magnum *La Raça* (1930). He claimed the existence of an ancient «Catalan race» and warned against «miscegenation» with other «races», such as the «Castilian one» that would lead to a loss of «culture» and mental aberrations (Artis, 1995: 1103-1106; Ealham, 2010: 14). Imperialism (positively connotated), continuous struggle between people, dominating and dominated «races», and the need to «purify races» («depuració») were Rossell's key concepts. Historians such as Ucelay-Da Cal have explicitly linked his zootechnical and political thinking. Rossell «transferred his eagerness to classify breeding animals to people with his scandalous book *La Raça*». Ucelay-Da Cal describes him as «the first uninhibited (and modern) racist ... with more or less fascist views, very Germanic in terms of ethnicity» (2018: 151-152; also see Ealham, 2010: 56; Roig, 2016: 75).⁸

After Jeroni Darder retired as director of the Barcelona Zoo in March 1931, Rossell succeeded him. The advent of the Second Republic in April of 1931 changed the political panorama fundamentally. In the elections of November 1932, he was elected a member of the «Parlament de Catalunya» and resigned as director of the zoo. To modern eyes, Rossell's political convictions might seem contradictory. On the one hand, he represented a left-wing, republican and anti-monarchic party, the Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya (ERC). On the other hand, his racist, xenophobic and eugenicist arguments undergirded his ultra-nationalist stance. Due to his extreme views, Rossell, the «notorious racist» (Ealham, 2010: 56), might have been politically an isolated figure. According to Ucelay-Da Cal,

8. «trasladó su afán por tipificar animales de crianza hacia las personas con su libro-escándalo *La Raça*» «el primer racista desinhibido (y moderno) ... con opiniones más o menos fascistas, muy germánicas en cuanto a lo étnico.»

he «never led anyone, not even a circle of disciples, nor did he represent anything beyond his own opinion» (2018: 152).⁹

Still, as we have seen, Rossell belonged to the milieu of Catalan nationalism, even if his crude biologist views situated him at the margins of this movement. Seen from a broader European context, his ideological «mix» was no exception. *La Raça* drew on recent research (mainly from French authors) in hereditary biology, physical (racial) anthropology and prehistory. As historians have shown (Paul, 1984; Lucassen, 2010), socialist thinking and racial and eugenic ideas were quite compatible with one another in the first third of the twentieth century.

To summarize: although certainly not a major political figure, Rossell is rather well known, in particular for his racist and nationalist convictions. Yet his close and extended connection with the Barcelona Zoo is virtually unstudied. The fact that he was at the helm of this institution between 1919 and 1932 is usually only mentioned in passing (Artís i Mercadet, 1994: 69-73, following by and large Pons, 1992: 80-91). Already in the numerous obituaries that appeared after Rossell's premature death in July 1933, many of them quite extensive, his 13 years of employment at the zoo were hardly mentioned at all (no mention: *La Publicitat*, 1933; brief mention: *Salom* 1933; *La Veu del Vespre*, 1933). The politician and racial theorist Rossell commanded all the attention. His ideas of how to reform the Barcelona Zoo for the most part formulated in unpublished memoirs were of no public concern or simply not known. This article will focus on his attempts to insert the Barcelona Zoo (and himself) into the transurban network of zoos in order to provide a more complete picture of Pere M. Rossell i Vilar.

4. A flood of data: Rossell's first memorandum (1919)

Rossell's first zoo memorandum is a typewritten memorandum of over 200 pages, bound in red cloth. Its title «Els Jardins Zoològics estrangers i el Parc de Barcelona» explicitly puts the Barcelona Zoo in an international context, and thus responds to the requirement of the job advertisement for the directorship. In the following we shall focus in particular of the aspects of the memorandum that touch on this issue of the transnational context of zoos. The memorandum is divided into three parts and is preceded by a personal presentation of the applicant. The first part is a data-packed overview of foreign zoos (1919: 12-99). Part two designs an ideal vision the Barcelona Zoo (1919: 100-108) and part three describes the current state of Barcelona Zoo and how it could be reformed (1919: 109-191). At the end of the memorandum there is a short bibliography and 18 illustrations: plans and photos of exemplary animal houses from foreign zoos.

9. «nunca lideró a nadie, ni siquiera un círculo de discípulos, ni representó nada más allá de su propia opinión».

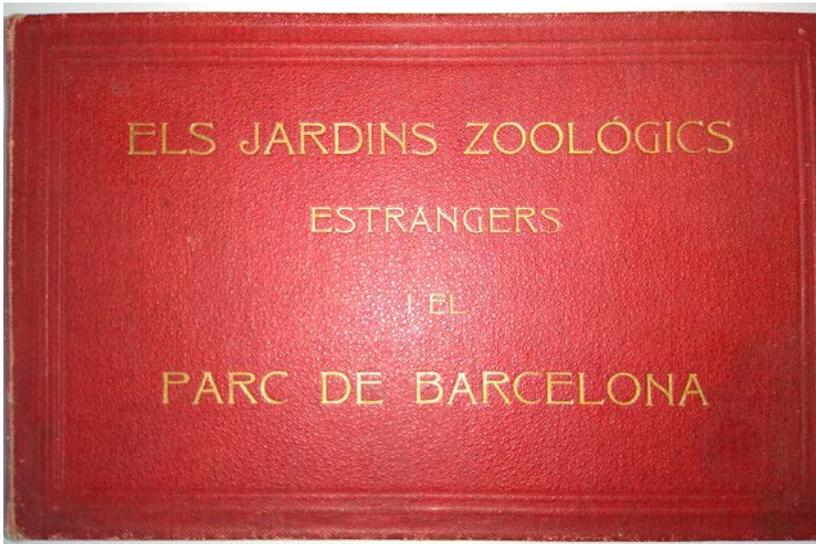


Fig. 2 Rossell's memoir of 1919 provided a large amount of information about foreign zoos. Arxiu del Zoo de Barcelona. Photo: Oliver Hochadel

So how did Rossell present himself to the Junta in order to convince them of his qualification for the directorship of the Barcelona Zoo? He started off by underlining his large professional experience in animal care: his training as a veterinarian, his work as a health inspector for livestock and his implication in «zootechnical» ventures aiming at «improving» livestock. He mentioned his membership in Catalan scientific societies, commissions he received from the Mancomunitat de Catalunya and his numerous publications in these fields. This included many articles in the agricultural sections of newspapers.

Rossell conceded that «he has never lived in zoological parks, but a strong sympathy has always led him to visit these establishments frequently, ... mainly to look for solutions to certain biological problems.» And admitted that «he has only visited the ones of Madrid, Paris, Basel and Mulhouse» (1919: 1).¹⁰ Yet, he continued, «he has tried to find out about the organization and operation of a certain number of foreign zoos» (1919: 7).¹¹ He provided a long list of 36 cities (and 38 zoos). Most of these zoos were European but Rossell also included three Canadian and six US zoos in his data.

The first part of the memorandum provided a mass of mostly quantitative data of these 38 zoos. Rossell highlighted the considerable differences between zoos as regards their basic

10. «no ha conviscut jamai en Parcs zoològics, pero una forta simpatia l'ha portat sempre a visitar freqüentment aquests establiments, ... principalment per a cercar-hi solucions sobre determinats problemes biològics»; «solament ha visitat el de Madrid, Paris, Basilea i Mulhouse».

11. «ha procurat enterar-se de l'organització i funcionament d'un cert nombre de Jardins Zoològics estrangers».

models (ownership and organization), their size and location with respect to the city. He did not present zoo after zoo but rather organized the data in thematic chapters. These chapters detail the surface of the zoo grounds, the numbers of animals each zoo held, further broken down into classes of animals (mammals, birds, reptiles and so on). Other chapters dealt with animal illnesses, alimentation, the housing of animals (cages, enclosures), the budgets of zoos, their number of staff and their salaries. Chapter 6 (1919: 30-34), for example, addressed the question of how the zoos obtained their animals given their elevated mortality and the fact that they did not reproduce in captivity. Rossell named four ways: purchase from animal dealers, import from colonies, donations or exchange between zoos.

The interconnectivity of zoos emerged (rather than being addressed explicitly) in particular with respect to the design of animal houses and enclosures. Rossell described for example the monkey houses in the zoos of Bristol, Manchester and Rotterdam in a comparative manner. As regards the monumental monkey house of the Rotterdam Zoo, Rossell also referred to two photos (figures 17 and 18) glued in at the end of the memoir showing the exterior (see Fig. 3.b) and the interior view. He also claimed that he was in possession of the plans of the «nova casa dels micos de Schoenbrunn», the Vienna Zoo (1919: 50-52). What Rossell obviously did not know was that the «new» Schönbrunn monkey house, which had opened in 1907 (and hence was not that new anymore in 1919) had proven impractical and was in need of a complete overhaul (Brachetka 1947: 87, 119). Early on (1919: 11) Rossell had specified that the information had been collected between 1905 and 1912. One might wonder why in this particular period and not later. We shall now discuss what his sources were for his first memorandum.

5. Gustave Loisel and the *Rapports*

Clearly, Rossell wanted to impress the Junta with the sheer mass of data displaying his in-depth knowledge of foreign zoos. Yet he did not explain how he could gather such a wealth of material on dozens of zoos without having visited them himself. The only contemporary author who published zoo data, including economic parameters, in such a comprehensive way was the French embryologist Gustave Loisel (1864-1933). At the end of his memorandum Rossell provides a short bibliography and there is indeed an abbreviated entry: «Loisel, Missions Scientifiques, etc. Paris 1907» (1919: 193). This refers to the three *Rapports sur une Mission Scientifique dans les Jardins et Établissements Zoologiques Publics et Privés*, published in 1907 and 1908.

These *Rapports* were the result of Loisel's extensive zoo travels in 1906 and 1907. The first *Rapport* detailed his visit to the United Kingdom, the Netherlands and Belgium, the second one to Germany, Denmark, Switzerland and Austria-Hungary and the third one to North America. In total he visited 87 zoological institutions, most of them zoos but also aquariums, natural history museums, and natural preserves. Loisel pursued his *Missions Scientifiques* on behalf of the French Ministère de l'Instruction Publique. Around that time

there had been a consensus in scientific and administrative circles in Paris that the zoo at the Jardin des Plantes was in dire need of reform. The ministry, responsible for the state-run zoo, financed Loisel's travels in order to generate proposals for a reform based on best-practices examples from abroad.

Gustave Loisel has been called the first zoo historian. His monumental opus magnum, the three volumes of *Histoire des Ménageries de l'Antiquité à nos jours* from 1912 runs up to nearly 2000 pages. Volume 3 of the *Histoire* dealing with the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries is based on the less known *Rapports*. The scarce historiography on Loisel (Livet, 2012; Solski, 2012; de Bont 2015: 113-114; Hochadel, 2020) focuses nearly exclusively on the *Histoire*.

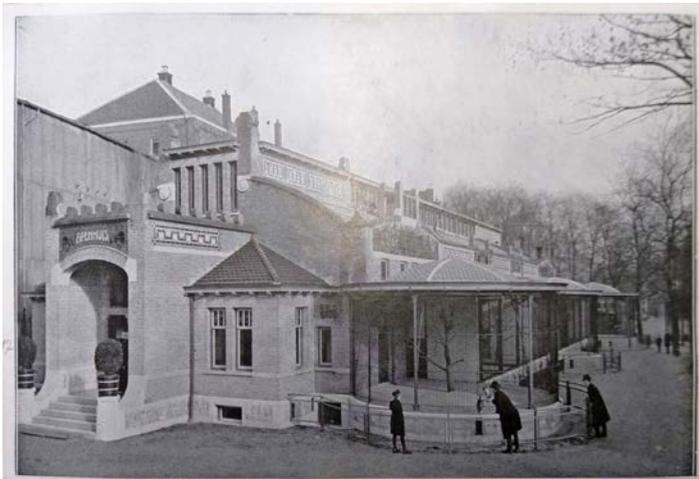
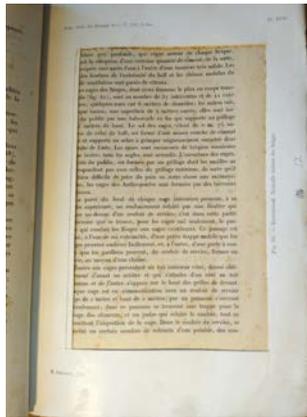


Fig. 3.a/b The monkey house of the Rotterdam Zoo. Rossell cut out 18 images from Loisel's *Rapports* (above) to adorn his application for the directorship of the Barcelona Zoo (below), Biblioteca de la Institució Milà i Fontanals, Arxiu del Zoo de Barcelona. Photos: Oliver Hochadel

Virtually all the information presented in the first part of Rossell's *Memoria* of 1919 was drawn from Loisel's three *Rapports*. The 18 images pasted in at the end of the memorandum were all cut out from his own copy of the *Rapports*.¹² And his information on the «new» monkey house on the Schönbrunn Menagerie, including a detailed sketch of the building complex, came from Loisel (1907b: 231-249). We do not know how Rossell got hold of his copies. Judging by a research of today's online catalogues the *Rapports* had only a very limited print run. Published as part of a series of publications of the French Government (Nouvelles Archives des Missions Scientifiques) the three *fascicules* (in total nearly 500 pages) only circulated in specialist's circles. Maybe Rossell obtained Loisel's *Rapports* when he went briefly into exile to Toulouse after the Setmana tràgica in Barcelona in July 1909 (Artís i Mercadet, 1995: 1092; Palomas i Moncholí, s.a.) or when he visited the Jardin des Plantes in Paris (although we do not know the year).

In a sense and despite all the obvious differences between them, Loisel and Rossell, found themselves in a similar situation. They both searched on an international level for «best practices» that characterised the discussion on zoo reform in the early twentieth century. Loisel's hope was to obtain a chair at the Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle (in charge of running the zoo in the Jardin des Plantes) by demonstrating his thorough knowledge of zoo management (de Bont, 2010: 127), the same way that Rossell wanted to become the new director of the Barcelona Zoo.

Loisel's approach was based on maximizing the available information, to compare and contrast specific zoo parameters, yet without identifying the one ideal zoo that should be taken as a model for reform back home. His approach (and tone) was positivist, sober, and neutral. He would cite specific installations or features of animal houses as exemplary.

Rossell followed Loisel not only in terms of content but also with respect to his method, remaining descriptive, «avoiding any comment» (1919: 101).¹³ A secondary effect of Loisel's comprehensive zoo panorama was going beyond mere comparison to spot connections between the zoos in particular with respect to the zoo architecture (Meuser, 2017). To copy each other at least to some extent, as we mentioned at the beginning of this article, was a defining feature of the zoo around 1900. This transnational interconnectivity of zoos did not escape Loisel's eyes, having seen so many zoos first-hand. He noted for example that the antelope house in the New York Zoo «is reminiscent of the Antelope House in Frankfurt.» (1908: 22).¹⁴ In this case Rossell copied Loisel verbatim: «is in a way reminis-

12. The personal copies of Rossell were in possession of his family until 2012 who bequeathed them to the library of the Institució Milà i Fontanals de Recerca en Humanitats, CSIC, Barcelona. I would like to thank in particular Manuel Sánchez Martínez and Mercè Rossell Alfonso for their thoughtful help.

13. «evitant el comentari».

14. «rappelle en certains points la maison des Antilopes de Francfort».

cent of the Frankfurt one» (1919: 47).¹⁵ But reading through Rossell's memoranda on zoos (even more so the second one which we will analyse below) it is evident that he fully grasped Loisel's point about the close exchange of ideas and models among zoos, the constant imitating and adapting.

Although the word plagiarism comes to mind, and with justification, Rossell, the avid reader of the *Rapports*, did not simply regurgitate the data Loisel had painstakingly collected on his extended journeys. First of all, Rossell, selected and synthesized the mass of data that Loisel presented on nearly 500 pages. As we have seen, he only included 38 institutions in his overview (and not 87 like Loisel). More importantly, he organized the data in a different way. Loisel's main ordering principle was the zoo visited. Each zoo description consisted of a virtual tour of all the installations (cages, enclosures and so on) including a lot of quantitative information on the number of animals, the measurements of animal houses, the number of animal keepers and so on. The larger units were the countries. In the summaries (sometimes clustering all zoos of one country and at the end of the *Rapports*) Loisel also provided tables, comparing zoos with specific parameters such as numbers of animals (e.g., Loisel, 1907a: 120-121).

Rossell provided rather simple lists more than sophisticated tables, his memorandum was type-written not printed. Yet he did extract (mostly quantitative) information from Loisel's zoo chapters to merge them under new chapter headings such as enclosures, nutrition, reproduction, prevention of diseases and zoo administration. His organizing principle was not the individual zoo but more general categories that allowed for comparison. One might say that Rossell created new knowledge about zoos by synthesizing the material that Loisel had presented in a more isolated manner. For example, Rossell a trained veterinarian classified the causes of death of apes in different zoos, showing that they varied (diseases of the digestive tract in Antwerp; pneumonia in Dresden, dysentery in New York etc; 1919: 83; Loisel, 1907a: 77 (Antwerp); 1907b: 205 (Dresden); 1908: 255 (New York)). In his own copy of Loisel's *Rapports* Rossell wrote with pencil «Malaltia» («disease») in the margins (Antwerp and Dresden, also 1908: 363). This shows how he searched through Loisel's material to extract cases that he could subsume under a different category to construct his own account. Apes («singes anthropoïdes») were still relatively rare at the time in zoos, often dying quickly in captivity. Therefore, the diseases of these highly valuable creatures were a major concern.

In the third part of his memorandum dedicated to concrete measures to improve the Barcelona Zoo the information gleaned from the *Rapports* was directly applied. For example, Rossell suggested: «We would adjust the facilities for large reptiles to those of the Manchester Garden and even better to those of Rotterdam.» (1919: 129)¹⁶ He also lamented

15. «recorda en certa manera la de Francfort».

16. «Les instal·lacions per a grans reptils, les ajustaríem a les del Jardí de Manchester i encara millor a les de Rotterdam.»

that neither Darder nor the Junta had kept statistics on animal mortality (1919: 147-150). Yet these data were crucial to understand and improve the situation of any zoo, Rossell had learned from Loisel.

In more general terms: What kind of zoo did Loisel envisage and in how far did Rossell follow him? Loisel had the Jardin des Plantes in mind, Rossell the Barcelona Zoo. It is not easy to tease Loisel's normative position out of his matter-of-fact accounts. He would argue that zoos need to be run according to scientific methods. This meant in concrete terms: animals needed more space and better-designed housing including the soil of the enclosure; hygiene was of utmost importance. For Loisel the zoo was always meant to be a scientific institution dedicated to research. This included conceiving the zoo as an experimental breeding station with applied goals, namely acclimatization of useful species. At the same time, Loisel understood well that the modern zoo needed to attract a large audience because its economy depended on entry fees (another point picked up by Rossell, 1919: 164). Loisel's thinking remained torn between these poles, the research agenda of the zoo and its character as a site of mass culture (Loisel, 1906; 1912, III: 380-381).

Rossell followed Loisel on virtually all of these aspects but adapted his vision to the concrete situation in the Parc de la Ciutadella. A zoo needed to be the ornament of a city *and* a place for science, including research on ethology, animal reproduction and his own field of expertise, «ramaderia», the breeding of livestock. In his sketch of the ideal Barcelona Zoo, he did not dwell on the tensions between the diverging goals of the zoo, as Loisel had done but rather formulated a wish list. The zoo was to serve a number of purposes and publics. It should be «a place of pleasure for the people, a source of pride for the citizens; a research laboratory for zoologists, zootechnicians and psychologists, and an academy for artists.»¹⁷ (1919: 174-185, quote 184-185) After all, Rossell's memorandum was an application to convince the jury to select him as the next director of the Barcelona Zoo.

In his short «international» bibliography, Rossell (1919: 192-193) also mentions two other titles: «S.S. Flower, Notes on Zoological Collections visited in Europa [sic!] in 1907» and «Reference List of the Zoological Gardens of the World. 1910». Stanley Flower (1871-1946) was a British colonial officer and the director of the Giza Zoo near Cairo (1898-1924). Apart from this particular zoo travel in 1907 detailed in the *Notes*, Flower visited a large number of zoos, in particular before 1914, often in official missions in order to gather useful information on the organization of zoos, just like Loisel. He also compiled and annually updated a *Reference List* that would include for the first time *all* zoos worldwide (1908-1914).

It is hard to say whether Rossell extracted much information from Flower to include it in his memorandum. No unequivocal example could be identified, but Flower's zoo-list might

17. «un lloc d'esplai per a el poble, un motiu d'orgull per a els ciutadans; un laboratori d'investigació per a zoòlegs, zootécnis i psicòlegs, i una acadèmia per a els artistes.»

have helped Rossell in composing his own. We also do not know whether Rossell read English at all. Maybe putting Flower's *Notes* and *Reference List* in the bibliography was just another instance of trying to demonstrate to the Junta how hard he had tried to gather information on an international level. In any case, it is remarkable that Rossell got hold of some of the writings of Loisel and Flower which were, on a global level, the two zoo reformers who had probably seen and studied more zoos (and on several continents, Flower had also been to South East Asia) than anybody else in the period leading up to World War I.

6. Becoming a zoo traveller: Rossell's second memorandum (1921)

In October 1919, with the applications of Jeroni Darder and Rossell on the table, a commission of three members (Casimir Giralt (1883-1957), Josep Maria Bofill i Pichot (1860-1938) and Manuel Cazorro y Ruiz (1865-1935)) had to select the next director of the Barcelona Zoo. The decision was not unanimous, two favoured the son of the former director and one Rossell. Jeroni Darder's strongest asset was his inside knowledge, he had been employed by the Zoo since 1898.

The dissenting voice of the commission drafted a three page «minority report». He saw Rossell as clearly better qualified than Jeroni Darder. Rossell had authored many more publications than his competitor and unlike Darder's writings Rossell's were scientific in character. His knowledge of the zoos abroad was far superior to Darder's. Unlike Rossell who had at least visited four other zoos Darder only knew the Barcelona Zoo first hand. The memorandum by Jeroni Darder could not be located apart from a few images drawn by himself (see Pons, 1992: 22, 48, 68). The anonymous dissenter judges it rather harsh. It was richly illustrated and far too descriptive, replete with (irrelevant) information on the history of zoological gardens instead of their current state. Jeroni Darder gave no indication of how to tackle the current problems of the zoo. For example, he only dedicated half a page to the fundamental issue of the zoo's budget, the dissenter lamented. (AH-MCNB id1485: 72-74, October 1919). After all, this kind of expertise had been one of the main requisites of the job description cited at the beginning of this article.¹⁸

In the end, the commission suggested a compromise, trying to guarantee continuity within the institution while at the same time infusing new blood into the Barcelona Zoo. Jeroni Darder was nominated director while Rossell was awarded the position of the «conservador» which they both took up in December 1919 (AH-MCNB id1485: 76-77; Pons 1992: 80-81; Artis, 1995: 1112).

18. There is no way of knowing for sure but the dissenter was probably Josep Maria Bofill. The Catalan physician and entomologist had much more of an academic and international profile than the other two members. Later on, in 1930, he would hold the laudatory speech when Rossell was admitted to the Real Academia de Ciencias y Artes de Barcelona (Bofill, 1930: 30-31), highlighting their close friendship. The naturalist and archaeologist Cazorro had more of a «local» profile. Giralt was a local politician. He represented the municipality on the commission and had no scientific training.

Having resolved the issue of the succession of the directorship the Junta could now follow up on the much called for renovation of the Barcelona Zoo. The first step in this direction was a «zoo voyage» à la Loisel in order to gather the latest information on zoos abroad, «best practices», that might serve as a guide or an inspiration for the reform «back home». Not long after Rossell had taken up his new position the Junta commissioned him to visit 17 zoos in France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany, Great Britain and Ireland. The reconnaissance mission was financed by the Mancomunitat. Rossell travelled through Western and Central Europe for a total of 70 days in the summer and early autumn of 1920. He visited 15 of the 17 zoos on his list: Paris (Jardin des Plantes), London, Bristol, Dublin, Amsterdam, The Hague, Rotterdam, Hamburg, Berlin, Dresden, Leipzig, Halle, Frankfurt, Cologne and Antwerp. Hannover and Breslau he left out but additionally he visited the zoos of Liverpool, Manchester, Edinburgh, Copenhagen, Stellingen (Hamburg/Hagenbeck), Nuremberg, Munich and Basel, bringing the total number to 23 zoos in eight countries. Rossell ceased to be an armchair traveller and in a sense followed Loisel's steps becoming a real zoo traveller.

A few months after he returned from his European Zoo tour, on 21 January 1921, Rossell presented another memorandum, entitled: «Jardins zoològics d'Europa. Memòria del viatge al estranger». It was supplemented by «an Album with 240 postcards, 27 engravings, 1 photograph, 3 guides, and 17 plans of zoological gardens» The source used here is not the clean copy of the memoir he submitted to the Junta but the original draft. This manuscript consists of over 400 handwritten pages on scrap paper, and contains strikethroughs. The clean copy and album with all the additional graphic material seem to be lost.

There were different parts: an explanatory note to the Junta (*Introduction*, 5 pages), a prologue, where Rossell tried to synthesize the main findings of his journey (*Prologue*, 14 pages), and the large empiric part of about 400 pages on the zoos. This main part was structured according to countries and each section is paginated individually. Rossell followed at least in a rudimentary way Loisel's procedure of describing zoos. At the beginning of each chapter dedicated to one zoo the year of its foundation and on occasion some historical account is given. Then the name of the director, the staff (number, tasks) and the size of the zoo ground (in hectares) were provided. The main part consisted of a virtual tour of the zoo, describing enclosure for enclosure.

This time Rossell's approach is much more descriptive and far less quantitative than the first Memoria of 1919, in which he was able to draw on all of Loisel's data. In this second memoir, the budgets of the zoos were rarely mentioned. Some parameters were completely missing: expenditures for personnel; more precise lists of the type of food (quantity and costs) or statistics of the animal population of a zoo, broken down into categories (mammals, birds, etc.). Rossell might have lacked the time or the resources to gather all these data. He explained in his foreword that he wanted to keep the extension of the memorandum to a minimum and that he had provided much of the information already in the previous memorandum (*Introduction*, p. 4).

As he travelled in the summer months Rossell could not meet many of the directors in person as they were on holidays. Yet he insisted that his visits were a starting point for building relationships «probably usable in the future» (*Introduction*, p. 4).¹⁹ This shows that the goal of the zoo journey was also to establish contacts with «Northern» zoos and to insert the Barcelona Zoo in already existing networks. While Francesc Darder, several decades back, was seemingly only interested in cultivating a close relationship with the acclimatization movement and the Jardin d'Acclimatation in Paris, Rossell and the Junta pursued a different vision for the «new» Barcelona Zoo: basically to become «modern» and on a par with their European counterparts.

In his description of the zoos Rossell almost always began with the «casa dels micos», the monkey house. That is no coincidence as a monkey house was a must-have for any zoo. At the same time, there had been much debate among zoo reformers, zoologists, directors and architects on how to design monkey houses that would significantly lower the high mortality of the inmates and comply with the requirements imposed by the hygiene movement. Heating for the inner cages, natural light through skylights, glass panels (instead of bars) to prevent contagion of tuberculosis from the visitors and outdoor cages for fresh air were the features that defined a «modern» monkey house. Rossell's report though showed that the zoos had come up with quite different solutions, for example, the enormous monkey house of the Hamburg Zoo (70 by 30 meters) or the «New Ape House» of the London Zoo, specifically built for apes (1921, Germany: 16; Great Britain: 43-46).

Rossell enumerated the different species a zoo holds, including the number of animals. Yet his focus was clearly on the animal houses. Were they old or recent? What condition were they in? Did they serve their purpose in housing a specific kind of animal with its particular needs? Rossell provided concrete measurements (height, depth etc.), what building material was used, whether there were inner and outer cages, what access visitors had and, if he could obtain the information, how much the animal house cost. Already in the manuscript Rossell included numerical references to the graphic material in the (lost) album that illustrated what was said in the memoir. We may conclude that Rossell (and the Junta) was looking in particular for best practice examples of animal houses as this information might be most useful for the renovation of the Barcelona Zoo and its very basic (i.e., deficient) enclosures. To adapt the animal houses to the physiological and even psychological needs of the animal had become an imperative among zoo reformers.

The features of other buildings such as restaurants and concert halls were usually described at the end of each «zoo visit». These for «humans only structures» represented the commitment of the zoos to fulfil the expectations of the general public to be entertained in the zoo even beyond watching «exotic» animals. This effort went back to the above-mentioned hybrid mission of the zoo, having to be both attractive and useful.

19. «probablement utilitzable en el futur».

Already in the prologue Rossell (1921: Prologue, 11-14, see already Rossell, 1919: 176) left no doubt that with one possible exception (the state-run zoo in the Jardin des Plantes in Paris) zoos had to adapt to the taste and the demand of the general public in order to survive economically. It should remain a place of zoological research but research alone will never be enough to pay the bills. This grudging admission of the power of the public had become common sense in zoo circles already well before 1920. Loisel, for example, found it hard to accept this lesson (1908: 347) but the average zoo director simply felt he had no choice. Zoo historians refer to this process as a democratisation against the will of the authorities running the zoos (Baratay & Hardouin-Fugier, 2000: 101, 176).

Depending on the importance of the zoo, an evaluating summary (ranging between one sentence and one or even two pages), pointing out the advantages and disadvantages of the respective zoo concluded each zoo visit. The significant number of zoos visited allowed Rossell to take a comparative stand. One of his most common formulations in the memorandum was «As we have already seen in zoo XY». This reminds us once more, as pointed out above, that the evolution of zoos can only be understood fully if conceived of as one large network of institutions that copy each other to some degree while coming up with local adaptations and innovations as well. For example, virtually all the zoos Rossell had seen charged entrance fees unlike the Barcelona one. In years to come, the Catalan zoo traveller insisted on introducing this measure. Finally, a fence was built to separate the zoo grounds from the rest of the Parc and since 17 April 1927 visitors had to pay 25 cents (Pons, 1992: 91).

While the idea was to gather useful information, without wanting to, the memorandum also offered glimpses of a harsh post-war reality. Less than two years after the end of World War I the penury of in particular some of the German zoos was reflected in empty cages and enclosures, a dearth of animals and personnel, creating an air of melancholia. Most of the zoos of the countries involved in the armed conflict lost a substantial number of animals due to the shortage of supplies (Zoo Hamburg: 2-3; Zoo Berlin: 43; Zoo Dresden: 95-95, 100).

After his return to Barcelona Rossell could certainly claim to have become a zoo traveller in his own right. Having visited 23 zoos was no small feat and on an entirely different level to simply extracting data from the *Rapports*. Consciously or not, Rossell operated in a very similar way to Loisel, deploying his «method» to visit zoos: his «virtual tour» from enclosure to enclosure (generally starting with the monkey house), his sober and neutral tone, and the eye for comparison. Yet with respect to Rossell's conception of what actually constituted a modern zoo, Loisel never had been the only reference. Since Carl Hagenbeck had opened his «animal paradise» in Stellingen outside Hamburg in 1907, this new model of exhibiting exotic animals had become the central issue in the transnational discussion about how a modern zoo should look. We shall now describe how the «Hagenbeck revolution», a zoo without fences and cages, displaying «freely» roaming animals, drove the debate about the future of the Barcelona Zoo.

7. Hagenbeck's animal paradise and the relocation of the Barcelona Zoo

Although the name of Carl Hagenbeck (1844-1913) may not be familiar to everybody today, around 1900 the entrepreneur from Hamburg was literally among the best-known people in the world (in terms of name recognition). His global fame as an animal trader but even more so as a circus director, tamer and producer of ethnographic spectacles predated the inauguration of the Stellingen Tierpark in 1907 (the literature on Hagenbeck is enormous, see Rothfels, 2002; Ames, 2009).

News about the «revolutionary» way of exhibiting animals also trickled into the Spanish public sphere. Possibly the first article on the Stellingen Zoo was a large and lavishly illustrated report penned by the American journalist J.B. Van Brussel that appeared in 1909 (in translation) in the magazine *Hojas Selectas*. Among the first Barcelonese to visit the Stellingen Zoo was the Catalan stage designer Oleguer Junyent (1876-1956), probably in 1909. His photos of the «fenceless» enclosures of the lions and the polar bears zoo suggest that his interest lay less in the animals themselves than in Hagenbeck's staging of a natural scenery. (Arxiu Fotogràfic de Barcelona, AFB3-394: No. 66521 and No. 66522 (lion); No. 66523 (polar bear).



Fig. 4 A model for the Barcelona Zoo: the Lion Panorama in Hagenbeck's Tierpark.
Photo: Oleguer Junyent, ca. 1910; Arxiu Fotogràfic de Barcelona, AFB3-394; No. 66521

We need to keep in mind that the Barcelona Zoo that Junyent knew was indeed an old-style zoo, with a rather uniform line-up of cages and enclosures running along one side of the Parc, with virtually no vegetation adorning the living quarters of the animals. The contrast with Hagenbeck's panorama could hardly have been starker. The constant mention of animals roaming «free» indicates not only the fascination with the new model but also the

discomfort many zoo visitors felt in Barcelona (and in other zoos around the world) to see animals in cages. As Rothfels (2002: 199) points out: «Hagenbeck's revolution» consisted not so much in the moated structures but in «the narratives of freedom and happiness he developed at his zoo». The coverage of Stellingen in the Spanish press focused very much on these narratives (e.g., Reader, 1916, and in the context of the opening of the second Hagenbeck-style Zoo in Rome in early 1911, Roma. El Jardín Zoológico, 1910).

Yet it was not until 1914 that the new model of a zoo was cited in order to discuss the future of the Barcelona Zoo. Maybe because it was only around then that the zoo in the Parc de la Ciutadella was widely considered to be in a dismal state and in need of reform. The first author to take Stellingen as an example was Ignasi de Sagarra (1889-1940) in an article in a popular magazine (Sagarra, 1914). Much later on, in 1932/33, the Catalan naturalist would succeed Rossell as director of the Zoo. In the article, Sagarra stated that there were two kinds of animal enclosures: the traditional old ones and Hagenbeck's panorama. He was enthusiastic about the latter and described it vividly. However it could not be determined whether Sagarra actually had visited the Stellingen Tierpark personally. In this article, the reform of the Barcelona Zoo was linked (also maybe for the first time) with the proposal to move it to an entirely new location. The Parc de la Ciutadella, and the very small space allotted to the zoo at that stage, only two hectares, clearly offered no possibility for a Hagenbeck-style Zoo with its (artificial) scenery of rocks, cliffs and ponds. Sagarra already suggested a few locations outside the city, in Horta or the Tibidabo hills, that might fit the Hagenbeck bill.

So Rossell was by no means the first admirer of Stellingen but in the long run, he would become the most vocal supporter of Hagenbeck's ideas south of the Pyrenees. Rossell knew Sagarra's 1914 article as he cited it in his short bibliography at the end of his 1919 memorandum along with Hagenbeck's autobiography (*Von Tieren und Menschen*, first published in German in 1908). Rossell referenced the Italian translation *Io e le belve* although there had also been a Spanish translation (both published in 1910; readers of *La Vanguardia* were informed about the Spanish translation in a lengthy article, Redman, 1910). Rossell was an avid reader of the book and cited it in both memoranda (1919: 62, 152; 1921: Germany, 24).

The animal paradise of Stellingen, too, featured already in his first critique of the Barcelona Zoo (1918b: 555) and then prominently in both memoranda. In his first memorandum he emphasized the lack of barriers and the apparent direct «access» of the visitors to lions and tigers (1919: 8, 43-46, 131). The second memorandum, documenting his first personal visit to Stellingen, included an extensive description (1921: Germany, 23-36). Rossell followed Sagarra's classification of two kinds of zoos (or «installations») and found both types in Stellingen. While there were still cages in Hagenbeck's Tierpark he described in detail the monumental panoramas, made of reinforced cement. One even reminded him of the «muntanyes de Montserrat», Catalonia's iconic mountain (of which there was also a miniature replica inside the Parc de la Ciutadella). He finds the epitaph of «animal paradise

... justified» (1921: Germany, 30).²⁰ At the same time, Rossell highlighted the commercial character of the Stellingen zoo, comparing it to the (also private) Bellevue Zoo in Manchester, as Loisel (1912, III: 317) had done before him.

An important issue for contemporaries when discussing Hagenbeck's innovation was the exposure of exotic animals to the «Northern climate» (see already Loisel, 1908: 152, 163). He was praised for showing that African animals could very well adapt to European winters. Photos of lions and ostriches moving through the snow seemed to prove that capacity (Van Brussel, 1909: 1062). Rossell picked up on that point repeatedly. Although he himself was there in the summer of 1920, he was obviously fascinated by African animals bracing the Northern cold (1919: 73-74; 1921: *Prologue* 9, Germany, 35; see already Loisel, 1907a: 30).

This is also a reminder that the acclimatization movement had not disappeared but rather evolved – and that the zoo continued to play a part in it. The ostrich farm in Stellingen was not primarily there to delight visitors but a venture to market ostrich feathers (*La cria de avestruces*, 1911; Rossell, 1921: Germany, 35). Neither had Rossell and the Junta given up on the «applied» feature of the Barcelona Zoo.

Zoo reformers from the South of Europe could even argue that the milder climate of Barcelona would make Hagenbeck's outdoor scheme more feasible (Sagarra, 1914). Already since Sagarra's article of 1914 but especially after the end of the era of Francesc Darder there was an ongoing discussion of moving the zoo away from the Parc de la Ciutadella. Between 1918 and the early 1930s several proposals were put forward to build a new zoo outside the city centre (e.g., Rossell, 1929; Rossell, s.a.). Rossell suggested two sites, Falcó (an abandoned quarry, today Parc de la Creueta del Coll) or, more prominently, Montjuïc, the hilly area to the South of the city, still without major constructions prior to the 1929 World Exhibition. As Artis pointed out (1994: 70), Rossell's second memorandum led the Junta to create a commission that would study the feasibility of relocating the Zoo. This commission consisted of the renowned botanist and at the time director of the Museu Martorell Pius Font i Quer (1888-1964) and Rossell himself. They presented their report (not preserved) in October 1922 to the Junta. Due to the lack of funding (and also because of the abolition of the Mancomunitat and by extension the Junta in the wake of the Coup d'état of Primo de Rivera in September 1923) none of these projects ever got beyond the planning stage (Rossell, s.a.: 1). The crucial point here is that these plans envisaged a Hagenbeckian setting, benefitting from the «wild» and «mountainous» landscape of Falcó and Montjuïc, featuring spectacular rock faces and steep inclines that would allow for similar enclosures as the famous panoramas in Stellingen. In the autumn of 1929, Rossell returned to Stellingen. Once more he praised the Hagenbeck revolution and positioned himself against the «old-style» Berlin Zoo (Rossell, 1929). The only Hagenbeck-style feature that was intro-

20. «Paradís dels animals ... justificat».

duced during Rossell's lifetime was the new enclosure for the polar bears, inaugurated in 1929 as part of an expansion of the zoo *within* the Parc. The bear pit was equipped with artificial rocks. (Pons: 1992, 97; Carandell, 2018: 28; Carandell; this dossier)

Apart from the admiration for Stellingen, serving as an inspiration for the zoo reform in Barcelona, there was yet another connection between the Hagenbeck enterprise and the Barcelona Zoo. The former was certainly not the only, but definitely an important supplier of animals since the 1920s. This was, of course, also part of the networking with important actors from abroad that Rossell had envisaged on his European Zoo tour in 1920. He was unlucky that summer because the two Hagenbeck sons, Lorenz (1882-1956) and Heinrich (1875-1945) were not present; instead, a cousin of Carl Hagenbeck showed him around the zoo. (Rossell, 1921, Germany, 1921: 26-27)

The relationship between the Barcelona Zoo and the Hagenbeck firm needs more investigation. Further research will have to clarify what the trade volume between the two entities was. As Rossell canvassed for a reform of the Barcelona Zoo in the 1920s in a Hagenbeckian spirit, and the Hagenbeck brothers were highly in demand internationally in the inter-war period reforming existing zoos or creating new ones, it also seems conceivable that Rossell asked them about the planned move of the Barcelona Zoo to Montjuïc. At least on two occasions, in 1927 and in May 1934, the Hagenbeck Circus performed in Barcelona (*La Vanguardia*, 10.2.1927: 19; 6.5.1934: 3; 11.5.1934: 8). Maybe it was in preparation for this second stay that the Hagenbecks had learned about Rossell's passing. In March 1934, Heinrich Hagenbeck sent a letter of condolence to Mercè Rosal i Camprodon, Rossell's widow, (in French) that suggests that they had indeed enjoyed some kind of working relationship. He even counts him «among his best friends.»²¹ (5/29 Necrològiques, ANC)

8. Conclusion

One institution Loisel did not visit on his extended journeys was the Barcelona Zoo. He seems to have only read about it. In the third volume of the *Histoire des ménageries*, his 624-page volume on the modern zoo, he dedicated exactly one sentence to Darder's zoo: «located in a corner of the park, ... this menagerie is of no interest whatsoever.»²² (1912: III, 110)

The members of the Junta, as well as Rossell, Ignasi de Sagarra and other Catalan naturalists, insisted in the 1910s and 1920s on the urgency to create a modern zoo, worthy of the metropolitan aspirations of Barcelona. As the analysis of Rossell's memoranda demonstrated, even a seemingly insignificant zoo such as the Barcelona one could insert itself into a larger transurban network of European zoos. Loisel unwittingly helped Rossell access detailed information and existing networks with his *Rapports*. The need for reform and his professional ambition to become the new director propelled Rossell into these networks,

21. «parmi mes meilleurs amis.»

22. «situé dans un coin du parc, ... cette ménagerie ne présente aucun intérêt.»

made him read the relevant literature and participate in ongoing discussions on the proper way to run a zoo. He drank in as much as he could, eager to travel himself after his extensive reading of Loisel's *Rapports*. In the French zoo reformer, Rossell also found a model of how to describe and analyse zoos. Reading between the lines of the second memorandum, we can get a glimpse of how eager he was to rub shoulders with well-known zoo directors, for example, Ludwig Heck (1860-1951, director 1888-1931) showed him around the Berlin Zoo (1921, Germany: 36), let alone the Hagenbeck brothers.

In his obituary of Darder, Rossell (1918a) had described the hybrid character of the Barcelona Zoo as ornamental and useful at the same time, «the character most appropriate to the Catalan idiosyncrasy».²³ Yet as he soon would learn from Loisel, virtually all zoos moved in between these two poles of research/utility and entertainment, so it made little sense to label a zoo as typically Catalan. Zoos were a product of transurban exchanges and hardly reflected a «national character». Although Rossell may be described as a Germanophile, he never referred to his idol Hagenbeck and his new model of exhibiting animals in national or racial terms. At the same time, the intellectual outlook of Catalan scholars in the early twentieth century was generally very much determined by French culture and science and Rossell was a prime example of this kind of orientation. The literature he cited in *La Raça* was for the greater part from French (racial) anthropology and prehistory, his central reference in matters of zoo reform was a French embryologist, Loisel.

These considerations bring us back to the question posed at the beginning of this article. What was the relationship between Rossell's two seemingly quite different agendas, his nationalist Catalanism and racism on the one hand and his embrace of transnationalism when it came to zoo reform? At first glance, one might indeed wonder if his enthusiastic newspaper article on Stellingen (Rossell, 1929) and *La Raça* (Rossell, 1930a) had been penned by one and the same author. Rossell wrote hundreds of pages on zoos, yet there were practically no remarks that might be qualified as Catalanist, racist or chauvinist so characteristic of *La Raça*. Nation, people or race seemed of no operational value in the debate about the best zoo.

Only when Rossell addressed the issue of keeping domestic animals in zoos did he insist on the importance of safeguarding «la pureza racial» (Rossell, 1919: 155) – the leitmotif of his publications on the breeding of livestock. At least on paper, Rossell had not given up on the idea of the zoo as a breeding centre of animals for consumption as advocated by Darder (Rossell, 1918c). Yet in practice, studying his memoranda and reviewing his initiatives in the 1920s, his main aim was to modernize the Barcelona Zoo following international trends. Did Rossell attempt to fuse his two lines of thought and professional activity? The answer is rather no. He did not use the zoo in order to «breed» (recuperate) «ancient» species of «Catalan» livestock. His objective was to present the exotic animals in an appeal-

23. «el carácter más apropiado á la idiosincracia catalan».

ing way to the general public. Rossell kept the spaces of the farm and the zoo by and large apart. Such an approach would not have been unheard of in interwar Europe. German zoo directors attempted to «recreate» extinct species such as the aurochs (Daszkiewicz & Aikhenbaum, 1999) or the tarpan («Urpferd») (Szczygielska, 2022), generally not on zoo grounds but in adapted enclosures in the countryside. The objective to «resurrect» the iconic Central European megafauna of an idealized past in Nazi Germany was rather ideological than utilitarian.

How may we interpret these two seemingly very different strands in Rossell's thinking? There was at least one common element in both, his faith in positivist science. As he understood it, his ideas about the Catalan race were based on scientific facts, not on political ideology. In *La Raça* he drew on recent research in the different fields of anthropology and biological disciplines more generally. In the same way, he gathered a huge collection of data to describe the current zoo to understand how to improve its management. There is a difference though: the arguments in his writings on race were mostly qualitative (*La Raça* is marked by sweeping generalizations) while his zoo memoranda were quantitative and comparative in character.

Earlier on we described the Catalanist intellectual milieu of the first third of the twentieth century, mentioning two major figures, Bosch i Gimpera and Puig i Cadafalch. Being an ardent nationalist (or in the case of Rossell even a crude racist) and searching for solutions (best practices) abroad was by no means exclusive. Rossell's nationalism was driven by a particular political ideology, and his transnational orientation by professional aspirations. His appropriation of Loisel (creative plagiarism) and Hagenbeck (adaptation) were part of his career plan. One may argue that his transnationalism was rather an emerging feature that he only fully embraced after studying Loisel and in particular after his first-hand experience of 23 European zoos. The case of Rossell shows the importance of «zoo travels» for weaving a transurban network of zoos and the impact it had on the zoo travelers themselves.

At the beginning of this article, we mentioned the historiography of transurban networks. Within this very fruitful field, the urban institution of the zoo is still an under-researched topic. Rossell's outreach to the European «zooscape» in order to reform the Barcelona Zoo exemplifies the potential of such an approach. Apart from the lens of political history and the study of nationalism, labelling him a «modern racist», we need to add a second dimension to our understanding of Rossell: a transurban perspective.

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