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Taming the Bourgeoisie: Grandville's *Scènes de la vie privée et publique des animaux* (1840-1842)

Writing in 1842, an unnamed critic for *L'Artiste* described the caricaturist J. J. Grandville's (1803-1847) *Scènes de la vie privée et publique des animaux* as a "mirror, accurate but not very flattering, in which each of us can look at ourselves and recognize ourselves."¹ The critic's description of the illustrated book *Scènes de la vie privée et publique des animaux* (henceforth referred to as *Les Animaux*) sums up both the work and its particular mode of representation: caricature, which is the comic distortion and/or exaggeration of an original object. From political celebrations to marriage proposals, *Les Animaux*'s visual and verbal "scènes" from nineteenth-century life presented period readers with a deformed image of themselves, their personality traits, habits and hobbies distorted by the artist's pencil. Grandville's brand of caricature, however, stands out from that of his contemporaries, such as Honoré Daumier, Henri Monnier and Gavarni, in that the basis for *Les Animaux*'s distortion, as the title of the work suggests, is the animal. In *Les Animaux*, the bourgeois banker is a fattened turkey, the politician a rotund hippopotamus and the landlord a beady-eyed vulture. While the use of animal imagery and metaphors was not new in the 1840s, Grandville's approach was, as the caricaturist created

hybrid creatures—animal heads atop human bodies—that visually and literally metamorphosed the person figured. Grandville’s banker is not *like* a turkey; he *is* a turkey, his human head replaced with avian beak, eyes and feathers. Under Grandville’s hand, nineteenth-century, French society takes shape as a menagerie of insects, birds and beasts.

Like the majority of French caricature from the same period, *Les Animaux*’s primary target was the bourgeoisie, the men and women of the July Monarchy (1830-1848) who increasingly dominated political and social life. The bourgeoisie was also the main consumer of period caricature. Indeed, it was the likes of Grandville’s banker and landlord who could afford to purchase satirical newspapers, illustrated books and individual prints.² As is the case with much literary and visual parody, Grandville’s *Les Animaux* mocks its primary audience, the bourgeoisie, both the object and audience of the artist’s parody. What is more, the bourgeoisie gave the work a commercial seal of approval as *Les Animaux* saw booming sales. *Le Charivari* reported that the publisher sold an estimated fourteen thousand copies within the work’s first months of publication, an enormous number when compared with average print runs for first-edition novels from the same period, which totalled between two thousand and five thousand copies.³ The success of *Les Animaux* marks the height of Grandville’s popularity, yet it also signals the growth of visual culture. Following advances in printing and engraving and the introduction of lithography, images became cheaper and easier to reproduce, spawning a wave of illustration.⁴ From newspapers to novels, the image permeated the literary and larger cultural field. It is not only the bourgeoisie that comes to dominate the July Monarchy, but also illustration, as caricaturists and illustrators, like the class they so fiercely mocked, gained economic and social status.

Given the originality of Grandville and the continued interest in caricature, the artist and his work have been the subject of much scholarship. Judith L. Goldstein, for example, explores the artist's animal metamorphoses in his early work, considering the images in terms of realism and the depiction of women.⁵ Philippe Kaenel and Clive Getty also focus on Grandville's use of the animal, comparing the artist's illustrations and caricatures with period discourse and practices of zoology and physiognomy.⁶ The article that follows complements this work, yet takes a different approach, exploring Grandville's parody of the bourgeoisie in *Les Animaux* as a means to tease out the interstices between the burgeoning class and the growth of visual culture during the July Monarchy. Detailed analyses of individual images, the work's sales, and reviews, serve to contextualize Grandville's portraits and their reception within the period's growing field of popular visual imagery. Such an analysis expands our understanding of Grandville's work, while adding to the study of caricature and the bourgeoisie. Equally significant, the focus on the bourgeois as consumer of caricature and illustrated books engages with current scholarship in the field of visual culture that seeks to localize images, visual spectacle and the act of looking within an historical, political, social and aesthetic framework.⁷ As we shall see, *Les Animaux* bears witness to the rise of the bourgeoisie during the July Monarchy *and* to the rise of illustration.

The Bourgeois: From Man to Myth

The nineteenth century in France is often referred to as the bourgeois century in that, from the French Revolution to the Third Republic (1871-1914), the bourgeoisie steadily gained political, economic and social ground. The term *bourgeois* originally referred to the inhabitants of villages who had obtained noted privileges and freedoms within the feudal system.⁸ The bourgeois was neither noble nor a peasant, but rather an intermediary, positioned somewhat precariously

between the two social poles. During the eighteenth century, “bourgeois” became associated with trade, yet the bourgeoisie remained relatively heterogeneous. As Adeline Daumard notes, “on the eve of the French Revolution, the bourgeois... are everywhere and they belong to very diverse, if not opposing, social categories.”⁹ While the variation among the members of the bourgeoisie makes the class difficult to define, the notion of an intermediary position serves to unify differences. As Priscilla P. Clark argues, the early bourgeois fall both socially and economically between the aristocracy and the peasantry, as they “either produced or transmitted goods... money... or services:” “Unlike the archetypical aristocrat, the bourgeois participated directly in the economic circuit, and unlike the lower classes his labor was not manual... nor was he attached to the person or property of another.”¹⁰ Clark’s definition allows for a wide range of “bourgeois” professions, from the small shop owner to the early industrialist. Such is the face of the bourgeoisie during the first half of the nineteenth century: a hodgepodge of merchants, bankers, lawyers, administrators and civil servants, united in their common exclusion from the aristocracy and purposeful self-distancing from the lower classes.

The bourgeoisie’s rise to power in the nineteenth century originated with the French Revolution, as it was predominantly the bourgeoisie who purchased the majority of the lands confiscated in 1790 from the Catholic Church.¹¹ The acquisition allowed the bourgeoisie to climb the social ranks, rivalling the aristocracy, whose status was based on the dual pillars of land and title. The bourgeoisie also gained economic wealth by moving further into the realm of industry and commerce. Post-revolutionary legislation paved the way by abolishing guilds and trade unions, thus opening the door for mass production based on unskilled labour. Napoleon continued the trend, establishing the Bank of France, which regulated, and hence stabilized, currency and financial transactions. Napoleon also opened up the military and government

agencies to the bourgeoisie, breaking the aristocracy's stronghold on government appointments. Progress was temporarily stalled under the Restoration (1815-1830), during which time the Bourbons restored the aristocracy to power, purging the government and military of Bonaparte sympathizers, many of whom were bourgeois. The Bonaparte witch hunt was only one of many policies that privileged the aristocracy at the expense of the bourgeoisie. Repeat dissolutions of parliament, increases in the level of taxes that governed eligibility to vote, tightening of press laws and the monarchy's open favouritism of the Catholic Church eventually led to the revolution of July 1830: three days of fighting on the streets of Paris that resulted in the ousting of the Bourbon king Charles X.

The workers and lower ranks of the bourgeoisie who fought on the barricades had hoped for a republic. They got the Orléanist prince Louis-Philippe instead, who, in a concession to the popular forces, was proclaimed "King of the French" rather than "King of France."¹² The newly crowned citizen King appointed Jacques Lafitte, an untitled banker, as prime minister, an unprecedented choice that set the stage for the regime's political, social and, most notably, economic programme.¹³ As Lafitte's and, later, fellow banker Casimir Périer's appointments illustrate, this was a regime that favoured *la grande bourgeoisie*: the wealthiest echelon of the bourgeoisie, such as bankers and early industrialists, who when locked out from government and military appointments during the Restoration turned to the realm of finance and commerce, worlds rejected by the traditional aristocrat. The move paid off as the *grande bourgeoisie*, with the help of Louis-Philippe, replaced the landed aristocracy to become the July Monarchy's new ruling class. The wealthy bourgeoisie, however, was no more democratic than its aristocratic predecessors. As Roger Magraw explains, "despotism shifted from château to Stock Exchange. The new elite represented narrowly oligarchical interests, extended the franchise only marginally

to 200-franc taxpayers, indulged in a quest for bureaucratic posts and sought to annihilate those popular forces which put them in power.”¹⁴

While such actions did not benefit the bourgeoisie at large in terms of direct political participation, the class as a whole did receive a certain legitimization in that bourgeois ideals and an overall lifestyle—economic comfort, moderation, work, the belief in social advancement, progress, science and a general respect for authority—became the regime’s dominant ideology.¹⁵ The king incarnated these beliefs by walking to work, for example, and adopting the typical attire of the bourgeoisie: black waistcoat, cravat, vest and umbrella. As he strolled from the royal palace to his chambers in parliament, Louis-Philippe performed the role of a bourgeois everyman. Similarly, the king sent his children to public schools, eschewing the traditional elitism of royal tutors and preceptors. The queen followed suit, having her dresses remade “to avoid excess expenditures.”¹⁶ The gardens of the royal palace were open to the public, and the king welcomed the bourgeoisie into his salons.¹⁷ This public persona aligned Louis-Philippe with the burgeoning middle class, playing up bourgeois ideals of work and family. True, the majority of the bourgeoisie did not pay enough taxes to vote, but it could nonetheless happily stroll through the royal gardens, much like the king himself, umbrella in hand.

Critics from all sides dubbed Louis-Philippe the “bourgeois king,” a nickname that stemmed from his public behaviour and that of his government. This is the monarchy that promoted the *juste milieu*: nothing too extravagant, nothing base, rather the optimal mean, a steady course that would maintain the status quo, bringing France not greatness but stability. *Le juste milieu* became the regime’s motto, and it was Francois Guizot who served as its most vocal spokesman. As Minister of Education (1832-1837) and later Prime Minister (1840-1848), Guizot shored up Louis-Philippe’s bourgeois performance with policy and practice. He was cautious in

foreign affairs, rejecting calls to aid nationalist movements in Germany and Italy, as well as colonial expansion.¹⁸ He applied a comparable strategy to domestic issues, refusing, for example, to intervene in the face of recession. As for the electorate, Guizot infamously retorted that if the non-voting public wanted to participate in government, it simply had to “get rich,” or in other words, earn enough money to pay the taxes required for voting rights. Change was possible; it was merely a question of hard work and money: the new keys to success. These actions and figureheads portrayed the monarchy as a reflection of the king’s moniker: a government by and for the bourgeoisie. Although technically it was the *grande bourgeoisie* that ruled, the bourgeoisie at large dominated in the realm of social influence, its values and ideals ultimately replacing aristocratic tradition. As the writer E. Duclerc argued in 1842, just two years after Guizot’s appointment to Prime Minister: “The Bourgeoisie dominates. It is the new aristocracy, the nobility of the nineteenth century.... This domination... is consecrated, proclaimed by the political institutions. It’s the Bourgeoisie that makes the law, it’s the Bourgeoisie that applies it.”¹⁹

Writers and artists echoed Duclerc, making the bourgeois the personification of the July Monarchy. And just like fellow critics, they were quick to heap all of the period’s social and political woes on the bourgeois’ back. The trend was particularly acute in the arena of caricature and, in fact, intensified following the press laws of 1835, which reinstated prior censorship for all images. No longer able openly to parody the king, caricaturists turned their pencils on the bourgeois. Artists such as Henry Monnier and Honoré Daumier indirectly critiqued Louis-Philippe and the July Monarchy through recurring characters who doubly incarnated the bourgeoisie and the regime. Henry Monnier’s Joseph Prudhomme, for example, stood as the “good bourgeois, without ambition, who desires to gently finish his career.”²⁰ Prudhomme

represents the bourgeois of the July Monarchy, his contentment with the status quo the result of his own economic comfort: an income of twelve thousand francs a year compared to the average annual salary of a worker, which totalled six hundred francs. Not surprisingly, Prudhomme is eager to guard his wealth and corresponding social status, and thus fully embraces the period's social hierarchy, of which he anchors the healthy middle. In his words: "to each his place, to each his responsibilities."²¹ Monnier's Prudhomme took the notion of the *juste milieu* to such heights that the character earned a place in the French language: *prudhomerie* and *prudhommesque*, as the epitome of mediocrity. Honoré Daumier's Robert-Macaire was equally self-interested. From hypnotist to doctor to banker to lawyer, the conman exploits and exposes the period's love of money. His financial schemes reveal the corruption, dishonesty and greed born from a value system based on money. The target is not only Louis-Philippe and his plutocratic government, but also the bourgeoisie as the emblem of commerce and materialism.²² From caricature to the court—Macaire and Prudhomme, Louis-Philippe and Guizot—the bourgeois of the July Monarchy grew to mythical proportions: conservative, mercantile, self-interested, small-minded, treacherous and exploitative—banal but brutal.

Grandville's Bourgeois Kingdom

Grandville, as noted, chose an alternative strategy to that of his artistic contemporaries, employing the trope of the animal to critique the July Monarchy. Like Daumier and Monnier, Grandville's principal target was the bourgeoisie, notably the *grande bourgeoisie*, the class most representative of government policies and practices. And just like that of Daumier and Monnier, Grandville's critique of the bourgeoisie came on the heels of the reinstatement of prior censorship in 1835, which made direct criticism of the King and the government all but

impossible. Prior to 1835, Grandville worked as a political caricaturist, contributing to *La Silhouette*, *La Caricature* and *Le Charivari*. In 1829, he published his first collection of hybrid animal-human figures: *Les Métamorphoses du jour*. Although the bourgeoisie is the subject of several of the album's lithographs, the critique is much more light-hearted—a bourgeois husband flirting with the maid, for example. The satire is also distributed among different social groups: painters, teachers, soldiers, writers. It is only later, in 1840 with the publication of *Les Animaux*, at the height of bourgeois power, that the bourgeoisie takes centre stage in Grandville's work.

Scènes de la vie privée et publique des Animaux opens with a revolution: the animals at the Parisian zoo decide to publish a collection of their own stories as a means to counter what they see as man's misrepresentation of animal life. As the title indicates, the work is to be a behind-the-scenes look at the animal kingdom. The title itself is a play on the writings of Honoré de Balzac (1799-1850), the master of *scènes*, the collected tales of his *Comédie humaine* (1842-1848) divided into *scènes de la vie privée*, *scènes de la vie de province*, *scènes de la vie parisienne*, etc. Following Balzac's model, *Scènes de la vie privée et publique des animaux* is an unveiling: the animal authors reveal the intricacies and intimate details of both their public and private lives. The animal, however, is merely, in the publisher Pierre Jules Hetzel's (1814-1886) words, "a cover."²³ The real target, as Hetzel continues, is man and "the foibles of our time."²⁴ Enter the bourgeoisie, the personification of the period and all its ills. Take the landlord, for example. In Grandville's animal kingdom, the landlord is a vulture dressed in a black overcoat, white cravat, vest and top hat, holding a cane with snuffbox and pocket watch tucked in vest (figure 1). His body and attire suggest the perfect bourgeois gentleman. Yet his head argues otherwise. The conflation: man and beast, landlord and vulture, is, of course, the source of Grandville's critique. The landlord as vulture implies that he is rapacious and feeds on carrion,

specifically renters, leading his tenants to their financial death. A similar metonymic substitution can be made from man to social class. As Priscilla P. Clark demonstrates, the landlord or *rentier* was a frequent literary stand-in for the bourgeoisie, as he symbolized the class's accumulation of wealth via land and property.²⁵ Grandville makes the same equation, with the landlord's round belly and locked money-chest as visual signs of economic wealth.



Fig. 1. J. J. Grandville, “Mr. Vulture, the hard-hearted landlord.”
Illustration from *Scènes de la vie privée et publique des animaux* (1842).

What is more, the landlord fiercely guards his wealth and corresponding social status, as he scans the street, his eyes alert, and his long, sharp beak a weapon against potential attack. His real power, however, stems from the rent notification slip in his hand. With one signature, one delivery, the landlord can deliver a mortal blow.

Grandville's portrait of the landlord—animal head/human body—falls within the longstanding theoretical and artistic tradition of animal imagery, dating back to Aesop's fables (ca. 620-560 BC), which subscribes to a series of correspondences between human physical traits and animal behaviour, as in pseudo-Aristotle's treatise *Physiognomonica* in which "a small forehead means stupidity, as in swine: too large a forehead, lethargy as in cattle," etc.²⁶ Nineteenth-century France witnessed a revival of such thought, spurred on by the advent of zoology, physiognomy and comparative biology, all of which popularized human-animal analogies and the practice of interpreting external physical features as signs of inner character. The use of hybrid animal/human figures in caricature also has an established history in France, dating back to the French Revolution, during which time images frequently portrayed members of the royal family and court as animals: La Fayette as a centaur, Bailly as a turkey, Necker as a shrimp and Louis XVI as a pig.²⁷ The main difference between revolutionary caricatures and Grandville's later images is that the former featured animal bodies with human heads. As Annie Duprat explains, to give the king or a member of the court an animal head would have been the "supreme transgression," transforming the "site of consciousness and thought."²⁸ Yet this is precisely what Grandville does to the landlord, replacing his human head—intellect, identity and character—with its animal counterpart. The transformation implies that the two creatures are related, and, more importantly, that the correlation between human and animal is behavioural as

well as physical: they are of one mind *and* one body. The human body-animal head pairing also invites a dual reading: man as animal, animal as man. By fusing physical elements from both man and animal, Grandville moves beyond anthropomorphism, asking viewers to see society in terms of its animal qualities. Indeed, Grandville's choice of specific animal-human combinations demands such a reading. The bourgeois landlord of the nineteenth century is much more a vulture than the vulture a landlord.

This visual and metaphorical paradigm is repeated throughout *Les Animaux*. Consider Grandville's portrait of a banker, whose profession as owner of property and/or capital parallels that of the landlord, placing him at the top of the bourgeoisie (figure 2).



Fig. 2. J. J. Grandville, "A Banker." Illustration from *Scènes de la vie privée et publique des animaux* (1842).

Like the very real Lafitte and Casimir Périer, the banker is the new king of the July Monarchy's political jungle. In Grandville's animal kingdom, however, the banker is a turkey, stuffed into a waistcoat of feathers, his plumes bursting out of his buttoned vest. Like the landlord/vulture, the banker is neither entirely human nor entirely animal: he has the legs and partial body of a man and the head of a turkey. The fusion of animal and human forces viewers to compare the two: both are greedy, insatiable beasts. And as the turkey scours the ground for grain, the banker hunts for gold, his perch lined with bags of coins. Yet what the banker possesses in wealth, he lacks in intelligence, as the turkey is commonly believed to be one of the least clever birds—witness the colloquial expression, in French and English, of a “turkey” as a dupe. Grandville prefaces this interpretation by transforming the banker's head, suggesting that the banker not only looks and acts like a turkey, he thinks like one. Equally damning is the fact that domestic turkeys are generally unable to fly. Selective breeding and over-feeding have grounded the birds. The same can be said for the banker in that his is an unproductive profession, based on hoarding and consumption. And in keeping with the turkey, as the banker eats, he grows fatter. The comparison, banker to turkey, reflects back on the bourgeoisie, notably the *grande bourgeoisie*, setting the class up as the ultimate consumer: gluttonous and inactive, eating, but doing no physical work. As we consider the series of analogies called forth in Grandville's image, perhaps the real turkey is not the banker but those whose labour and savings go to fatten him up.

A similar critique of bourgeois wealth and consumption appears in a later image of a men's club dinner. Here, a hippopotamus, an ape, a frog, a pig and a deer raise their glasses at a

celebratory feast (figure 3). The accompanying narrative explains how this particular group is celebrating the recent *coup d'état*, which it orchestrated, installing a new editor for their collected



Fig. 3. J. J. Grandville, "A Banquet." Illustration from *Scènes de la vie privée et publique des animaux* (1842).

stories. Although all of the characters in the narrative are animals, Grandville gives each a human body, blurring the boundaries between man and animal. It is this ambiguity that allows us to read the image in both ways: animals acting like humans and humans acting like animals. In the case of the former, the animals mimic nineteenth-century French politics, namely the revolution of 1830, in which the bourgeoisie led the charge against Charles X. In the animal narrative, the deposed editor is a monkey, and the new leader a Reynard. This reversal suggests that the animals, like the bourgeoisie, have ousted a buffoon only to install a cunning fox. As noted, initial hopes for a republic were quickly dashed when Louis-Philippe took the throne. For the wealthy bourgeoisie, however, this is of no concern. They have obtained exactly what they wanted: they have replaced the landed aristocracy to become the period's new ruling elite. In Grandville's image, the animals celebrate that victory, drinking, eating and, as the caption states, "toasting the fair sex," the party punctuated with all the trappings of human consumption.

We can read this same image in reverse: the bourgeoisie of 1830 as a herd of animals, from hippopotamus to pig. The varying species reflect the diverse nature of the bourgeoisie, which is nonetheless united in its shared appetite for power. The bottle of champagne, the remnants of food on the plates, as well as the drooling pig and the hippopotamus's lascivious tongue imply unbridled indulgence. Here, we have the new ruling class, or in Duclerc's words, the new aristocracy: a lazy, dirty, fat pig; a bulbous frog, who spends his days catching flies on the lily pad; and the buck or deer, whose homonym in French is *serf*, a word-play that emphasizes the bourgeoisie's supposedly common origins. Their spokesman is a hippopotamus, his size reflective of the bourgeoisie's growing political and economic stature. However, the ape implies that this new class is a mere parody, a paltry imitation of the aristocracy's *ancien régime*. What is more, this is the same class that will eventually turn its back on the workers and peasants

who helped it to power. As Roger Magraw explains, “the distinctive feature of ‘1830’ was the success with which the bourgeoisie incited and manipulated popular unrest to oust the regime, and then turned to repression of artisan and peasant agitation.”²⁹ In public, the bourgeois is the self-proclaimed gentleman, espousing hard work, democracy and fraternity. Yet in the private dining room of his club, he is an animal.

The landlord, banker and men’s club dinner, albeit only a few of the many images in *Les Animaux*, illustrate both Grandville’s aesthetic and his critique of the bourgeoisie. Here the focus has been predominantly on *la grande bourgeoisie*. However, the work’s critique extends to the bourgeoisie at large, including civil servants, doctors, lawyers, scientists; the new bourgeois art of photography; as well as bourgeois courtship, marriage, motherhood and family. And while *Les Animaux* also includes portraits of the upper and lower classes, the bourgeoisie remains the primary target. And what a target it is: a menagerie of gluttonous parasites, which amounts to a reversed animal kingdom in that pigs, turkeys, vultures and apes rule. Grandville’s portrait thus both mocks the bourgeoisie and calls into question its ascendancy, suggesting that the bourgeois’ rise to power is unjust *and* unnatural. This critique is made possible by Grandville’s use of the animal, as his hybrid figures play off the correspondences between human and animal behaviour, creating a series of substitutions that highlight the ridiculous, if not dangerous, aspects of the bourgeoisie, such as its greed. More importantly, Grandville’s strategic choice of replacing human with animal head points to a totalizing metamorphosis: mind and spirit, leading the body, as the bourgeois becomes animal. This approach sets Grandville apart from period caricaturists and his predecessors. Likewise, the use of visual caricature distinguishes Grandville from writers, such as Balzac, who also employed the animal to mock social groups.³⁰ Where the writer’s comparisons, by the very nature of language, remain metaphorical, Grandville’s offer

viewers an actual simulation: the landlord *as* vulture. It is Grandville's process of visualization that allows the viewer literally to see the bourgeoisie's animal nature. Through the lens of his parody, the so-called new aristocracy appears as beasts in human clothing.

For Sale: The Bourgeoisie and Book Illustration

Les Animaux's fierce parody of the bourgeoisie did not dampen sales. As stated, the work sold a reported fourteen thousand copies within its first months of publication. It is important to note, however, that *Les Animaux* was initially published in serial format: fifty weekly instalments, published from November 1840 to November 1841, each comprised of eight pages of text along with in-text illustrations, plus two individual, pull-out plates.³¹ The instalment system boosted sales in that people could purchase the work one issue at a time, making small weekly payments. It also attracted occasional buyers, whose sporadic purchases equally increased sales. In the case of *Les Animaux*, the instalment system proved so successful that the work's publisher, Hetzel, quickly signed Grandville for an extended contract of fifty additional issues, which appeared the following year: November 1841 to December 1842. The second series achieved similar success, pushing sales to an estimated twenty-five thousand copies.³² *Les Animaux* maintained its popularity throughout the century with reprints and/or re-editions in 1844, 1852, 1866, 1867 and 1868.³³ As Annie Renonciat concludes, *Les Animaux* was "one of the most successful works of the time and Grandville's best."³⁴

In the critics' minds, what made *Les Animaux* great were its images. As noted, *Les Animaux* is an illustrated text. Grandville's portraits are accompanied by short narratives by some of the period's most popular writers: Honoré de Balzac, Charles Nodier, Jules Janin and Alfred de Musset. While these narratives are an important element to the work, they fall outside

the scope of this article. Moreover, based on the conception of *Les Animaux*—designed as a showcase for Grandville’s signature figures—one could argue that the narratives serve primarily as textual backdrop for Grandville’s images. As Hetzel, writing under the pseudonym P. J. Stahl explains in the introduction to *Les Animaux*: “Our thought in publishing this book was to add words to Grandville’s marvelous animals and to partner our pen with his pencil to help him critique the foibles of our time.”³⁵ Hetzel espouses a partnership between writer and artist, but Grandville clearly dominates; it is his animals that are the basis for the work. Indeed, *Les Animaux* contains 320 illustrations, including in-text and pull-out plates, the image making up roughly two-thirds of the work.³⁶ As the title page and various advertisements proclaim, *Les Animaux* is Grandville’s work: “par Grandville.” He is not only its artist; he is its author. Critics read the work accordingly, repeatedly focusing on Grandville and his images: “this book, splendidly illustrated by Grandville;” “Grandville, the head inspirationist;” “never has Grandville shown himself to be a more skillful illustrator;” “We can only repeat the unanimous praise that the press has already given Mr. Grandville. Let’s be content with saying that the compositions of the second volume are as ingenious, as funny, as perfect as those of the first volume.”³⁷ Charles Blanc summed up the critics’ response to *Les Animaux* in a posthumous biography of the artist: “What perfection in [*Les Animaux*]! Such a book was only possible with Grandville and by him.”³⁸

The focus on Grandville and his portraits signals a revision of book illustration. Traditionally the writer dominated, the word itself the basis for illustration, but in *Les Animaux*, it is the artist who reigns, his images the primary text, while the narratives function as verbal illustration. As noted, Grandville is listed as the work’s author on the title page, while the writers appear as “collaborators.” This shift in illustrational practices is part of a larger trend, *Les*

Animaux being one of a number of illustrated books, anthologies and albums from the same period, such as *Les Français peints par eux-mêmes* (1840-1842), *Le Diable à Paris* (1845), Tony Johannot's *Voyage où il vous plaira* (1843), Grandville's own *Un Autre monde* (1844) and Gavarni's *Oeuvres choisies* (1846-1848), in which the image was given equal, and at times exclusive, billing in relation to the word. These works and the prevalence of illustration were, in part, the result of technical advances. End-cut wood engraving and the mechanical press made illustrations easier and cheaper to produce, spawning a flood of illustrated texts, from schoolbooks to contemporary novels, newspapers to advertisements. This influx of illustration marks the beginnings of mass visual culture, the image permeating public and private space as never before. In Michel Melot's words, "from the nineteenth century on, one can no longer do without images."³⁹

Behind the rise of the image during the July Monarchy stands the bourgeois: his tastes and money fuelling the market for illustration. First, in terms of cost, illustrated books remained relatively expensive: from 15 to 45 francs per volume compared to standard book prices, which ranged from 3.50 francs to 7.50.⁴⁰ The majority of illustrated books from the 1840s, like *Les Animaux*, were published in instalments, priced at 10 to 50 centimes per issue, which lowered initial costs. These same prices, nonetheless, amounted to between 2.5% and 25% of a worker's daily wage, which ranged from 2 to 4 francs. As a result, the poorer classes may have occasionally purchased an issue or two, or rented them from a reading room, but repeat purchases and/or buying the entire volume at 15 or 20 francs was beyond their financial reach. The illustrated book of the July Monarchy was thus limited to the realm of the bourgeoisie and upper classes, those who could afford the cost of images. Yet illustrated texts were not just a question of money, for as the market developed, they quickly became a matter of aesthetics:

high versus low art. On the one side, metal engraving reigned as the “academic technique *par excellence*.”⁴¹ Time-consuming and costly, metal engraving mirrored the paintings and sculptures it reproduced, earning the status of a fellow member of the *beaux-arts*. Wood engraving anchored the opposite end of the aesthetic scale. Although the introduction of the burin, or line-engraving tool, resulted in more precise and detailed images, wood engraving maintained its reputation as a “popular” art, with its crude images that were cheap, easy to produce and destined for the public at large. For these latter reasons, wood engraving was the medium of choice for the majority of publishers during the July Monarchy, and as more and more illustrated texts were produced, wood engraving became aligned with commerce. As the painter and future member of the Academy of Fine Arts, Frédéric de Mercey, opined in 1843, wood engraving is “of bad taste and of an industrial mindset,” producing nothing but a “debauchery of illustrations commercially conceived.”⁴² Herein lies the link between the illustrated books of the July Monarchy and the bourgeoisie: commercial images, priced out of reach of the lower classes, but aesthetically beneath the traditional patrons of “high” art, the aristocracy. Mercantile and, from de Mercey’s perspective, mediocre, the illustrated book of the July Monarchy aimed for the middle, directly at the bourgeoisie.

This was most certainly true of Grandville’s *Les Animaux*. While Hetzel touted the work as “a book that amateurs of beautiful editions will know how to appreciate”—first-rate engravings, typography, printing and paper—its price, 15 francs per volume, and the exclusive use of wood engraving placed *Les Animaux* in a more modest market.⁴³ In fact, de Mercey cited *Les Animaux* as an example of “carnival literature, peddler literature, literature for women and for children.”⁴⁴ Actual sales are difficult to trace; however, *Les Animaux* most likely fell between Hetzel’s and de Mercey’s assessment, attracting a potentially mixed audience, but an audience

that was nevertheless dominated by the bourgeoisie. Grandville documents this audience in an illustration from *Les Animaux* in which a pair of street hawkers distributes flyers for the forthcoming work (figure 4). The two salesmen have attracted a crowd of potential consumers, including workers—the dog in his apron, the crow in a maid’s cap and shawl—as well as petit-



Fig. 4. J. J. Grandville, “Street Hawkers.” Illustration from *Scènes de la vie privée et publique des animaux* (1842).

bourgeois and bourgeois customers—the frog in elegant jacket; the owl, parrot and crane, dressed in hat and necktie, the window frame suggesting a bourgeois family. This is the audience

of *Les Animaux*, the bourgeoisie punctuated by an occasional worker. In the vein of many satirical texts, *Les Animaux* thus parodies its primary audience, mocking bourgeois greed, wealth and consumption as the same bourgeois consumes the artist's images. As *Les Animaux* and Grandville's portrait of street hawkers bear witness, what the bourgeoisie, if not the public at large, wants is not just illustrations, but images of itself: a mirror, as the critic for *L'Artiste* stated, in the form of an illustrated book.

Conclusion: Taming the Bourgeoisie

Grandville illustrates the web of visual pleasure, parody and consumption that grounds *Les Animaux* in a final image set in the Museum of Natural History (figure 5).



Fig. 5. J. J. Grandville, "The Museum of Natural History." Illustration from *Scènes de la vie privée et publique des animaux* (1842).

Here, a group of visitors gazes at an animal exhibit: a giraffe, zebra, deer, bear, tiger and a selection of birds. In the crowd, there is a well-dressed man and woman on the far left; a bourgeois gentleman ahead of them, wearing top hat and black jacket; two soldiers in the middle; a working-class couple posed next to them; and, finally, a young man—also in top hat and black jacket—on the far right, who is carefully scrutinizing the base of the statue before him. At first glance, these people appear human due to their clothing and posture. Upon closer inspection, however, we see that they have animal heads: namely those of a cockatoo, a dog and a swallow. Moreover, they are framed by two similar statues: a bust of a man/turkey and a life-sized figure of a man/donkey. This combination of hybrid animal-humans and actual animals encapsulates Grandville's visual universe, in which humans and animals play off each other as physical and symbolic mirrors. It also presents a situation in which the diegetic audience is simultaneously looking at itself, in the form of the animal-human statues, and its animal other via the stuffed specimens on display. The same is true for the historic audience of *Les Animaux*, in that the bourgeoisie of the July Monarchy saw a version of itself in the veiled form of the artist's hybrid characters. As they look at *Les Animaux*, they mimic the figures in the image, viewing both representations of themselves and their animal counterparts. The parallel between the diegetic and extradiegetic audience suggests that the viewers of *Les Animaux* have their own animal qualities. Just as the swallow/soldier and the dog/bourgeois, they too have been transformed by the artist's pencil; their own beastliness reflected in the portraits of their animalistic others. This transformation is the basis for parody as the genre is based on distortion, but a distortion in which the original object is nonetheless recognizable. For Grandville's images, the transformation is of an animal nature, the animal and its archetypal qualities easily identified and

then mapped on to the human figure. In *Les Animaux*, viewers see man and animal, *animal* as man, *man* as animal, and ultimately *themselves* as animal. This is made possible via the animal head, as it allows viewers to recognize the figure, yet remain distanced. Paradoxically, the animal mask both facilitates and blocks identification. Such is the power of caricature; we laugh at the person before us from the privileged space of external viewer. The landlord/vulture may look and/or act like us, but it is simply an artistic illusion.

Illusion or not, Grandville demonstrates a certain hold over the bourgeoisie. They, in large part, supported the publication of *Les Animaux*, both in terms of subject matter and sales. Like the animals on display in Grandville's Museum of Natural History, they are fixed on the pages of *Les Animaux*, offered up for public scrutiny and critique. What is more, they are paying to see this exhibit, to see not just images of themselves, but a parody of themselves. Grandville plays the role of docent or even zookeeper, feeding the bourgeois' visual, if not narcissistic, desires. The metaphor of a zoo—artist as keeper, bourgeois as animal, *Les Animaux* as cage—implies that Grandville has temporarily tamed the bourgeoisie. Indeed, by first metamorphosing the bourgeois into animals, then putting them on display, and finally by making them consumers of this same process, the artist domesticates the period's new ruling class, reducing their political and social status to a series of visual *bêtises*. As viewers close the book, they close the cage on the July Monarchy and its dominant social class, the bourgeoisie's power metaphorically contained within the covers of a book.

We cannot forget, however, that the artist is in a cage of his own, for without the bourgeoisie, there would be no text and no sales. In the case of *Les Animaux*, Grandville earned an estimated 18,500 francs, making him one of the highest paid illustrators of the period.⁴⁵ He equally gained a greater artistic reputation, *Les Animaux* giving him the recognition and status to

publish several later illustrated works, in which he was the sole artist. The bourgeoisie proved to be Grandville's favorite target, his best customer and one of his greatest aesthetic achievements. This formulation coincides with Grandville's chosen medium: caricature. As Michele Hannoosh argues, "caricature follows the path of all revolutionary forms and activities: it binds itself to the model it is dethroning, and is sustained by the system it attacks."⁴⁶ Grandville takes a similar road, mocking the bourgeoisie while relying on its support. His signature on the life-sized statue in the museum image testifies that Grandville, the artist, is a part of the very world he critiques. Earning an average of 8,000 francs a year—compared with the annual salary of an engraver, of 1,000-1,500 francs, and that of a diplomat, of nearly 10,000 francs—Grandville was himself, at least financially, a bourgeois.⁴⁷ The artist thus finds himself locked in his own cage.

From satire to sales, *Les Animaux* attests to the simultaneous rise of the bourgeoisie and the image. Moving to the forefront of social and political debate, the bourgeoisie garnered greater attention and critique from artists, writers and political adversaries. This attention included caricature and visual satire, as the bourgeoisie became the stand-in for the July Monarchy and its ideology. As evinced by *Les Animaux*, the adjective "bourgeois" came to signify greed, wealth, idleness, exploitation and mediocrity, ironically a description quite similar to traditional critiques of the displaced aristocracy. The bourgeoisie was also one of the greatest consumers of this same satire, funding a large portion of the wave of illustrated texts that swept through the July Monarchy. Their affinity for *Les Animaux* supports the adage that, above all, we prefer our own image. *Les Animaux* lays bare this process, its portrait of the bourgeoisie an important record of the bourgeois' ascendancy in the nineteenth century and its role in the growth of visual culture. Moreover, Grandville's hybrid figures are just as unique and powerful today as they were in 1840. Unlike the majority of contemporary, popular animal imagery—

Disney being the example *par excellence*, which adorns animals with human accoutrements, speech and behaviour, yet leaves their physical bodies intact—Grandville’s figures block any such comfortable transfer. In Grandville’s visual formulation, the human body and all its functions are part of the animal world. His singular combination of human bodies and animal heads forces each of us to confront our own animal within.

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Notes

¹ Unless otherwise noted, all translations are my own. “*Scènes de la vie privée et publique des animaux*” (*L’Artiste* 1.24, 1842), 282.

² James Cuno, “Charles Philipon, La Maison Aubert, and the Business of Caricature in Paris, 1829-41” (*Art Journal*, Winter, 1983), 349.

³ “*Scènes de la vie privée et publique des animaux*” (*Le Charivari*, 5 December 1841); Martin Lyons, “Les Best-Sellers” in Roger Chartier and Henri-Jean Martin, eds., *Histoire de l’édition française: Le temps des éditeurs, du romantisme à la Belle Epoque* (Paris: Fayard/Cercle de la Librairie, 1990), 417.

⁴ Ségolène Le Men, “Book Illustration,” in Peter Collier and Robert Lethbridge, eds., *Artistic Relations: Literature and the Visual Arts in Nineteenth-Century France* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 95-98.

⁵ Judith Goldstein, “Realism without a Human Face” in Margaret Cohen and Christopher Prendergast, eds., *Spectacles of Realism: Gender, Body, Genre* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995), 66-89.

⁶ Philippe Kaenel, “Le buffon de l’humanité: la zoologie politique de J.-J. Grandville, 1803-1847” (*Revue de l’art* 74, 1986), 21-28 and Clive F. Getty, “Physiognomy, Science and Romantic Visual Satire” in Keith Busby, ed., *Correspondances: Studies in Literature, History and the Arts in Nineteenth-Century France* (Atlanta: Rodopi, 1992), 71-102.

⁷ Vanessa R. Schwartz and Jeannene M. Przyblyski, eds., *The Nineteenth-Century Visual Cultural Reader* (New York: Routledge, 2004) and Petra ten-Doesschate Chu and Gabriel P. Weisberg, eds., *The Popularization of Images: Visual Culture under the July Monarchy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994).

⁸ Adeline Daumard, *Les Bourgeois et la bourgeoisie en France depuis 1815* (Paris: Flammarion, 1991), 35.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 35-36.

¹⁰ Priscilla P. Clark, *The Battle of the Bourgeois: The Novel in France, 1789-1848* (Paris: Librairie Marcel Didier, 1973), 20.

¹¹ Roger Magraw, *France 1814-1915, The Bourgeois Century* (Oxford: Fontana Paperbacks, 1983), 17.

¹² Jean Lhomme, *La Grande Bourgeoisie au pouvoir (1830-1880): Essai sur l’histoire sociale de la France* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1960), 35.

- ¹³ Ibid., 42.
- ¹⁴ Magraw, 49.
- ¹⁵ Daumard, 43.
- ¹⁶ César Graña, *Bohemian Versus Bourgeois: French Society and the French Man of Letters in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: Basic Books, 1964), 10.
- ¹⁷ Paul H. Beik, *Louis Philippe and the July Monarchy* (Princeton: D. Van Nostrand Company, 1965), 20.
- ¹⁸ Magraw, 71.
- ¹⁹ Cited in Daumard, 47-48.
- ²⁰ Henri Monnier, *Mémoires de Monsieur Joseph Prudhomme*, 2 vols. (Paris: Librairie nouvelle, 1857), 2. 267.
- ²¹ Cited in Colette A. M. Dimic, "Henry Monnier et la satire du bourgeois à l'époque Biedermeier" (*Arcadia* 23.1, 1988), 68.
- ²² Judith Wechsler, *A Human Comedy: Physiognomy and Caricature in 19th Century Paris* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 82.
- ²³ Pierre-Jules Hetzel, preface to *Scènes de la vie privée et publique des animaux* by J. J. Grandville, 2 vols. (Paris: J. Hetzel et Paulin, 1842), 1. 1.
- ²⁴ Ibid.
- ²⁵ Clark, 112.
- ²⁶ Cited in Getty, 73.
- ²⁷ Annie Duprat, "Le sage, même à cinquante ans profite à l'école des bêtes" in Alain Niderst, ed., *L'Animalité: hommes et animaux dans la littérature française* (Tübingen: Günter Narr Verlag, 1994), 131-148.
- ²⁸ Ibid., 138.
- ²⁹ Magraw, 48.
- ³⁰ Kenneth Rivers, "Balzac and Visual Caricature" (*Revue du Pacifique* 3, 1977), 123-124, 128; and Michel Thérien, "Métaphores animales et écriture balzacienne, le portrait et la description" (*L'Année balzacienne*, 1979), 193-208.
- ³¹ Rose Fortassier, Introduction, *Peines de cœur d'une chatte anglaise*, by Honoré de Balzac (Paris: Flammarion, 1985), 10.
- ³² Annie Renonciat, *La Vie et l'œuvre de J. J. Grandville* (Paris: ACR Edition Internationale, 1985), 207.
- ³³ Ibid.
- ³⁴ Ibid., 208.
- ³⁵ Hetzel, 1. 1.
- ³⁶ Renonciat, 204; and Gordon N. Ray, *The Art of the French Illustrated Book, 1700-1914*, 2 vols. (New York: The Pierpont Morgan Library and Cornell University Press, 1982), 2. 273.
- ³⁷ *Le Charivari*; *L'Artiste* 7.22 (1841), 167; and *L'Artiste*, 1842, 283.
- ³⁸ Charles Blanc, *Les Artistes de mon temps* (Paris: Firmin-Didot et Cie, 1876), 306.
- ³⁹ Michel Melot, "Le texte et l'image" in Roger Chartier and Henri-Jean Martin, eds., *Histoire de l'édition française: Le temps des éditeurs, du romantisme à la Belle Époque* (Paris: Fayard/Cercle de la Librairie, 1990), 330.
- ⁴⁰ Jean-Pierre Seguin, "Tableau du livre romantique" in Jean Adhémar and Jean-Pierre Seguin, eds., *Le Livre Romantique* (Paris: Éditions du chêne, 1968), 30-31, 38.
- ⁴¹ Stephen Bann, *Parallel Lines: Printmakers, Painters and Photographers in Nineteenth-Century France* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), 87.
- ⁴² Frédéric de Mercey, published under the pseudonym of Frédéric de Lagenevais, "La littérature illustrée" (*Revue des deux mondes* 1, 1843), 648.
- ⁴³ Renonciat, 204.
- ⁴⁴ de Mercey, 655.
- ⁴⁵ Cited in Renonciat, 147.
- ⁴⁶ Michele Hannoosh, *Baudelaire and Caricature: From the Comic to an Art of Modernity* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1992), 22.
- ⁴⁷ Renonciat, 148.