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Propositions

for the PhD dissertation

Temminck's Order. Debates on Zoological Classification: 1800–1850,

by Maria Eulàlia Gassó Miracle

1. Temminck's changing status among his peers is a reflection of the development of systematics between 1800 and 1850.
2. *'s Rijksmuseum van Natuurlijke Historie* was founded as an institution detached from the Leiden University because of the emergence of systematics as a separate discipline from anatomy.
3. Temminck's classificatory work and his law of the distribution patterns of mammals reveal that, despite the emphasis he put on defining groups, his focus was actually on similarity, stressing continuity above divisions.
4. The concept of *genus* was essential in nineteenth-century systematics: it carried the basic premises for constructing the natural system and, ultimately, for understanding the natural order.
5. The main drivers behind the development of systematics were standardization, an increasing specialization, and the rise of a meritocracy.
6. By the mid-nineteenth century, systematics had become a discipline within natural history.
7. The status of systematics depended on whether or not it succeeded in providing causal explanations for natural phenomena. This was true in 1850, and it still is today.
8. Between 1820 and 1850, the British took the lead in the democratization of natural history.
9. A lower status of a particular scientific discipline in the disciplinary pecking-order results in its historiographic paucity.
10. Without more research on its history, Dutch natural history is doomed to be routinely excluded from the global history of science.
11. Linking initiatives within the domains of digital humanities and cultural heritage to museum object databases will push the history of science forward.
12. Serendipity plays a very important role in the work of the historian of science.