

certain parameters: many criteria influence the way the adult horse will come out, and not all of these criteria can be foreseen” (221). These animals’ value was contingent on their health, the status of their owners, color, care, and potential use.

Several contributors refute prominent narratives and provide surprising connections. Jürg Gassmann counters the widely held assertion that medieval cavalry primarily served a shock function by driving into static infantry formations; rather, he argues, they “rode up to, but not into” cohesive infantry formations (72). Brownrigg contends that the horse collar was not “a medieval intervention that revolutionized transport by replacing inefficient ancient harnesses, which had choked the horses” (55). Jennifer Jobst deconstructs riding before a prince, from the manège movements to turnout, noting that the rider ought to trot toward the prince, halt, and bow in a practice still preserved in the modern dressage test. While one of the volume’s strengths is its range of approaches, this is also a weakness; much of the most innovative research centers on material analysis alongside administrative documents, and this might have been highlighted as a central theme across all essays. In sum, contributors’ use of their archival, linguistic, material, and equestrian expertise provides a number of clear windows into premodern Europe’s practical horsemanship across social strata.

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doi:10.1017/rqx.2022.37

Animals and Courts: Europe, c. 1200–1800. Mark Hengerer and Nadir Weber, eds. Oldenbourg: De Gruyter, 2020. viii + 434 pp. \$103.99.

A volume bringing together court studies and historical animal studies is very welcome. Mark Hengerer and Nadir Weber put forward seventeen essays, plus introduction and epilogue. These approach court animals from a variety of disciplinary perspectives and case studies, thoughtfully themed into four sections. Throughout these sections, attention is paid to court performance, ritual, and ceremony, during a period in which the medieval knight gave way to the early modern courtier and the elite continued to display, define, and redefine themselves through the animal body.

The volume considers gendered practices of breeding, training, using, gifting, loving, and killing animals. Court staff are brought to life—in the stables, the kennels, as handlers of exotics—and the world beyond court intersects with its animal concerns, for instance, in the witch called to heal sick Este horses in Elena Taddei’s essay. Animals appear in groups, as teams of German carriage horses (Magdalena Bayreuther’s chapter) or French hunting dogs (Maïke Schmidt) and as named individuals (e.g., Triton the Spitz in Andreas Erb’s essay). We meet animals on the move, such as horses between Ferrara and Germany (Taddei); or exotics to and from the Portuguese court (Catarina Simões); and animals at home, as with companion animals in Maria

Aresin's fascinating chapter on squirrels, Fabian Jonietz's on animal commemoration, and Katharine MacDonogh's on the pets of royal women.

Some chapters are more descriptive, while others have a more forceful analytical bite; some more focused on the human, others more open to animal experience. Overall though, the volume offers a rich array of courtly interspecific interactions. Many chapters are beautifully illustrated and a stimulating range of sources and evidence speak to each other: visual, material, literary (e.g., in Julia Weitbrecht's essay); archival, printed (e.g., in the chapter by John Villiers); archaeological, zoological, and genetic (e.g., in the study of the black francolin, a game bird whose fate in Western Europe was bound with courtly hunting, medical, and dietary practices [Giovanni Forcina et al.]).

To give a taste of other thought-provoking chapters: Thierry Buquet gives a wide-ranging assessment of the use of hunting cheetahs at European courts. Mackenzie Cooley deftly sets Italian horse breeding and horsemanship in the context of developments in warfare and the role of the mounted nobleman, and increasing marginalization of the peninsula in terms of international power, if not of cultural (including equestrian) influence. Sarah G. Duncan zooms in further on occupants of the stable to illuminate stable design and day-to-day horse management. Christian Jaser evokes the fast-paced world of the palio, from preparation and stud infrastructure to race day to commemoration of victories among jostling Italian courts. Armelle Fémelat's chapter on portraits of favorite dogs and horses in Mantua reflects on visual recordings of genuine emotional bonds with real-life animals.

A standout chapter is Fabian Persson's "Unruly Display: The Challenges of Working with Animals in Swedish Royal Spectacle." This puts animals firmly center stage, recognizing that "the inclusion of animals in courtly display came with problems attached. . . . There were inevitable clashes with another highly valued quality: order" (266). A skittish horse might spoil a parade, dogs or monkeys destroy precious interiors, a lion not fight on command, or conversely a leopard might kill a servant and escape its cage; besides, "on an everyday level, animals smelt unusual, ate things they should not, and left unwanted souvenirs" (280).

A great strength of this book is Mieke Roscher's epilogue. Roscher pulls out important themes, discussing the human-animal entanglements at the heart of the volume; the living beings put to symbolic use; the place of the animal body and material artifacts; and relational agency. The epilogue proposes that court studies take the opportunity to evaluate the growing body of scholarship on different times and places, to adopt a "longue durée approach to courtly animal practices," one which "also takes the methods offered by human-animal studies seriously" (406). This packed volume certainly points to paths forward for future research into the ways in which, across changing historical circumstances, the court made animals and animals made the court.

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doi:10.1017/rqx.2022.38