



Animal History Network

Hayvanât Newsletter

20
25



Spring



Animal Representations in the Rijksmuseum's Art Collections



The works displayed in the *Rijksmuseum* (Amsterdam) reveal the place of animals within historical and social life. Spanning themes from labor to status, from representation to companionship, these depictions demonstrate that animals were not merely subjects of paintings but active agents in life itself.

This study, which examines the Rijksmuseum's artworks through an animal-focused lens, brings a fresh perspective to art history. Paintings reflecting their periods often feature numerous animal figures. Artists depicted what they saw, perceived, and valued in their surroundings. In the museum's paintings, animals appear as actors fulfilling roles related to labor, status symbols, and representation—on the streets, under trees, on farms, in wars, and within domestic spaces. They are also frequently used in symbolic ways.



Animal Representations in the Rijksmuseum's Art Collections



To grasp animal experiences, certain questions arise that challenge us to view the world from the animals' perspective. The common thread in these artworks is not merely the inclusion of animal figures, but the functional roles these depictions serve within broader societal narratives. From these images, we can conclude that animals are integral parts of the social fabric—beings that cannot be separated from the contexts in which they lived.

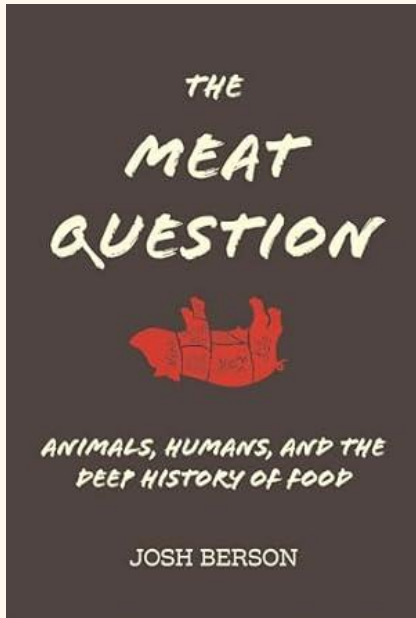
You can access the rest of the article from [here](#).



Book Introductions

The Meat Question: Animals, Humans, and the Deep History of Food

Zuhal Su Çoban [presented](#) the book "*The Meat Question: Animals, Humans, and the Deep History of Food*" written by Josh Berson.



The book examines the history of meat, particularly delving into the deep history in the initial chapters. It takes readers on a journey to the beginning of humanity, exploring the environment in which humans began developing their cognitive abilities during paleohistorical times.

Berson initially adopts a distant perspective when discussing human and non-human animals at the beginning of the book. However, as the book progresses, he takes a more genuine approach and attempts to align himself with the non-human animals while striving to maintain objectivity in his portrayal of humans and their communities, to which he also belongs.

Animals and Capital

Tara Yegani, [presented](#) the book "*Animals and Capital*" written by Dinesh Joseph Wadiwel.



Wadiwel criticizes capitalism and its exploitation of animal bodies, referencing Karl Marx extensively. The book discusses the three values that animals in the food industries have under capitalism: they are seen as raw materials, transformed into consumption commodities, and used as laborers. It sheds light on the violence involved in producing these commodities, which consumers often overlook.

It draws parallels between animals and humans forced to work, emphasizing that life and well-being are not prioritized under capitalism, with production ends taking precedence. The book highlights the crucial role of constant product movement for the survival of capital. Animals are selectively bred to increase relative surplus value, contributing to this circulation.



Announcements

The Hayvanât Team Talked at ANAMED

The **Hayvanât** team convened for a panel organized in collaboration with ANAMED (Koç University Research Center for Anatolian Civilizations). Moderated by Faisal Husain, the event explored the boundaries, sources, and methodologies of animal history.

Cihangir Gündoğdu and İbrahim Can Usta explored the historical roles of animals, providing examples from the Ottoman Empire to the early Republican Era. They emphasized that animals should not be viewed merely as passive beings but as historical agents in their own right.

Key topics discussed during the panel included tracing animal labor through archival documents and alternative sources, the invisibility of nonhuman animals in historiography, and critical perspectives on the anthropocentric structure of mainstream historical writing.

The event also introduced Hayvanât - Animal History Network, which aims to provide an interspecies perspective to Ottoman-Turkish historiography and promote collaboration among researchers in the field.

You can access the rest of the article from [here](#).





Announcements



“Hayvanların Yaşamı” Exhibition at Salt Beyoğlu

On display at Salt Beyoğlu Istanbul until August 10, the [exhibition](#) "Hayvanların Yaşamı" examines human-animal relations from the past to the present. Aiming to make interspecies life more visible, the exhibition features a striking work by Mine Yıldırım focusing on the politics of dog removal in Istanbul. The works of artists from various disciplines provide a critical perspective on human-centered historical narratives.

Hayvanât Talks Begin!

As part of the Animal Lives Exhibition, Hayvanât Talks will host **Mine Yıldırım** on **June 25**.

Titled “Between Care and Violence: The Dogs of Istanbul,” Yıldırım’s talk will focus on "Rethinking Animal History Alongside the Archive and Research Exhibition.”

The talk will take place on Wednesday, June 25, at 3:00 PM, at Santralistanbul Campus.

HAYVANÂT
KONUŞMALARI:
**İHTİMAM İLE ŞİDDET
ARASINDA:
İSTANBUL’UN
KÖPEKLERİ**



Arşiv ve
Araştırma
sergisi ile
Hayvan Tarihini
Yeniden
Düşünmek

**25 HAZİRAN
ÇARŞAMBA
15:00
SANTRALİSTANBUL
E2-102**

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