Sabine Haag (ed.)

_Echt Tierisch! Die Menagerie des Fürsten._ Bilingual (German/English) exhibition catalogue of the Kunsthistorisches Museum Vienna (KMV, Vienna, 2015); editorial coordination Thomas Kuster, Annemarie Jordan Gschwend, and Veronika Sandbichler; accompanying the exhibition with the same title at Schloss Ambras, Innsbruck (18.6.–4.10.2015). 269 pages, colour illustrations. ISBN 9783990200971.

Why would the catalogue of an Austrian exhibition on early modern princely menageries be of interest to the readership of a journal that focuses on the history of science? The first and perhaps most important reason is that the history of science itself has in recent decades opened up to the history of collecting, the practices and persons connected with the growth of expert knowledge, objects and visual material as sources of information, and the court as a place of knowledge creation in early modern Europe. The exhibition catalogue _Echt Tierisch_ covers a large number of these topics and presents a wealth of visually stunning and hugely diverse material that ranges from stuffed animals to small statues and casts, drawings and oil paintings of _naturalia_, maps, printed works, _Kunstkammer_ items constructed with parts of animals (such as Mexican feather paintings, ivory goblets, or rhinoceros horn cups), portraits of collectors and their staff, and archival documents that throw light on the how, where and why of Habsburg animal collecting in this age.

Together with the Medici in Florence the courts discussed here formed one of the most important circles of early modern princely collectors in Continental Europe, and it is one of the great merits of this publication to discuss animal collecting at interconnected Habsburg courts in Vienna, Prague, and Innsbruck, as well as to go into their links with Habsburg courts in Madrid and Lisbon during a large part of the sixteenth and the early seventeenth century. Indeed, the Madrid court and especially Lisbon, with its early access to exotic _naturalia_ and the leading international role of Catherine of Austria, Queen of Portugal, are shown to have been an early source of inspiration and a permanent source
of animals for the Habsburg courts in Central Europe in this period. Exchanges with the Bavarian court in Munich and with the Medici in Florence, the other major source of inspiration for European *naturalia* collectors, are mentioned more briefly. The most notable collectors among them were, besides Catherine of Portugal, Archduke Ferdinand II (Prague, Innsbruck) and Emperors Maximilian II (Vienna) and Rudolf II (Prague). A further key figure is the imperial agent-diplomat Hans Khevenhüller, who from 1574–1606 acted as representative in Spain for the Central European Habsburgs, procuring exotic animals and *Kunstkammer* objects, finding specialized staff and supervising transports, to name only a few of his many duties. It is hard to overestimate the influence of his activities and expertise on the Habsburg collections and *Kunstkammern*.

We thus meet the patrons, collectors, agents and further staff involved in the complex and costly business of obtaining, transporting and caring for animals that ranged from Asian elephants, rhinoceroses, zebras from Africa, monkeys from various continents, American birds (including the turkey), tropical monkeys and small mammals, to special European animals, such as costly horses from Spain, reindeer, elk, hunting dogs from England and other parts of Europe, hunting birds, and various kinds of farm animals. Another strong point of this catalogue is that it does not define animal collecting in a narrow sense, but includes this whole range from rare exotics to pets and farm animals and covers both animals that lived indoors and formed part of the households and those that were kept in the menageries, farms and hunting domains that were as closely linked to these courts as were their parks, pleasure gardens, orchards and kitchen gardens.

The catalogue and the six essays in this publication roughly follow these same categories. The former first introduces the collectors and their sites of collecting, and continues with two large sections on exotics (in particular elephants, monkeys, big cats and rhinoceroses). A further section focuses on representations of animals, which range from famous oil paintings (Orpheus and the animals) by Savery and the drawings by Georg Hoefnagel that were part of the Dürer Renaissance at Rudolf II’s court, to far less well-known material and even pieces that have never been shown before, such as a group of 126 bird images on as many pieces of parchment pasted on a large sheet of paper (dated 1559). The last two sections concentrate on animals in the *Kunstkammer* and farm animals.

The six essays by Annemarie Jordan Gschwend, Sylva Dobalová, Thomas Kuster, Veronika Sandbichler and Katharina Seidl offer much more than a summary of information concerning their respective subjects. In particular, the essays by Jordan Gschwend and Kuster present a considerable amount of new research, especially in terms of archival sources. The former discusses the cul-