Animal Soundscapes and Early Modern Privacy at the Danish Court

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Abstract
European courts were noisy and crowded spaces during the seventeenth century, not least because of the many animals they harboured. Dead or alive animals at court served various purposes: tokens of power such as horses and dogs with a military or entertaining function; "objects" of prestige with decorative functions such as exotic living animals or dead animal parts in the prestigious ivory and narwhal collection preserved at Rosenborg Castle; companions in an intimate and private relationship with their owners; and workforce in agriculture or as modes of transport. Historians rarely listen, and if they do, they listen mostly to humans, in a traditional speciesist approach. However, one of the most characteristic features of animals is their sonic world: horse hooves, birdsongs, or barking dogs are some of the omnipresent animal soundscapes at court, creating a common soundscape and a shared aurality. In this article, I study the sounds and vocalizations produced by various animals that were kept at the Danish court, based on textual and visual sources, along with the artefacts preserved in the royal collection of Rosenborg Castle. The purpose is to reconstruct the sonic ecology of the animals at court in order to understand the interspecies relations and the respective influence of humans and nonhumans in terms of privacy. What do the sources tell us about animal and human interaction in terms of privacy, if we ask the right questions to these sources? Issues of privacy, invasion of privacy, intimacy, and violence are considered, based on the aural world of animals.

Keywords
Early modern history – Kingdom of Denmark-Norway - sound studies – animal studies – privacy studies

Introduction

The "soundtrack" of the early modern world was populated with a much larger number of animals than our present-day post-industrial noisy soundscape.[1] In the countryside, in the city, and at court, animals were present as a workforce and as a means of transportation that have completely disappeared today. The court was crowded and noisy, not the least because of the many animals it harboured. Dead or alive, animals at court served various purposes: as tokens of power, such as horses and dogs with a military or entertaining function; as "objects" of prestige with decorative functions, such as exotic living animals or dead animal parts, preserved in the ivory and narwhal collection at Rosenborg Castle in Copenhagen; or as companions kept in an intimate and private relationship with their noble owners. Rarely considered by scholars, one of the most characteristic features of animals is their sonic world: horse hooves, birdsong, or barking dogs are an intrinsic part of the early modern soundscape at court.[2] Even dead, animals would produce sound since their body parts were transformed into musical instruments, tools, or weapons. Scholars of animal studies generally "look" at the animals and focus on the visual, or "read" them in sources and focus on the textual.[3] I shall here listen to them and bring new insights into the issues of privacy by considering sound. Thinking with sound—just like thinking with animals—gives entirely new perspectives on history. Listening allows us to better understand the past, to render its vividness as it was once populated with living humans and nonhumans making sounds and noise.

Privacy is a notion that eludes a hard definition and as such it is a powerful lens through which to investigate the early modern world.[4] Often mistakenly equated only with the modern definition of privacy by Warren and Brandeis –the right to be left alone– historical privacy is, however a more complex notion. Studying privacy before the creation of privacy as a human right allows us to understand how people in the past negotiated the need to keep their thoughts, their bodies but also their material possessions and information private. The idea is not to focus on the private and public spheres but to explore privacy as a social, cultural, and political phenomenon. At the Centre for Privacy Studies, we approach privacy with two methods. First, we realize a terminological analysis of the sources, searching for the *priv- words (words deriving from *privatus*). Second, we study the heuristic zones of privacy as defined by Mette Birkedal Bruun: a concentric structure

1 I would like to express my gratitude to all my colleagues at the Centre for Privacy Studies, with a very special thank you to Mette Birkedal Bruun, Jesper Jakobsen, and Natacha Klein Käfer. I am especially grateful Peter Kristiansen and would like to thank Jesper Munk Andersen (Rosenborg Castle), Thomas Lyngby (Frederiksborg Castle), Lars Berglund, and to the reviewers of this journal for their help and precious suggestions. An extraordinary thank you to Valeria De Lucca and Melissa Van Drie. This article is part of the Independent Research Fund Denmark, Research Project 2 *SOUND: Soundscapes of Rosenborg* (Grant nr 0132-00146B).

2 The otherwise excellent book by Mark Hengerer and Nadir Weber, eds., *Animals and Courts: Europe, c. 1200-1800* (De Gruyter, 2020) does not consider sound or animal vocalisations at all.

3 John Berger, "Why Look at Animals?," in *About Looking*, ed. John Berger (Bloomsbury, 1980), 1–26.

4 Philippe Ariés and Georges Duby, eds., *Histoire de la vie privée: L'Univers historique* (Seuil, 1985); Lena Cowen Orlin, *Locating Privacy in Tudor London* (Oxford University Press, 2008); Michael McKeon, *The Secret History of Domesticity: Public, Private, and the Division of Knowledge* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005); Beate Roessler, *The Value of Privacy* (Polity, 2005); Bart van der Sloot and Aviva de Groot, eds., *The Handbook of Privacy Studies: An Interdisciplinary Introduction* (Amsterdam University Press, 2018); David Vincent, Privacy: A Short History (Polity Press, 2016).

fanned out that allows us to explore privacy in the zones of the soul, the body, the chamber, the home, the household, the community, and the society (Figure 1).[5] This offers not only the different domains of privacy, but also the possibility to study their thresholds and overlaps. We are particularly interested in notions of privacy as a quality and as a threat: too little privacy threatens the individual, while too much may ruin society. Applying these methods to animal studies requires to reformulate some of the heuristic zones. I suggest here to rename the chamber as the nest for a bird, or the stable for a horse; the household as a small pack; the community as the whole species and the society as the biophony. [6]

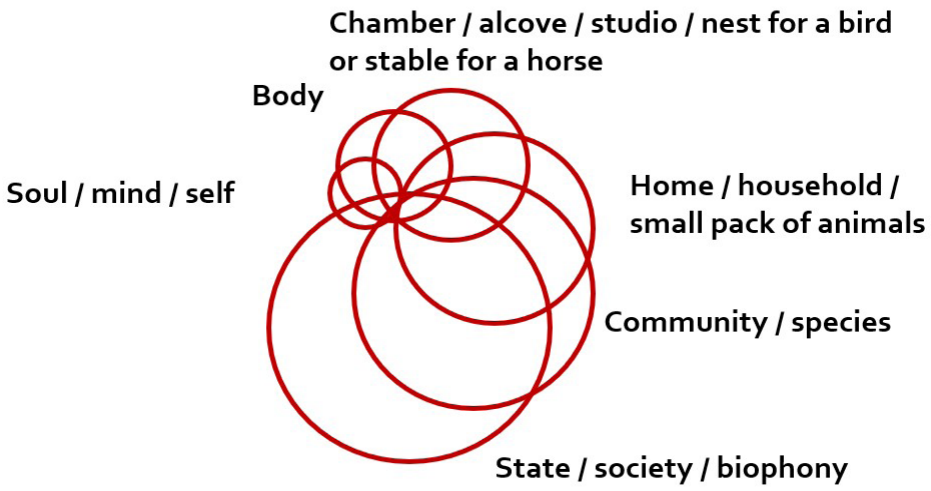

Fig. 1: Heuristic zones of privacy

I shall apply privacy to the nonhumans, but I will also consider the private space filled by animal sounds, along with the infringement of animal privacy. Finally, I shall address the connections between slavery, animal studies, and privacy. Both human slaves and animals have been caged and restrained. Their freedom and their privacy have been denied. This article focuses on a site- and time-specific environment: the Danish court at Rosenborg Castle, where I conducted my research on early modern soundscapes.

The field of soundscape ecology was defined by sound scholars in the late 1970s and has been divided into three spheres.[7] Geophony includes all the non-biological ambient sounds such as wind, rain, thunder, or fire. Biophony encompasses the sounds produ-

5 Michaël Green, Lars Nørgaard, and Mette Birkedal Bruun, eds., *Early Modern Privacy: Sources and Approaches* (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2022), 22–23, Mette Birkedal Bruun, "The Centre for Privacy Work Method," Centre for Privacy Studies, https://teol.ku.dk/privacy/research/work-method/, accessed December 8, 2022. Recent publications by members of the Centre, which apply the heuristic zones as a lens, include: Johannes Ljungberg and Natacha Klein Käfer, eds., *Tracing Private Conversations in Early Modern Europe: Talking in Everyday Life* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2024), Natacha Klein Käfer, ed., *Privacy at Sea: Practices, Spaces, and Communication in Maritime History* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2024), Natacha Klein Käfer and Natália da Silva Perez, eds., "Practices of Privacy: Early Modern Knowledge in the Making," Special issue, *KNOW: A Journal on the Formation of Knowledge* vol. 8, no. 1–2.

6 An error in figure 1 has been corrected since the publication of this article.

7 Barry Truax was the first to use this term in his *Handbook for Acoustic Ecology* (ARC Publications, 1978) to define the acoustic relations between the environment, living organisms and humans. The concept has been further discussed in Bernie Krause, *The Great Animal Orchestra: Finding the Origins of Music in the World's Wild Places* (Little Brown/Hachette, 2012) and in Krause, *Voices of the Wild* (Yale University

ced by living organisms and is the category I shall discuss here. Finally, anthropophony comprises all the sounds produced by humans and has been further subdivided between controlled sounds that have been intentionally generated—such as language or music—, and unintentional sound defined as (anthropogenic) noise or technophony.[8] Whereas the modern industrial world has generated an ever-increasing amount of non-meaningful sounds or noise pollution, biophony produces a variety of meaningful sounds and vocaliaations, for example, to attract mates, to defend territories, or to sound the alarm. The intersection of biophony and anthropophony creates a form of privacy. Interspecies communication and privacy are connected, and this raises the question of how we can ethically listen to nonhumans. I shall address it in the discussion of domestication, exploitation, and hunting.

Historians rarely listen, and if they do, they listen mostly to humans in a traditional speciesist approach. In this article, I study the sounds produced by various animals that were kept at the Danish court based on textual and visual sources along with the artefacts preserved in the royal collection of Rosenborg Castle. Some historians would argue that it is difficult "to listen" to texts and images but it is exactly what musicians and musicologists do when they read scores –an analogic representation of sounds– and when they ready historical theoretical books about early music. In this article, I shall consider archival texts and paintings as sources to listen to animal soundscapes, but also as sources to analyse the relationships between humans and non-humans. What do animal representations tell us about interspecies communication in terms of privacy if we ask the right questions to these sources?[9] I take inspiration from Vinciane Despret's questioning of human exceptionalism and her brilliant re-evaluation of the relationships between humans and nonhumans, by giving back some agency to the animals.[10] Early modern courts had little by way of visual privacy.[11] Constantly surrounded by a large entourage, servants, animals, and visitors, the nobility was persistently scrutinized. What could be heard or not is, therefore, highly significant. Eavesdropping, spying, and listening in order to secure information or rank were common practices. Aurality, or the shared soundscape, defines a community and includes humans across several social classes and nonhumans. Thinking with sound is performative.[12] Sound always implies motion: to make sound, an animate or inanimate being must move or must be moved to create vibrations. The

Press, 2015). See also Bryan C. Pijanowski et al., "Soundscape Ecology: The Science of Sound in the Landscape," *BioScience* 61, no. 3 (2011): 203–16.

8 Paula Laiolo, "The Emerging Significance of Bioacoustics in Animal Species Conservation," *Biological Conservation* 143, no. 7 (2010): 1635–2013; Caitlin R. Kight and John P. Swaddle, "How and Why Environmental Noise Impacts Animals: An Integrative, Mechanistic Review," *Ecology Letters* 14, no. 10 (2011): 1052–61; Lisa Goines and Louis Hagler, "Noise Pollution: A Modern Plague," *Medscapes* 100, no. 3 (2007): 287–94.

9 Vinciane Despret, *What Would Animals Say If We Asked the Right Questions?*, trans. Brett Buchanan (University of Minnesota Press, 2016).

10 For a more inclusive study of soundscapes including not just humans, see Michael Gallagher, Anja Kanngieser, and Jonathan Prior, "Listening Geographies: Landscape, Affect and Geotechnologies," *Progress in Human Geography* 41, no. 5 (2017): 618–37.

11 Lena Cowen Orlin, *Locating Privacy in Tudor London* (Oxford University Press, 2007); Dustin M. Neighbors, Lars Cyril Nørgaard, and Elena Woodacre, eds., *Notions of Privacy at Early Modern European Courts: Reassessing the Public and Private Divide*, 1400-1800 (Amsterdam University Press, 2024).

12 Jonathan Sterne, "Sonic Imaginations," in *The Sound Studies Reader*, ed. Jonathan Sterne (Routledge, 2012), 6.

purpose of this study is to reconstruct the sonic ecology of the animals at court in order to understand the interspecies relations and the respective influence of animals and nonanimals in terms of privacy.[13] The roles of immobile, inanimate animals are silent, part of the "realm of mute objects."[14] Listening to and hearing these mute objects is an inquiry into the invisibility and into the silence of the past in order to make them present and audible. Animal vocalizations or other types of sounds produced by animals are largely unchanged, even if noise pollution has had a massive effect on biophony. Communication between humans and nonhumans during training, hunting, or caring mostly functions with sounds as non-verbal language. Therefore, listening to animals challenges the hard division between biophony and anthropophony; in fact, the two realms conflate in an interspecies reciprocal awareness realised by listening and communicating. As anthropologist Tom Rice has shown for zookeepers, "looking after" animals crucially involves "listening after" them.[15] Listening to them is not just important for caretaking but also in surveillance, a process called "monitory listening" which has a strong impact on privacy.[16] I shall therefore consider the "grey zones" of privacy, both as a threat and a quality. Bringing sound and listening into the study of privacy gives a new definition of thresholds; something invisible can be heard before it can be seen, private activities conducted behind closed doors—or in captivity, in the case of animals—can also be heard without being seen. Animal privacy, as Lori Gruen argues, concerns dignity, fragility, and—most importantly—the recognition of someone else's existence.[17] Although highly debated today, animal rights were non-existent in the early modern world and, as a corollary, animals had no right to privacy.[18] The cohabitation between humans and animals entails surveillance and captivity and the denial of animal privacy by the multisensorial nature of desire and the power to look at, to listen to, to touch, to taste, and to own animals. I shall here focus on the sense of hearing and consider interspecies interaction in the entangled habitat of the court by focusing on animal soundscapes, listening, and privacy.

Horses: tokens of power, strength, nobility, and manliness

By far, the most important animal in the early modern world was the horse. Horses lived in close contact with their noble riders. Their privacy was constantly invaded and restrained. Strong, well-bred, and beautiful stallions were the prime instruments for displaying the

13 On the methodology and work concepts of the Centre of Privacy Studies, see Mette Birkedal Bruun, "Towards an Approach to Early Modern Privacy: The Retirement of the Great Condé," in *Early Modern Privacy: Sources and Approaches*, eds. Michaël Green, Lars Cyril Nørgaard, and Mette Birkedal Bruun (Brill, 2021), 12–60.

14 Don Ihde, "The Auditory Dimension," in Sterne (ed.) *The Sound Studies Reader*, 23–24.

15 Tom Rice, "Listening after the Animals: Sound and Pastoral Care in the Zoo," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 27, no. 4 (2021): 850–69.

16 Trevor Pinch and Karin Bijsterveld, "New Keys to the World of Sound," in *The Oxford Handbook of Sound Studies*, eds Trevor Pinch and Karin Bijsterveld (Oxford University Press, 2012).

17 Lori Gruen, "Dignity, Captivity, and an Ethics of Sight," in *The Ethics of Captivity*, ed. Lori Gruen (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 231–247.

18 Brett Mills, "Television wildlife documentaries and animals' right to privacy," *Continuum: Journal of Media & Cultural Studies* 24, no. 2 (2010): 193–202.

nobility's power and manliness in a literal and symbolic way.[19] Horsepower—a fitting name to describe the power of horses—is still used today as a common unit of power. In the early modern period, horses played a crucial role in military campaigns, and an army would only be as good as its horses.[20] Monarchs and aristocrats were eager to be depicted riding horses and would spend large amounts to buy them. In the kingdom of Denmark-Norway, a mount cost between 120 and 1000 Danish rigsdalers during Christian V's reign.[21] In the Winter Room at Rosenborg Castle, there is a big gilt silver figure of Christian IV tilting at the ring, a game in which he excelled and an opportunity for the king to display his skills, strength, and manliness. The figure was paid by the king with the prizes he won at tilting during his own coronation in 1596. On the stairs of the central turret hang dozens of rider portraits of carousel paintings from the time of Christian V along with equestrian paintings of the *haute école* (1691–1693), the highest form of dressage (Figure 2).[22] The purpose of this bellicose game was to bring down trophies, rings, heads in wood or papier mâché, often representing the colonized others, by using several types of weapons.[23] The animals were dressed as magnificently as their royal riders. Two riding trappings are preserved in the treasury of Rosenborg: the ones used by Christian IV at his own coronation in 1596 and the ones used at the great wedding of prince-elect Christian and Magdalene Sibylle of Saxony in 1634.[24] Christian IV's shabrack (saddle cover) is made of black velvet embroidered with gold, silk, and pearls (Figure

Fig. 2: Equestrian painting of crownprince Frederik

19 Daniel Roche, *La culture équestre de l'Occident, XVIe–XIXe siècle: L'Ombre du cheval*, 3 vols. (Fayard, 2008–2015); Daniel Roche, ed., *Le cheval et la guerre du XVe au XXe siècle* (Association pour l'Académie d'art équestre de Versailles, 2002); Daniel Roche, ed., *Voitures, chevaux et attelages: du XVIe au XIXe siècle* (Association pour l'Académie d'art équestre de Versailles, 2000); Donna Landry, *Noble Brutes: How Eastern Horses Transformed English Culture* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009); Philip Mansel, Tobias Capwell, and Donna Landry, *Horses and Courts: The Reign of Power International Symposium*, 21–23 March 2018, University of Kent Centre for Studies in the Long Eighteenth Century, Society of Court Studies, Wallace Collection, https://research.kent.ac.uk/studiesinthelongeighteenthcentury/horses-and-courts-international-symposium/, accessed April 21, 2022; Erica Fudge, *Brutal Reasoning: Animal, Rationality and Humanity in Early Modern England* (Cornell University Press, 2006).

20 Philip Mansel, "Introduction," in Mansel et al., *Horses and Courts*.

21 Reinhold Mejborg, *Billeder af Livet ved Christian V.s Hof, samt andre Bidrag til Danmarks ældre Culturhistorie* (1882), 51.

22 Unknown artist, *Crownprince Frederik IV catching a Black man's head on his sword* (ca. 1695), oil on canvas, The Royal Collection, Rosenborg Castle, with permission.

23 Kasper Steenfeldt Tipsmark, "Christian 5.s kongelige karruseller," Danmarkshistorien.dk, https://danmarkshistorien.dk/vis/materiale/christian-5s-kongelige-karruseller/, accessed April 19, 2022.

24 Mara Wade, *Triumphus nuptialis danicus: German Court Culture and Denmark, The Great Wedding of 1634* (Harrassowitz, 1996).

Fig. 3: Christian IV's shabrack.

3).[25] The embroideries represent Chronos, allegorical figures, and the planets with delicate and elaborate ornamentations, showing the king and his mount as conquerors of the universe. The display of power at court was a performative staging where horses were costumed and staged to enhance the visibility and virility of their royal riders.

Carriages were just as important as the horses and benefited from the same prestigious appearances. They were artworks on wheels, intended to display the wealth and rank of their passengers. They were also a reflection of the ruler's power in the public space, and therefore, rules of precedence and parking were important and created many diplomatic incidents. Carriages were also the programmatic means of transportation for women. Women were not supposed to ride horses in southern Europe, and even though horseback riding was more acceptable in the Germanic and Nordic countries, the typical gendered division of transportation was still "men in the saddle and women on wheels."[26] Christina of Sweden, a queen on the move, travelled on horseback often in male attire, creating both stupor and admiration.[27] Female riders are seldom represented in painting. One exception is the Danish Queen Sophie-Amalie, an avid huntress represented riding a horse side-saddled during a falcon hunt.[28]

Finally, horses were also used as workforce or as a means of transportation. Therefore, early modern cities counted many more horses than we do today as they no longer have daily indispensable functions or significant military relevance. The great number of horses together with the different quality of the soundscapes mean that sounds produced by horses were one of the most conspicuous animal soundscapes of the early modern biophonic and anthrophonic countryside and urban settings. First, horses produce a

25 Peter Paul Perlestikker, *Christian IV's riding trappings, used at his coronation* (1596), black velvet embroidered with gold and pearls, stirrups and spurs in iron and gold with enamel and diamonds, attributed to Dirich Fyring, master of the crown of Christian IV (1596), The Royal Collection, Rosenborg Castle, with permission. See also Jørgen Hein, *The Treasure Collection at Rosenborg Castle: The Inventories of 1696 and 1718, Royal Heritage and Collecting in Denmark-Norway 1500–1900*, vol. 3 (Museum Tusculaneum, 2009), 258–62. The fabrication of the shabrack amounted to a cost of 1400 *rijsdalers*.

26 Julian Munby, "Men in the Saddle and Women on Wheels: The Transport Revolution in the Tudor and Stuart Courts," *The Court Historian* 24, no. 3 (2019): 205–20.

27 Camilla Kandare, "A Queen in Constant Motion: Queen Christina of Sweden and the Unexpected Mobility of Sovereignty," in *Unexpected Heirs in Early Modern Europe: Potential Kings and Queens,* ed. Valerie Schutte (Springer, 2017), 207–32.

28 The painting is not attributed and is preserved at Gavnø Fonden. I would like to express my gratitude to Dustin W. Neighbors for sharing this information with me.

variety of vocalizations labelled as whinny, nicker, snorting, squeal, groaning, sigh, and screaming.[29] Vocalizations are a means of communication with various meanings that were clear to the caretaker or rider of the horse. They can be a welcome sign and a means to catch attention from both other horses and humans, and they can also express contentment, danger, threat, violence, or aggression. However, the most characteristic sound produced by a horse is not a vocalization but the sound of its hooves on the cobblestones. Additional sounds produced by horses are the wheels of the carriages they draw. In fact, early modern streets were crowded and noisy, and speeding carriages were extremely dangerous. Police regulations constantly mentioned animals and the threat they represented: "Carriages and other coaches hurriedly driven in the streets often expose their passengers and even more pedestrians to many unfortunate accidents."[30] All kinds of animals are mentioned in these regulations, such as pigs, dogs, fish, donkeys, and horses. The main issues concern noise, cleanliness, and health or—as in this case—safety. Finally, the equestrian soundscape included the sounds of various accessories such as whips and spurs. Horses were tamed—a process literally called breaking a horse—by being reined in, saddled, whipped, and spurred, and in these ways their bodily privacy was invaded on a daily basis. They were kept in captivity, harnessed, and used as workforce or for performative displays of power and splendour. Their privacy was denied in terms of freedom and choice along with the right to be undisturbed. Controlling the horses involved physical touch by their riders or carers but also, to a large extent, interspecies sonic communication in order to command them or silence them. Conversely, animal sounds penetrated the porous threshold of the court and invaded human privacy.

Dogs and hunting: loyal companions and noisy beasts

Dogs were less numerous than horses but lived in an even stronger intimacy with their masters. As members of the family, they give us insights into privacy in terms of submission and unwavering loyalty; as wild animals, their animality is a threat to humans.

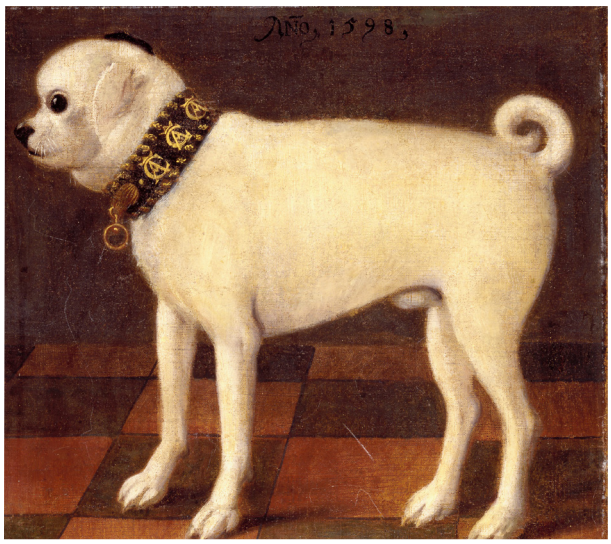

Fig. 4 Tyrk, the dog of Anna Cathrine.

Dogs were the favourite intimate companions of the nobility, both of noblemen and women. Beginning in the sixteenth century with Charles V's portrait with a huge dog painted in 1532 by Jakob Seisenegger and reinterpreted by Titian a year later, portraits of noblemen with dogs became

29 Debbie Busby and Catrin Rutland, *The Horse: A Natural History* (Quarto, 2019), 98–99.

30 Johann Peter Willebrandt, *Abrégé de la police: accompagné de reflexions sur l'accroissement des villes* (L'Étienne et fils, 1765), 42: "Les carrosses ou autres voitures roulans [sic] précipitamment dans les rues exposent souvent ceux qui y sont et encore plus ceux qui vont à pié [sic] à bien des accidents fâcheux."

extremely common. The animal usually supported the composition in its narrative as a faithful and devoted pet. The Danish court was no exception—dogs are almost as omnipresent as horses in the paintings preserved at Rosenborg. However, some portraits of dogs deserve a special mention: Tyrk, the dog of Anna Cathrine, first wife of Christian IV, is depicted alone (Figure 4).[31] Individualized portraits of animals are not non-existent but they are much rarer than animals depicted with the noble family.[32] The dog wears an expensive collar decorated with the queen's monogram. Precious dogs cost more than enslaved persons. In 1679, Queen Charlotte Amalie received two small dogs which cost 560 Danish rigsdalers[33] whereas in 1686, on enslaved man was 120 rigsdalers and an enslaved woman for 148.[34] Christian V's beloved dog Tullefas was painted in his actual size and his portrait was hung in the king's chamber side-by-side with Queen Charlotte Amalie's portrait. When Tullefas died, the king took the portrait along with him to his various residences.[35] An individualized canine portrait tells a different narrative about interspecies relationships between the dog and its master in terms of privacy. The dog no longer functions as an object of prestige but as a member of the family, at par with the queen in the case of Tullefas. Dogs share the intimacy of the royal family not just in paintings but also in everyday life, not just as noisy companions and treasured pets but also as instrumental parts of the performance of domination by incarnating the symbol of absolute loyalty to the monarch.

Early modern churches were spaces of devotion but also spaces of sociability.[36] People would engage in a variety of everyday activities—they socialized, conducted business, and flirted. Often, they took their dogs along and the latter did not always behave. In 1630, the Roman lawyer, Grazioso Uberti complained that dogs and their masters calling them or petting them during church service were producing a racket that was disturbing the sermon.[37] The same happened in Nordic churches, since Frederik IV chose to represent his huge dog accompanied by a small enslaved boy in the absolute foreground of the painting commemorating his coronation in 1700 at the church of Frederiksborg. The dog and the boy are placed between the throne and the altar in a privileged position, but also isolated from all the others, in the position of the Others (Figure 5).[38] In a seventeenth-century Dutch painting of the Oude Kerk in Delft, Emanuel De Witte represents an open tomb in the foreground, with two dogs and two little boys defacing a column by scribbling on it. One dog is running freely around the church while the other is urinating against a

31 Unknown artist, *Painting of Queen Anne Cathrine's dog, with her monogram on its collar* (1598), oil on canvas, The Royal Collection, Rosenborg Castle, with permission.

32 Armelle Fémelat, "Rubino, El Serpentino, Viola, and the Others: Renaissance Portraits of Dogs and Horses at the Court of the Gonzagas," in Hengerer and Weber (eds.), *Animals and Courts*, 195–218.

33 Mejborg, *Billeder*, 36.

34 Mejborg, *Billeder*, 37.

35 Mejborg, *Billeder*, 37.

36 Angela Vanhaelen, "Painting the Visible Church: The Calvinist Art of Making Publics," in *Making Space Public in Early Modern Europe: Performance, Geography, Privacy*, eds. Angela Vanhaelen and Joseph P. Ward (Routledge, 2013), 223–40.

37 Grazioso Uberti, *Contrasto musico: Opera dilettevole* (Lodovico Grignani, 1630), 92–93; Valeria De Lucca and Christine Jeanneret, "Exploring the Soundscape of Early Modern Rome through Uberti's *Contrasto musico*," in *The Grand Theater of the World: Music, Space, and the Performance of Identity in Early Modern Rome*, eds. Valeria De Lucca and Christine Jeanneret (Routledge, 2020), 11–30.

38 Bendix Grodtschilling III, *The Anointing of Frederick IV of Denmark in Frederiksborg Palace* (1706), gouache. The Royal Collection, Rosenborg Castle, with permission.

Fig. 5: Frederik IV's coronation.

column.[39] Gourmand, the gigantic Great Dane of King Christian VII of Denmark-Norway, behaved terribly during the *castrum doloris* of the dowager Queen Sophie-Magdalen and urinated on the coffin.[40] Conversing at church while dogs were barking, running around, and urinating involved the production of a fair amount of noise and brought to life a very different soundscape than our assumptions about churches as silent spaces, reserved for devotions, sermons, and organ music. The defacement by urine represents an invasion of the sacred space by an animal behaving with no sense of what humans consider sacred.[41]

Early modern dogs were praised as hunters, protectors, rescuers, and faithful companions.[42] However, they were also defined in conflicting and competing modes.[43] Their ability to eat absolutely everything made them, along with pigs, emblems of indiscriminate gluttony. They were often considered a nuisance, especially because of the racket they could cause in early modern cities.[44] "So that the inhabitants are not disturbed at night, the police strictly orders the street provosts to chase the dogs howling in the streets during the night," rues the Chief of Police, Willebrandt.[45] A distinction has to be made between the treasured pets of the nobility and wild dogs howling at night. Animals are welcome companions when they are tamed, clean, and silent, but they are dangerous embodiments of bestiality if they are untamed, sick, and noisy. Rabid dogs were clubbed

39 Emanuel de Witte, *Interior of the oude Kerk, Delft* (ca. 1650), oil on wood. Metropolitan Museum, New York, https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/438490, accessed 20.12.2025, public domain.

40 Ulrik Lang Langen, *Den afmægtige: en biografi om Christian 7* (Jyllands-Posten, 2009), 308. Gourmand accompanied the king everywhere, even at the theatre house to see plays and ballets. See Langen, *Den afmægtige,* 298.

41 Michael Taussig, *Defacement: Public Secrecy and the Labor of the Negative* (Stanford University Press, 1999).

42 Craig A. Gibson, "In Praise of Dogs: An Encomium Theme from Classical Greece to Renaissance Italy," in *Our Dogs, Our Selves: Dogs in Early Modern Art, Literature, and Society*, ed. Laura Gelfand (Brill, 2016), 19–40.

43 Alison G. Stewart, "Man's Best Friend? Dogs and Pigs in Early Modern Germany," in *Animals and Early Modern Identity*, ed. Pia F. Cuneo (Ashgate, 2014), 19–44.

44 Emily Cockayne, "Who Did Let the Dogs Out? Nuisance Dogs in Late Medieval and Early Modern England," in *Gelfand, Our Dogs, Our Selves*, 41–67.

45 Willebrandt, *Abrégé*, 42: "Afin que de nuit les habitans ne soient pas troublés, la police ordonne exactement que les prevosts des rues poursuivent les chiens qui hurlent pendant la nuit dans les rues,"

to death by the servants of the executioner.[46] Animals also needed to be taken care of by being fed and trained and by having their health attended to. In 1551, payments were recorded for food: Christian III's guenon received raisins and almonds while the parrots were fed with seeds.[47] Eight boys were hired in 1558 to transport the royal birds from Sorø to Roskilde; of them, two boys were responsible for the king's parrots and the other six carried the queen's small birds.[48] A German was hired in 1587 to castrate the horses, dogs, and pigs in the royal residences, a task for which he received an annual payment of 100 rigsdalers and a court attire.[49] Silencing, caging, restraining, castrating, and taming the animals were the leading forms of interspecies relations and the invasion of animal privacy was constant. However, it worked both ways: dogs howling and barking, running, and urinating in church or in the streets also represent an invasion of human privacy and a dangerous threat to their quietude, especially at night or during devotional practices. Noisy disruptions and defacements provoked anxiety among humans because of the animality of their producers.

The vocalizations of dogs range from barks, growls, howls, whines, whimpers, screams, and pantings to sighs and sneezing.[50] Vocalizations allow communication between dogs but also between dogs and humans. Their meanings are extremely varied and different, ranging from alarm, threat, friendly welcome, annoyance, defining boundaries, terror, pain, calls for assistance, loneliness, playful intentions, concentration, pleasure, excitement, fear, stress, agony, disappointment, and displeasure. Just like horses, dogs not only produced vocalizations but also produced sounds when they walked, trotted about, and ran around the stone or marble floor of the castle, thus producing a highly identifiable noise with their paws and sonically signalling their presence. The dogs were instrumentalized, becoming a sort of extension of the senses of their masters. A guard dog can hear or smell before his master does and can therefore protect him. At court, access to the monarch was strictly regulated for humans, but these rules did not apply to the royal pets. Royal pets shared a lot of intimacy with their royal masters together with free access to them, as long as the masters were willing to have them around. They were allowed to sleep in their master's private chambers and could freely enter or exit them, even in the middle of the night.[51] They had special cushions and expensive collars: they were cuddled and well nourished. The relationship between humans and tamed house dogs is a relationship of companionship, intimacy, and shared privacy. However, dogs also needed to be controlled because they could become dangerous and were often stronger than their master. The expensive collars they were forced to wear functioned as a reminder of their submission, a threat to their privacy, and a potential way of restraining and silencing them.

46 Willebrandt, *Abrégé*, 46.
47 Mejborg, *Billeder*, 150.
48 Mejborg, *Billeder*, 150.
49 Mejborg, *Billeder*, 142.
50 Stanley Coren, *How to Speak Dog: Mastering the Art of Dog-Human Communication* (Simon and Schuster, 2012).
51 Jeroen Duindam, *Vienna and Versailles: The Courts of Europe's Major Dynastic Rivals, 1550–1780* (Cambridge University Press, 2003), 154–55. Louis XIV's cherished dogs would not only be present at the *petit coucher*, but they slept with the king.

Fig. 6: Parforce hunting in Dyrehaven.

One of the most popular court entertainments involving both dogs and horses was parforce hunting, introduced by Christian V in Denmark and inspired by the French model established by Louis XIV.[52] Parforce is not just a hunt but a ritualized performance and a social gathering where the king would show his skills, physical strength, bravery, and ultimately his absolute power over not only life and death but also nature. The purpose was not to eat the animal but to offer it as a compensation to the dogs after hours of tracking it through the woods. In Denmark-Norway, the favoured and biggest prey was the majestic red deer, as one can see in one of the wall paintings in the Winter Room of Rosenborg Castle (Figure 6).[53] When the deer was exhausted and could no longer run, the king was summoned with a particular horn signal called the *hallali* and he would pierce the deer's heart with a spear or a hunt sword called a *hirschfænger* (deer catcher). When the prey had been silenced, it was offered to the dogs as a tribute in a codified ritual called the *curée*. Hunting was certainly one of the loudest soundscapes at court, saturated by horns, human and animal screams, and the natural sounds of the woods trampled by hunters, horses, and dogs. Horns are the musical instruments of parforce hunt; they are used both as hunting signals and as fully sounded pieces called *fanfares*. As the hunters communicated between themselves and their dogs with shouts and whistles, dogs barked and panted, and the stag attempted to flee, its hooves resonating in the wood. Hunters also broke branches of trees in a particular manner in order to find and mark the territory where the prey had run through. The horns used were the traditional, fully circled French horns called *trompes*. Made of brass and developed in France in the seventeenth century for Louis XIV's hunts, these *trompes* were used in a musical composition for the first time in 1664 by Lully in his *comédie-ballet* "La Princesse d'Élide," presented at the sumptuous *Fêtes des plaisirs de l'isle enchantée* at Versailles.[54] The hunt is literally "soun-

52 Philippe Salvadori, *La chasse sous l'Ancien Régime* (Fayard, 1996); Andrée Corvol, *Histoire de la chasse: L'Homme et la Bête* (Perrin, 2010); Carl Weismann, *Vildtets og Jagtens historie i Danmark* (Hage & Clausens, 1929); Kristoffer Schmidt, "Christian 5.s parforce jagt I 1600-tallets aviser," *Fund og Forskning* 59 (2020): 9–42; Jesper Laursen, *Herregårdsjagt I Danmark* (Gads, 2009); Museum Nordsjælland, *The parforce hunting landscape in North Zealand*, UNESCO World Heritage, https://parforce.dk/parforcejagt/, accessed February 22, 2022.

53 Unknown Dutch painter, *Parforce Hunt in Dyrehaven* (ca. 1750), oil on wood. The Royal Collection, Rosenborg Castle, with permission.

54 Renato Meucci and Gabriele Rocchetti, "Horn," in Grove Music Online (2001), accessed February 28, 2022; *Les Plaisirs de l'Isle enchantée* (Paris: Robert Ballard, 1664); Sylvie Chevalley, "Les Plaisirs de l'île enchantée," *Europe* (1966): 34–43; Marie-Christine Moine, *Les fêtes à la cour du Roi Soleil* (Paris: Lanore, 1981); Jean-Marie Apostolidès, *Le Roi-machine: Spectacle et politique au temps de Louis XIV* (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1984); Nicolas Milovanovic and Alexandre Maral, eds., *Louis XIV: L'Homme et le roi, catalogue d'exposition* (Paris/Versailles: Skira-Flammarion/Château de Versailles, 2009); Jérôme de La Gorce, "Les

ded," both as music and as interspecies communication.[55] Hunting horns are site-specific instruments, linked to the wood and nature, where the hunt takes place. The *hallali* is not only a melody but is also a signal that musically announces the imminent death of the animal. The deer would first grunt as a defence mechanism and finally bawl in distress as the final blow was given. During the *curée*, while the dogs tore the prey apart, the *fanfares* that were played during the hunt were repeated as a remembrance. Music here functions as a mnemonic device in a ritualized sonic kill. During the Middle Ages, it was common to use an oliphant, a horn carved in ivory.[56] A famous example is the horn of the Viking Ulf, preserved in York Minster.[57] It was substituted by brass instruments for hunting in early modern times, but such ivory horns continued to be made and were called Afro-Portuguese horns. From the Renaissance until the eighteenth century, these horns were prized gifts exchanged between European princes. Such a sizable ivory horn (61.5 cm x 7.5 cm on the broadest side) was added to the royal collection in the late seventeenth century by Christian V. Royal hunting officers carried these horns at court.[58] In the case of the oliphant, there is an interesting shift: the dead elephant tusk produces sounds whose purpose is to kill the living animal. A dead but still resonating animal spoke musically to the living one and announced his imminent death. Materiality is a crucial feature in producing sound, by vibrating strings, vibrating a column of air, vibrating membranes, or by percussion. The vibrations create a resonance by literally penetrating the body of the listener. Listening to the sources and preserved animal-made artefacts instead of seeing and reading them brings a new dimension to interspecies relationships. While reading or seeing gives a static picture, the sonic reconstruction of the hunt reveals a journey from life to death and the afterlife of the animals recycled into objects or meals. Humans killed, ate, and made things out of animals; conversely, these animal-made things empowered the aristocrats collecting or wearing these precious animal artefacts.[59] The violence, the ingestion, and the dismemberment are extreme forms of invading the animals' privacy. The nonanimals invade the hunted animals' habitat leading to their death. Ultimately transformed into delicate objects, the animal-made objects invade in return the most intimate private chambers or even bodily parts of their killers.

fêtes prestigieuses du Roi-Soleil," in *Versailles*, ed. Pierre Arizzoli-Clémentel (Paris: Citadelles & Mazenod, 2013), 207–15.

55 In French: *sonner l'hallali*, not playing it *(jouer)*. Michel Pinçon and Monique Pinçon-Charlot, "La chasse au son de la trompe: Contrainte cynégétique et ferveur musicale," *Ethnologie française* 24, no. 4 (1994): 751–63; "L'art des sonneurs de trompes," Fiche d'inventaire du patrimoine culturel immatériel de l'UNESCO, https://www.culture.gouv.fr/content/download/115269/1312229, accessed April 21, 2022.

56 Anthony C. Baines and Jeremy Montagu, "Oliphant," Grove Music Online (2001), accessed February 28, 2022.

57 Rachel Backa, "A Viking Treasure: The Horn of Ulph," in 1414: *John Neuton and Re-Foundation of York Minster Library*, eds. Hanna Vorholt and Peter Young, June 2015, https://hoaportal.york.ac.uk/hoaportal/yml1414essay.jsp?id=6, accessed February 28, 2022.

58 I would like to express my gratitude to Vivian Etting of the National Museum in Copenhagen for the historical details she generously gave me about this horn. See https://samlinger.natmus.dk/dmr/asset/168054 (photograph by Lennart Larsen, Nationalmuseet).

59 On animal-made objects, see Erica Fudge, "Renaissance Animal Things," *New Formations* 76 (2012): 86–100.

Colonization: silenced, sounding exotic animals, and enslaved persons

The deprivation of privacy in terms of colonization and displacement both for animals and enslaved persons reaches a whole new level in the early modern period. Exotic animals are indissociable from colonial history, both in the south and in the north of the kingdom of Denmark-Norway. Whereas dogs and horses are common animals used in everyday life, animals such as lions, elephants, camels, reindeer, monkeys, parrots, and zibeths were restricted to the court. As such, they became markers of distinction together with other creatures that were considered "curiosities," such as people with dwarfism, "Turks," and Black people.[60] Polish animal-keepers presented trained bears to Frederik II at Nyborg Castle in 1555, and bears were kept in Rosenborg's garden during the seventeenth century.[61] A lion cost the same as a good horse, and an elephant twice as much.[62] Both the colonized humans and nonhumans tell a history of domination and displacement.

Fig. 7: Queen Sophie-Amalie.

A perfect example of the complex interspecies and interracial relationships at the Danish court is the portrait of queen Sophie-Amalie with an enslaved boy holding an Icelandic gyrfalcon (Figure 7).[63] The white gyrfalcons were extremely rare and prestigious. Given that Iceland was a colony of the Kingdom of Denmark-Norway at that time, the Danish monarchs often used them as precious and prized diplomatic gifts among European rulers.[64] Painted by Abraham Wuchters, this portrait reveals the history of colonial encounters, of the possession and acquisition of humans and animals. The falcon is a raptor, but he is hooded: he is tamed and controlled, he cannot see or attack, his privacy has been invaded in this enforced seclusion, and he is deprived of his sight—his most essential sense for hunting. Apart from the background with a view of the sky, the red velvet drapery, the red-and-gold chair, and the child's yellow clothes, the composition of the living figures is based on a contrast between black and white. The queen's ele-

60 Mejborg, *Billeder*, 36, 150–51.
61 Mejborg, *Billeder*, 164, 36.
62 Mejborg, *Billeder*, 36.
63 Abraham Wuchters, *Sophie Amalie* (1667), oil on canvas. With permission of Det Nationalhistoriske Museum på Frederiksborg Slot. Picture: Ole Haupt
64 Åsa Ahrland, "Hawks and Falconry in Northern European portraiture against a broader European background During the Early Modern Period (c. 1500–1800)," in *Raptor on the Fist: Falconry, its Imagery and Similar Motifs Throughout the Millennia on a Global Scale*, edited by Oliver Grimm, Karl-Heinz Gersmann, and Anne-Lise Tropato (Wachholtz, 2020), 741–42. Strangely enough, the author does not address the colonial aspect of the painting at all; instead, she refers to the enslaved boy as a "child," a "black boy, possibly a servant at court."

gant and lavish dress combines both colours, richly decorated by black and white pearls, white lace, black jewels, and the royal black and white ermine fur, whereas the falcon is white with a black beak, and the enslaved boy can barely be discerned because he is so black—the white pearls around his head are much easier to see. *Morians*—as all Black and Indian people were indiscriminately called—in Denmark-Norway were not ruled by a specific law, unlike Jews, Gypsies, Catholics, and Swedes.[65] They were employed as domestic servants, but it is unclear if they were paid and had the right to voluntarily terminate their employment. However, it seems obvious from the sources that they were owned, regularly exchanged, and loaned by their masters and that they worked as slaves without control over their own bodies and fate.[66] They were treated as a prestigious and desirable commodity, just like exotic birds. They served at court as pages, valets, mascots, specialist workers like pearl divers, or as gifts from the monarch to aristocrats.[67] Both the bird and the boy came from Danish colonies—the boy either from the Danish West Indies or the Danish Indian colony in Tranquebar, and the falcon from Iceland. In this portrait, Sophie-Amalie chose to be represented with a white raptor that is blinded and a black boy that has been enslaved. The bird is controlled by the child, and both the child and the animal are controlled by the queen, made evident by her putting her hand on the head of the enslaved boy in a gesture of possession. Issues of privacy in this interspecies and interracial encounter are based on domination, exhibition, and possession: both the human and nonhuman have lost their freedom and are being used as tokens of prestige. When not posing for the queen's portrait, Sophie-Amalie's falcon would have been caged. Falcons communicate with a series of vocalizations: they have simple repeated monosyllabic calls such as cackles, chatters, squawks, croaks, wails, and whines. They advertise their occupation of a territory, beg for food, or mate.[68] While hunting, falcons use their exceptional eyesight but also sound: they have a ruff of stiff feathers around the face that help to capture sound and localize their prey. Sounds produced by falcons are not limited to vocalizations but include feathers fluttering and flapping wings while flying, hunting, or grooming. Birds can be heard without being seen or long before they can be seen. In the case of exotic birds, birdsong was an aural reminder not only of their master's domination over the animal, but also of their dominions of the colonies. Captivity for both the falcon and the enslaved child violated their privacy in terms of loss of freedom, lack of control, and constant exhibition to their master's gaze along with the impossibility of being left alone. In terms of sound, the absence of privacy also entailed being subjected to a different soundscape with unfamiliar language for the boy and unfamiliar bird vocalizations for the falcon.

65 Jorge Simón Izquierdo Díaz, "The Trade in Domestic Servants (Morianer) from Tranquebar for Upper Class Danish Homes in the First Half of the Seventeenth Century," *Itinerario* 43, no. 2 (2019): 200. However, the author wrongly identifies the bird as a cockatoo.

66 Izquierdo Díaz, "The Trade," 201.

67 Izquierdo Díaz, "The Trade," 201–02.

68 Pascal Carlier, "Vocal Communication in Peregrine Falcons Falco-Peregrinus during Breeding," Ibis 7, no. 4 (1995): 582–85; Kari Kirschbaum, "Falconiadae Falcons," *Animal Diversity Web* (2004), http://animaldiversity.org/accounts/Falconidae, accessed April 9, 2022.

The magnanimous elephant and the sound of ivory

Dead exotic animals or animal parts would still produce sounds and they were also highly coveted at court. They allow us to study issues of privacy and death. *Exotica* was one of the categories present in the cabinet of curiosities.[69] From the mid-sixteenth century until the seventeenth century, ivory was the most fashionable and the most expensive luxury in European courts. The treasury of Rosenborg Castle has one of the most important ivory collections in the world. Elephants embodied strength, magnanimity, and wisdom in the early modern world and were an ideal representation for rulers, especially because they could be tamed and thus embody conquest and colonization.[70] The kingdom of Denmark-Norway had a special relationship with elephants, since the highest chivalric order in the country was—and still is—the Danish Order of the Elephant.[71] Living elephants were exhibited in courtly menageries or used as performers during lavish spectacles, but the cabinet of curiosities became their final resting place. After having been killed and transported, they would finally be turned by an ivory lathe into extraordinarily delicate artefacts.[72] In the early modern world, ivory trade went hand-in-hand with slavery. Portuguese merchants initiated the trade, quickly followed by the Dutch West Indies Company and the French at the beginning of the seventeenth century.[73] The kingdom of Denmark-Norway chartered the Danish West India Company from 1671 until 1803 and bought enslaved persons and ivory from the Danish Gold Coast in present-day Ghana.[74] Ivory (known as white gold) and slavery are connected because they shared the same distribution routes: both were sold in the same harbours and newly captured enslaved persons (known as black ivory) were used to carry the tusks.[75]

Turning ivory was a mechanical art that required skills in mathematics, geometry, perspective, and mechanics. Once the work was set into motion, it could not be stopped or changed. God was characterized as the first turner, and the art of turning became a symbol for the prince's power over society and his ability to plan and control it.[76] Several members of the Danish royal family, including women, were avid ivory turners. Turning

69 Krzystof Pomian, *Collectors and curiosities: Paris and Venice, 1500–1800*, trans. Elizabeth Wiles-Portier (Polity, 1990); Giuseppe Olmi, "Science, Honour, Metaphor: Italian Cabinets of the 16th and 17th Centuries," in *The Origins of Museums: The Cabinet of Curiosities in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century Europe*, eds. Olivier Impey and Arthur MacGregor (House of Stratus, 2001), 1–17.

70 Wolfram Koeppe, ed., *Making Marvels: Science and Splendor at the Courts of Europe* (Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2019), 237–39.

71 Jørgen Hein, *Ivories and Narwhal Tusks at Rosenborg Castle: Catalogue of Carved and Turned Ivories and Narwhal Tusks in the Royal Danish Collections 1600–1875*, 2 vols. (Museum Tusculanum, 2018).

72 Almudena Pérez de Tudela and Annemarie Jordan Gschwend, "Renaissance Menageries: Exotic Animals and Pets at the Habsburg Courts in Iberia and Central Europe," in *Early Modern Zoology: The Construction of Animals in Science, Literature and the Visual Arts*, eds. Karl A.E. Enenkel and Paul J. Smith, vol. 2 (Brill, 2007), 419–45.

73 Martha Chaiklin, "Ivory in World History: Early Modern Trade in Context," *History Compass* 8, no. 6 (2010): 536.

74 Erik Gøbel, *Vestindisk-guineisk Kompagni 1671–1754: Med Peder Mariagers beretning om kompagniet* (Syddansk Universitet, 2015); Erik Gøbel, *The Danish Slave Trade and Its Abolition* (Brill, 2016), 15–17.

75 Chaiklin, "Ivory," 538.

76 Hein, *Ivories*, vol. 1, 3.

was realized by using an ivory lathe, operated by a treadle and flywheel.[77] Both the turning process and the ivory artefacts produce sound. Metal and wood carved the ivory in mechanical sounds; the elephant was sometimes transformed into a musical instrument, as we have seen in the case of the ivory horn. If the tusk became a tool or a weapon, it would also keep on producing sounds. One artefact—the ivory whip that once belonged to Christian V—also has an integrated flute at the end of the handle and is therefore both a tool and an instrument. This whip could whistle and produced the characteristic sonic boom of a whip cracking.[78] In the case of whipping, the invasion of privacy of the horse is linked to both the senses of touch and hearing as the violence is simultaneously produced by the sonic boom and the pain it inflicts. In the case of elephants, the process of killing monumental animals and transforming them into delicate artefacts brings to an ultimate form of negating privacy even in death. The giant and wild animal has completely disappeared—it has been dismembered and its tusks have been carved beyond recognition. Turning ivory was a means for the monarch to assert his power and control over society but also over nature. The journey of the elephant from life to death, from the colonies to Denmark-Norway, involved crossing a variety of geographies, cultures, and soundscapes only to be finally silenced and collected in the treasury of the castle.

Fig. 8: Ostrich eggs from the Royal Collection.

Ostrich: liminal creature and precious eggs

The ostrich eggs bring us to evoke issues of privacy, reproduction rights, and emptied eggs. The royal collection contained eighteen centrepieces with ostrich eggs mounted on elaborated ivory decorations (Figure 8) that were realized by the ivory turner Lorenz Spengler.[79] Two pairs have been lost, but drawings are preserved in the Royal Collection of Graphic Art. One of them represents an ostrich figure on top of the egg, holding a horseshoe. One of the favoured representations of the ostrich in the early modern world was based on the belief that ostriches could consume and digest anything, especially iron—hence the representation with the horseshoe.[80] Ostriches were kept as curiosities in aristocratic European menageries, and their feathers and eggs were precious commodities.[81] The bey of Morocco offered two ostriches to King Frederik V in

77 Diderich de Thurah, *Queen Sophie Magdalene's lathe* (1735–36), various materials, The Royal Collection, Rosenborg Castle, with permission. See also Hein, *Ivories*, vol. 1, 34.

78 Peter Krehl, Stephan Engemann, and Dieter Schwenkel, "The Puzzle of Whip Cracking: Uncovered by a Correlation of Whip-tip Kinematics with Shock Wave Emission," *Shock Waves* 8 (1998): 1–9.

79 Lorenz Spengler, *Vases depicting Minerva and Mars, as symbol of the motto of Frederik V: "By ingenuity and constancy"* (1757), ostrich-egg and ivory, The Royal Collection, Rosenborg Castle, with permission.

80 Koeppe, *Making Marvels*, 80.

81 Una Roman D'Elia, *Raphael's Ostrich* (Pennsylvania State University Press, 2015), 9.

1753 as a diplomatic gift to settle a dispute on piracy in the Mediterranean.[82] The birds were kept at the royal menagerie in Frederiksberg Palace and were cared for by a Tunisian animal-keeper. During the harsh Danish winter of 1754, the keeper lit a fire to warm the menagerie and burnt down the whole menagerie along with the ostriches. Although the ostriches allegedly died, the eggs were found intact in the ashes. Ostrich eggs were coveted exotica since the early Middle Ages. The symbolism associated with the ostrich is complex and sometimes contradictory. A long tradition originating in Ancient Egypt associated the bird with justice. The hearts of the deceased were weighted against an ostrich feather. The ostrich feather was also the hieroglyph for justice—a fact that was known in the early modern world. This association still existed, as attested, for example, by the famous ostrich painted by Raphael in the Hall of Constantine at the Vatican as an emblem of the allegory of Justice.[83] However, the ostrich was also regarded as a monster or a marvel, part-bird, part-beast. It is the largest bird known in existence, but also a foolish bird that does not fly, thus being a liminal creature. Little is known about the vocalizations of ostriches or, more generally, the communication patterns of paleognath birds.[84] The large ratites such as the ostriches produce the lowest frequency calls among birds. Alive at the royal menageries, Frederik V's ostriches would have produced deep booms, drums, grunts, and roar-like calls. Kept in captivity, they had little privacy, being exposed continually to the gaze of the visitors. Naturally fast and long-distance runners, they were also being deprived of their freedom to roam and run. One possible means of achieving some form of privacy while being kept in captivity and being exhibited would be vocalizing in a language inaccessible to their human gaolers. In this specific case, their possibility to reproduce had also been denied since their eggs were harvested, emptied, and mounted on delicate ivory pieces kept in the royal collection.

Narwhal: unicorn and silenced shrine of the absolute monarchy

Like the elephants, the narwhal points to privacy and death but from the Northern colony of Greenland. The ivory collection also contains narwhal pieces and some walrus sculptures. The kingdom of Denmark-Norway had an absolute monopoly on the narwhal trade.[85] The arctic animal was hunted in Greenland and used by the Danish monarchs as a territorial specialty, a colonial prized diplomatic gift, just like the Icelandic gyrfalcon. Characterized by its helical tusk, the narwhal was considered to be a mythic unicorn from the Middle Ages until the mid-seventeenth century. It was the paragon of the allegories, remedies, and natural marvels found in the cabinet of curiosities. Considered the most powerful antidote in existence, it was thought to neutralize poisoning, cure melancholia, and was imbued with mystical, magical, and religious connotations.[86] Like the unicorn,

82 Hein, *Ivories*, vol. 2, 193.
83 D'Elia, *Raphael's Ostrich*, 8, 13.
84 Jeremy R. Corfield, M. Fabiana Kubke, and Christine Köppl, "Emu and Kiwi: The Ear and Hearing in Paleognathous Birds," in *Insights from Comparative Hearing*, eds. Christine Köppl, Geoffrey Manley, Arthur Popper, and Richard Fay (Springer, 2013), 263–88.
85 Else Roesendahl, *Hvalrostand, elfenben og nordboerne i Grønland* (Odense Universitetsforlag, 1995).
86 Koeppe, *Making Marvels*, 91; Rüdiger Robert Beer, *Unicorn: Myth and Reality* (Mason/Charter, 1977), 177; Mogens Bencart, "Enhjørninger, narhvaler og gamle grønlændere," *Museerne i Viborg Amt* 13 (1985): 114–25; Hein, *Ivories*, vol. 1, 2.

the narwhal was thought to be strong, shy, and very hard to hunt. It was believed that it could only be captured when it laid its head in the lap of a virgin. Worth ten times more than gold, it was one of the most precious commodities of the early modern period.

Fig. 9: Coronation of Christian V.

The anointment Chair of Absolutism, preserved in the Knights' Hall at Rosenborg Castle, was produced between 1662 and 1671.[87] It was used for all the coronations until the end of the absolute monarchy in 1840. The chair is built of wood and iron and contains thirty-eight drums of narwhal tusks, and many half-drums line the seat, armrests, and the back. Frederik III commissioned the work but died before it was finished, and it was used for the first time at the coronation of Christian V in 1671. The original throne without the gilt Virtues added in 1684 can be seen in the painting of Christian V's coronation by Michael van Haven (Figure 9).[88] As Jørgen Hein convincingly shows, Frederik III modelled his throne on Solomon's model as it is described in the Old Testament ("Moreover the king made a great throne of ivory, and overlaid it with the finest gold") and in the painting *The Judgement of Solomon* by Peter Paul Rubens that was in the possession of the king. The Danish monarch placed himself at par with Solomon and represented Copenhagen as the new Jerusalem. By using narwhal instead of ivory, he clearly affirmed his Nordic provenance and his colonial power over Greenland. Alive, narwhals use sounds to navigate and hunt for food. Their vocalizations include echolocation clicks, pulsed tone signals, and whistles.[89] Like the other hunted animals discussed in this chapter, narwhals have been deprived of their life, dismembered, and silenced. The Danish hunters would have needed (or forced) the cooperation and the skills of the Inuit hunters to track what humans perceive as extremely private and elusive cetaceans, kill them, and take them out of their element and habitat. Transformed into objects, they have become invisible as animals and reduced to a precious commodity that has become a shrine for the absolute monarch of Denmark-Norway.

Interspecies communication, listening, and privacy

The early modern animals at court represent one instrumental character in the performance of power, functioning either as a companion or as a beast being exhibited, alive

87 For this and the following description, see Hein, *Ivories*, vol. 2, 66.

88 Attributed to Michael van Haven, *Anointing of King Christian V* (1671), oil on canvas. The Royal Collection, Rosenborg Castle, with permission.

89 Marianne Marcoux, "Narwhal communication and Grouping Behaviour: A Case Study in Social Cetacean Research and Monitoring" (PhD diss., McGill University, 2011), 136.

or dead. Animal soundscapes encompass two different approaches to privacy. On the one hand, the porosity of sound has the capacity to penetrate any kind of private space. Unwelcome animal vocalizations and other animal sounds could invade and threaten the privacy of humans—or, conversely, animal privacy was constantly invaded by human sounds. Humans and animals had different strategies to protect their privacy from the intrusions of one another. The dominant species could obviously have them silenced at any time and by any means, whereas the animals, especially if they were kept in captivity, had no possibility of retreating and avoiding the unwanted sounds produced by the humans. Unlike the eyes, the ears cannot be closed because there are no earlids and sound exposure is a serious violation of privacy. On the other hand, non-verbal sounds are instrumental in interspecies communication as has been demonstrated. Speciesism tries in vain to establish a hard boundary between humans and non-humans. By considering sounds and particularly non-verbal interspecies communication, the boundary collapses as biophony and anthropophony converge and mix. In order to be able to communicate with animals, humans must reveal the animality of their own bodies by producing animal sounds. However, interspecies communication is far from being a straightforward process and often leaves room for miscommunication and misunderstandings. In the tiny space left between captivity and control, animals could have private forms of communication between each other that would remain incomprehensible to their human owners. Animals, dead or alive, certainly vocalize or make noises more freely in privacy. Privacy and interspecies communication are closely related and urge us to listen ethically to nonhumans.

The aural world of animals or animal parts preserved in the royal collection of Rosenborg tells us a sobering history of the invasion of animal privacy through their exploitation, colonization, displacement, and confinement, by exploiting, colonizing, displacing, confining, hunting, killing, collecting, and consuming. All these activities involve noise and violence to destroy privacy. Listening to animals has shown that interspecies communication during training, hunting, or caring for the animals mostly functions with sounds as non-verbal language. A rider uses tongue clicks or onomatopoeia to encourage his mount or direct a carriage, a hunter signals to his dogs with whistles and screams, and the same is true for a falconer communicating with his raptor. Along with words, the human agent uses an animal form of communication. In her philosophy of listening, Gemma Corradi Fiumara states that "humans are 'animals' that define themselves."[90] Consequently, humans also define what animals are and how they get to be treated. By listening to the animals, we strive not only to ask the right questions, but also listen to their answers in an attempt to reconstruct a more encompassing and interspecies sonic ecology of the early modern court.

90 Gemma Corradi Fiumara, *The Other Side of Language: A Philosophy of Listening* (Routledge, 1990), 50.

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