

trained to fit into the human world of work and pleasure. Besides, pet shops have no trouble selling them as commodities. As for food production, only a few people—vegetarians—deny themselves meat. A few more may decry assembly-line output and ask for “free-range” chickens and the like. But the vast majority of human beings have no qualms about industrially raised and slaughtered beasts.

As for the third way we deal with animals, societies advocating the prevention of cruelty to animals, groups demonstrating against seal hunts or decrying the penning of dolphins and orcas for amusement, and still others protesting inhumane treatment of laboratory animals receive media attention, usually, of course, when they dramatize conditions. (Zoos are not discussed). Perhaps these concerns reflect a society that can now afford to be nice to animals, compared, say, to the early settlers who saw wild beasts as competitors on the land and as threats to human survival.

I do not think the author has gone far enough in space and time, however. The western city as such is not the problem and our culture runs historically much deeper than western capitalism about which she often decries as the culprit. First, the ten proffered photos of sculptures of animals and people in Toronto are interesting. Yet the bronze cows resting in the Toronto-Dominion Plaza in Toronto are only a step away, as it were, from the cows chewing their cud in a fenced pasture. Such a pastoral scene is also an artifact of human invention. Also consider that before there was a Jerusalem, the ancient Israelites, while still camping en route to the promised land, brought down Yahweh's wrath by worshipping the golden calf image. So the city is secondary, and no more of an artifact than much of the work of agricultural people in the past. In fact, their work through the ages has contributed to the making of the modern city.

The author thus has a problem of continuity. Why blame capitalism? As we know our predecessors in early post-glacial North America quickly hunted to extinction several of the megafauna of the period. Paleolithic people domesticated dogs capable of obedience. Neolithic folk domesticated cattle and a few other animals that can be herded owing to their hierarchical social structure, and also domesticated plants.

What we have seen over the past almost half a millenium does not represent a clear cultural separation from earlier periods but an *intensification* of economic activity. Through technological improvements, aided greatly by the burning of inanimate fossil fuels, modern societies, at least in the rich world, have raised the exploitive ante a notch higher than that of earlier times. So the assembly, or rather more precisely disassembly, lines in abattoirs are speedier and more refined. Besides, capitalists are hardly a new phenomenon; think of the Medicis or investors reported in biblical stories.

Does the rising tide of concern about liberating animals from human constraints signify a new grand era in world history? I would not hold one's breath. The odds favouring widespread meatless dining are virtually minuscule, that is unless people kill off all the beasts and are forced to forage for plants. Nor will people treat pets as equal citizens; we will eat them, too, if des-

perate. Human beings have indeed put enormous stress on habitats. But I doubt whether we as the dominant species possess enough virtue to follow what Annabelle Sabloff advocates.

Besides, if humans are so stupid as to foul our nest so mightily as to ensure our demise as a species, and if we take with us the squirrels, raccoons, skunks, mice, rats, even cockroaches and the like with which (whom?) we cohabit in the city, the bacteria will likely still survive beyond what has been referred to as the “fifth great extinction”.

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André Raymond. *Cairo*, trans. by Willard Wood (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press), 2000. Pp. 436. Illus., maps, photos, bibliography and index. (Originally published by Fayard in Paris, 1993, as *Le Caire*.)

André Raymond, distinguished scholar of Arab pre-modern cities, has published in *Cairo* a remarkable portrait of one of the most storied cities of mankind. Mummies, pharaohs and pyramids most often spring to mind when the word Cairo is uttered. For Raymond, Cairo, (for *Qahirah*, the city of the tenth century Fatimids), evokes the Citadel, the Ibn Tulun mosque, or the hospital of Mamluk Sultan Qalawun. His is the Muslim city, beginning with its foundation in 642 as Fustat, the garrison capitol of the original Arab conquerors. Raymond has spent more than two decades in the study of the great Arab cities of the Middle East, first with his major work on the crafts and tradesmen of pre-modern Cairo (*Artisans et commerçants au Caire au XVIIIe siècle*, published in Damascus in 1973–74). A second important work, *The Great Arab Cities in the 16th to 18th Centuries: An Introduction*, was published in New York in 1984. Both titles have had a tremendous influence on the way urban and social historians have viewed and written about the “traditional” Muslim city.

Apart from the impeccable credentials of its author, and an immensely readable translation by Willard Wood, this is a work that has also been given very handsome treatment by the press. Each of the four parts is illustrated with period drawings and photographs and black-and-white urban plans of the city for the period under discussion. Thus, it is possible to observe the evolution of the city as represented in contemporary histories (mostly Arabic before Napoleon's invasion in 1798), and as excavated or plotted in more recent times, when that has been possible.

Raymond chose to organize the history chronologically, which in the Cairo example, means a division by the major dynastic influences on the city. Part One: Foundations (642–1250) starts with the Arab conquest and ends with the crusades. Part Two: Medieval Cairo (1250–1517) encompasses the era of the Mamluks. Part Three: The Traditional City (1517–1798) treats the Ottoman period, which Raymond acknowledges has “long been spoken of as a foreign rule, tyrannical and obscurantist, responsible for the decline of Egypt and Cairo” (p. 189). His will be a different